

WAR DEPARTMENT

BASIC FIELD MANUAL

SOLDIER'S HANDBOOK

July 23, 1941

*Including C1, May 4, 1942, and
C2, December 28, 1942*

NOTE.—No initial distribution will be made of this manual as it contains only minor changes to the December 11, 1940, edition. Replacement of copies now in the hands of individuals is not authorized.

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BASIC FIELD MANUAL

SOLDIER'S HANDBOOK

Prepared under direction of the
Chief of Staff



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GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, July 23, 1941.

FM 21-100, Soldier's Handbook, is published for the information and guidance of all concerned. Its purpose is to give the newly enrolled member of the United States Army a convenient and compact source of basic military information and thus to aid him to perform his duties more efficiently.

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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

G. C. MARSHALL,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

E. S. ADAMS,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

DISTRIBUTION:

C and H (5) ; X.
(For explanation of symbols see FM 21-6.)

II

FOREWORD

You are now a member of the Army of the United States. That Army is made up of free citizens chosen from among a free people. The American people of their own will, and through the men they have elected to represent them in Congress, have determined that the free institutions of this country will continue to exist. They have declared that, if necessary, we will defend our right to live in our own American way and continue to enjoy the benefits and privileges which are granted to the citizens of no other nation. It is upon you, and the many thousands of your comrades now in the military service, that our country has placed its confident faith that this defense will succeed should it ever be challenged.

In the transition from civil life to the life of a soldier you may, at first, feel somewhat confused. It is the purpose of this handbook to help you over these rough spots as rapidly as possible and to lay the foundations for your successful career as a soldier.

Making good as a soldier is no different from making good in civil life. The rule is the same and that is—know your own job and be ready to step into the job of the man ahead of you. Promotion is going to be very rapid in this Army. Be ready for it. You will have little time to learn the duties of a noncommissioned officer after you become one. You will be expected to know those duties and show that you know them. At a moment's notice you may have to take charge of your squad as a corporal—and in a critical hour. In the same way when you are a sergeant you cannot tell under what conditions and at what hour you may have to take the place of your lieutenant. You want to know what is expected of you and be ready to do it.

The things that a trained soldier must know, and the way in which they are done, will be taught you as rapidly as you can absorb them. The basic military information is described and explained in this handbook so that it may be available constantly to you during the first weeks of your service. By mastering the contents your future progress will be much more rapid.

III

In making yourself an efficient soldier you are helping to build a defense for our country that nothing can destroy. You are repaying your obligation to the United States for all the benefits of the past and are declaring your faith in our future. If you will make a part of yourself the following characteristics of the good soldier, you will be doing your part in upholding the glorious reputation of the Army of the United States:

Be obedient.—Obedience means to obey promptly and cheerfully all orders of your commissioned and noncommissioned officers. At first you cannot be expected to know the reason for everything you are ordered to do. As you remain longer in the service and you understand more of the reasons for military training you will find that everything has been figured out as the result of experience in the past. Ways and methods which have been successful in the past are continued until some new way proves to be better, and then the change will be made. Cheerful obedience leads to a better performance of your duties. It makes it easier for all of your comrades to do their part. It means better teamwork.

Be loyal.—Loyalty means that you must stand by your organization through thick and thin. Boost your organization at every opportunity. Be loyal and true to your officers, your noncommissioned officers, and your comrades. In this way you will be loyal to your country.

Be determined.—Determination means the bulldog stick-to-it-iveness to win at all costs. During your training keep everlastingly at the most difficult tasks and never give up until you have mastered them. Determination to win means success in battle.

Be alert.—Alertness means being always on your guard. A good soldier may be pardoned for failure, but never for being surprised. Should the unexpected happen, use your head and do something, even if it is wrong, rather than "lie down."

Be a member of the team.—Teamwork means that each man in the squad, platoon, company, troop, or battery gives everything in his power to make for the success of the whole unit. Success in battle depends on teamwork just as much as success in a football game depends on the pull-together spirit of the football team. Unless you play your own special part the team may not win.

RECORD OF THE SOLDIER

Name _____
 Army serial No. _____
 Grade _____ Organization _____
 Height _____ Weight _____
 Born _____ (Place) _____ (Date) _____
 In case of emergency notify _____ (Name) _____
 _____ (Address) _____ (Town) _____ (State) _____
 Beneficiary (6 months' pay) _____ (Name) _____
 _____ (Relation) _____ (Street and number or rural route) _____ (Town and state) _____
 Government insurance _____ (Amount) _____ (Policy number) _____
 Other insurance _____ (Amount) _____ (Policy number) _____
 Bank account _____ (Name of bank) _____ (City and State) _____
 _____ (Church) _____ (Town and State) _____
 Rifle number _____
 Pistol number _____
 Company number _____
 Watch _____
 Regimental commander's name _____
 Battalion commander's name _____
 Company commander's name _____
 Chaplain's name _____
 Platoon commander's name _____
 Squad leader's name _____