

# Field Maneuvers

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**Flanking**

# Lesson Objective

- By the end of this lesson the learner will be able to:
  1. Understand the principles of “Flanking” as an offensive field maneuver.
  2. Understand the types of “Flanking” maneuver that can be used in the field.
  3. Illustrate the “Flanking” maneuver on paper.
  4. Execute the “Flanking” maneuver in the field.

# What is Flanking?

- **Flanking Maneuver** --- also called a flank attack, is an attack on the sides (flanks) of an opposing force. If a flanking maneuver succeeds, the defending force is attacked from two or more directions, which significantly reduces its ability to defend itself.

# When is it Best to Use the “Flanking” Maneuver?

- When there are 2 or more team members.
- When opposing force is concentrated in a target area that can be contained by suppression fire or distracted by a diversion.
- When terrain, environment, or camouflage is available for a flanking team to engage enemy without being detected.

# Types of Flanking Maneuvers

- There are three main types of “Flanking” Maneuvers
  1. **Ambush**
    - Flanking maneuver where friendly unit performs a surprise attack on the enemy from a concealed position. Friendly units may be hidden to the sides of the ambush site to surround the enemy target.
  2. **Front Engagement**
    - Flanking maneuver used when a friendly unit encounters an enemy defensive position. Upon receiving fire from the enemy, the unit commander orders a flank attack. A part of the friendly unit “fixes” the enemy with suppressive fire while the flanking force then advances to the enemy flank and attacks them at close range.
  3. **Double Envelopment**
    - Flanking maneuver identical to Front Engagement except two flanking teams are sent to engage enemy at both flanks (left and right).

# How is the “Flanking” Maneuver Executed?

## Steps to Execute a Front Engagement “Flanking” Maneuver

- Divide the attacking force into 2 parts: Team A (suppression fire) and Team B (flanking attack).
- Team A will create a diversion and/or suppress the enemy by firing upon the enemy’s position.
- While Team A applies diversion and/or suppression fire, Team B advances toward the enemy flank. *(Note: Team B must be able to advance without being detected.)*
- Team A will continue suppression firing until flanking team engages the enemy unit.
- When signaled by Team B (flankers), Team A (suppressors) will advance toward enemy using Leapfrogging maneuver or charge with Line Abreast Formation.

# Illustration of Flanking Maneuver “Front Engagement”

