

Victorian Drill for Martini-Henry

Adapted from Field Exercises of 1877



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In the Victorian manual, movements are done according to a number of "beats" or seconds. Therefore, one will make the first movement

t, count "two... three..." then continue to the next movement.

The result is a uniform, crisp-looking drill that is a pleasure to watch. Always remember to think "two... three..." in your mind when going through the manual of arms and performing movements. Forgetting this will upset the entire drill, so it is vital to keep it in mind.

Commands are issued in a loud, clear voice, with the instructive word first, followed by a "beat" for the soldier to comprehend it, then the executive word, on which the order is performed. Thus "Shoulder [pause] Arms!" is how orders will be given and will be easier to carry out and understand. If a drummer is present, he will strike the drum to mark each beat where the movement is to be carried out.

Without Arms

There will be many occasions when soldiers are found without their rifles. Initially, drill is to be performed without arms as well, that the soldiers better learn the basic movements without added distractions such as kit and rifle. **Position of Attention:** The position of "attention" is when the soldier is prepared to listen to instructions and carry them out. He stands with his feet together, pointing outwards at approximately a 45° angle. The hands are lightly clenched, but do not form a fist. The arms hang at the sides, thumbs in line with the outer seam of the trousers. The head is to be held aloft, chin parallel to the ground, shoulders thrown back. At the position of attention the soldier does not move or fidget, but is alert and proud.

Right--Face (2) - ONE: The right foot is brought behind the left, the instep of the right up against the heel of the left (forming an upside-down T).
TWO: The soldier turns, pivoting on his heels, 90°, and now is facing right.

Left--Face (2) - ONE: The heel of the right foot is brought into the instep of the left foot (forming a skewed T).
TWO: The soldier turns, pivoting on his heels, 90°, and is now facing left.

Right About--Face (3) - ONE: The right foot is brought back, the heel of the left foot in line with the toe of the right foot (forming a backwards L).
TWO: The soldier turns, pivoting on his heels, 180°, and is now facing the rear.
THREE: The right foot is brought back.

Left About--Face (3) - ONE: The right foot is brought forward, the heel of the right foot in line with the toe of the left foot (forming a skewed L).
TWO: The soldier turns, pivoting on his heels, 180°, and is now facing the front.
THREE: The right foot is brought forward.

Stand at--Ease (2) - ONE: Sharply bring the hands up, the fingers together, thumbs out, with the thumb of the right hand against the sternum, fingers pointed upwards.
At the same time, the left hand will be brought three inches under the right, palm up, thumb out.
TWO: Step back with the right foot, bringing the instep into the left heel. At the same time, throw down the right hand onto the left, clasping hands, both palms facing the body, thumbs up. The fingers of the right hand will cover those of the left.

Attention (1) - ONE: Bring the right foot up again, at the same time snap the hands back to the sides in the position of attention.



Saluting

Saluting is also performed on a beat. When a superior approaches within six paces, the inferior will be standing, stop, and render a salute by carrying the right hand up, in a circular movement to about chest height, and snap his hand to the side of his head, palm out, so that the fingers touch one inch over the eyebrow. After a mental "two... three..." count, the hand is quickly brought back to the side. If marching or walking, a salute will be rendered with eyes towards the superior and delivered with the hand *farthest* from the superior.



Under Arms

More often than not, a soldier is expected to have his rifle to be ready to perform his military duties. This section will be practiced once the unarmed movement drill has been mastered.

Fall in, position of attention: Order arms - butt of rifle in line with left toe held against the right side of the body. The sling of the rifle faces out. The soldier stands at attention.

Advance arms (3) - ONE: Grasp the rifle with the right hand as far as without constraint.

TWO: Cant the rifle straight up, catching it with the right hand at the wrist and swinging the left hand across the body, seizing the rifle. The right hand should enclose the trigger guard with the thumb and forefinger.

THREE: Quit the left hand to the side, bringing the rifle down and into the right shoulder.

Order arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle with the left hand at the top band of the rifle sling.

TWO: Letting go of the trigger guard with the right hand, lower the rifle to almost touching the ground, keeping it steady with the right hand.

THREE: Quit the left hand and let the rifle come down.

Shoulder arms (4) - ONE: Seize the rifle with the right hand.

TWO: Cant the rifle straight up, catching it just above the action. The right forearm should be parallel to the ground.

THREE: Swing the rifle into the left shoulder, taking the butt with the left hand.

FOUR: Quit the right hand, bringing it sharply down to the side.

Advance arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle at the wrist with the right hand.

TWO: Using the left hand to guide the rifle, briskly bring the rifle down into the right arm, grasping the trigger guard between the thumb and forefinger.

THREE: Quit the left hand.

Shoulder arms (3) - ONE: Grasp the rifle with the left hand, arm across the body and parallel to the ground, bringing the right hand out from the trigger guard and behind the wrist of the rifle.

TWO: Bring the rifle into the shoulder, taking the butt with the left hand.

THREE: Quit the right hand.

Order arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle at the sight or just above it with the right hand.

TWO: Guiding the rifle with the left, bring the rifle down to the right side of the body, butt of the stock on the ground and held against the body.

THREE: Quit the left hand.

Shoulder arms (4) - ONE: Seize the rifle with the right hand.

TWO: Cant the rifle straight up, catching it just above the action. The right forearm should be parallel to the ground.

THREE: Swing the rifle into the left shoulder, taking the butt with the left hand.

FOUR: Quit the right hand, bringing it sharply down to the side.

Trail arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle at the sight or just above it with the right hand.
TWO: Guiding the rifle with the left, bring the rifle down to the right side of the body.
Held in the right hand, the rifle should be parallel to the ground.
THREE: Quit the left hand.

Shoulder arms (2) - ONE: Bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.
TWO: Quit the right hand.

Present arms (3) - ONE: Twist the rifle 90° to the right in the left hand, grabbing it at the wrist in the same moment with the right hand.
TWO: Hoist up the rifle in front of the body high enough that you can see through the trigger. The left hand will be held against the rifle while the right does the supporting, keeping the elbows in close together.
THREE: Step back with the right foot and sharply bring the rifle down, grasping it with the left hand that the forearm is parallel to the ground. The right hand will be at the wrist, between the thumb and hand, fingers extended.

Shoulder arms (2) - ONE: Step forward with the right foot, back into position, and bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.
TWO: Quit the right hand.

Port arms (2) - ONE: Twist the rifle 90° to the right in the left hand, grabbing it at the wrist in the same moment with the right hand.
TWO: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle. The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.

Shoulder arms (2) - ONE: Bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.
TWO: Quit the right hand.

Charge arms (3) - ONE: Twist the rifle 90° to the right in the left hand, grabbing it at the wrist in the same moment with the right hand.
TWO: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle. The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.
THREE: Bring the rifle down sharply to the right side, letting it fall into the left hand with a loud "Hah!" The butt of the rifle should be up against the right thigh.

Shoulder arms (3) - ONE: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle ("Port arms"). The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.
TWO: Bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.
THREE: Quit the right hand.

Rifle Inspection

"Prepare for Rifle Inspection. Port-arms!" (4) - ONE: Twist the rifle 90° to the right in the left hand, grabbing it at the wrist in the same moment with the right hand.
TWO: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle ("Port arms"). The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.
THREE: Open the breech, keep the thumb in the lever.
FOUR: Quit the lever and grasp the rifle at the wrist with the right hand.

The commanding officer or non-com will then inspect the weapons to ensure they are unloaded and clean. Close the breech after inspection by pulling the trigger of the Martini. Return the right hand to the wrist of the rifle.

Shoulder arms (2) - ONE: Bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.
TWO: Quit the right hand.

Order arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle at the sight or just above it with the right hand.
TWO: Guiding the rifle with the left, bring the rifle down to the right side of the body, butt of the stock on the ground and held against the body.
THREE: Quit the left hand.

Ease arms (2) - ONE: Grasp the rifle with the right hand just below the muzzle.
TWO: Step back with the right foot and push the rifle forward by extending the right arm.

Bayonets

Originally, the Martini-Henry had a 1853 Enfield bayonet, 17" long, with the socket "bushed" to fit the smaller barrel. It was the opinion of many officers that this was not long enough to be effective. In 1876 a 25" triangular bayonet was created for the Martini and used successfully from then on. The bayonet has a socket tube with a locking ring to go around the lug. It is almost identical to the Enfield version, but longer by eight inches. The orders to fix bayonets are somewhat unusual, but described below.

Fixing -

At the word **Fix! (2)** - ONE: With the right hand, grasp the rifle just below the muzzle. With the left hand, palm out, take the bayonet socket between the thumb and forefinger.
TWO: Without moving the position of the hand, jerk the bayonet downwards, in the

scabbard and frog, so that it is almost parallel to the ground.

At the word **Bayonets! (3)** - ONE: Push the rifle forward, as in the position of "Ease arms" with the right hand. At the same time, draw out the bayonet and hold it just above the muzzle.

TWO: Fix the bayonet onto the muzzle and secure the locking ring. Once done, keep the left hand at the muzzle.

THREE: Quit the left hand to the side, bring the rifle crisply back into the position of "Order".

Un-Fixing -

Un-Fix Bayonets! (3) - ONE: With the right hand, bring the rifle butt down between the legs, holding it in place with the heels and knees. Bring both hands up to the muzzle.

TWO: With the left hand holding the rifle steady, unfix the bayonet with the right and return it to the scabbard. Bring the right hand back up to the muzzle.

THREE: Bring the rifle back to the right side and resume the position of "Order."



Firing Procedure

Shoulder arms (4) - ONE: Seize the rifle with the right hand.

TWO: Cant the rifle straight up, catching it just above the action. The right forearm should be parallel to the ground.

THREE: Swing the rifle into the left shoulder, taking the butt with the left hand.

FOUR: Quit the right hand, bringing it sharply down to the side.

"Company will fire two volleys at 100 yards."

Ready (2) - ONE: Twist and grab the rifle at the wrist with the right hand.

Simultaneously, right-face the body 90°.

TWO: Step forward with left foot approximately 12" and bring the rifle down into the "Charge" with a loud "HAH!"

Load (1) - ONE: Open the ammunition pouch on your waist belt and load the rifle, keeping your head and eyes down while doing so. Bring the head up, looking forward, when you have finished loading so the officer knows.

Present (2) - ONE: Bring the rifle up into the shoulder and take aim. You have two "beats" to acquire your target.

TWO: Pull the trigger and fire the rifle.

Once fired, instantly bring the rifle back down and begin reloading for the next volley. Bring the head up when you have finished loading.

Present (2) - ONE: Bring the rifle up into the shoulder and take aim. You have two "beats" to acquire your target.

TWO: Pull the trigger and fire the rifle.

"Cease firing!" - Be sure the rifle is unloaded, close the breech, close the ammo pouch, keep the head DOWN..

Ready (1) - Bring the head up, alert and ready.

Shoulder arms (3) - ONE: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle ("Port arms"). The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.

TWO: Bring the rifle up into the left shoulder with the right hand, grasping the butt with the left hand.

THREE: Quit the right hand.

Rear Ranks

Rear rank does the same firing procedures, however in all appropriate cases, he will bring rifle butt up under the armpit, not down on the thigh as the man in the front rank does. When told "Company will fire a volley..." the rear rank steps to the right, so that the left half of his body is covered by his front file partner and the right half of his body is exposed to safely fire the rifle. Once the volleys are fired and the order to "Shoulder arms" is given, the rear rank will step to the left, back into line on the second beat of "Shoulder arms."

Kneeling

"Front rank kneeling, ready" (2) - ONE: Twist and grab the rifle at the wrist with the right hand. Simultaneously, right-face the body 90°.

TWO: Come down on the right knee with a loud "HAH!" The left foot will be on the ground, left elbow upon it. The butt of the rifle will be against the right thigh, not to touch the ground.

All firing procedure is the same.

Shoulder arms (2) ONE: Rise up and bring the rifle into the shoulder, gripping the butt with the left hand.

TWO: Quit the right hand.

Order arms (3) - ONE: Seize the rifle at the sight or just above it with the right hand.

TWO: Guiding the rifle with the left, bring the rifle down to the right side of the body, butt of the stock on the ground and held against the body.

THREE: Quit the left hand.



Bayonet Exercise

"Company, commence bayonet exercise!"

The number two files (every other file) will march five paces forward and halt. No other verbal commands will be given.

Charge arms (4) - ONE: Twist the rifle 90° to the right in the left hand, grabbing it at the wrist in the same moment with the right hand.

TWO: Bring the rifle before the body, held across the chest at about a 60° angle. The left hand should make a slight slap when the rifle falls upon it, the right hand securely grasping the weapon at the wrist, forearm parallel to the ground.

THREE: Bring the rifle down sharply to the right side, letting it fall into the left hand with a loud "Hah!" The butt of the rifle should be up against the right thigh.

FOUR: Step back one pace with the right foot, knees slightly bent.

Forward Attack (2) - ONE: Thrust the bayonet forward.

TWO: Bring the rifle down to position of "Charge arms."

Low Attack (3) - ONE: Bring the rifle butt upwards, rotating the rifle so that the sling is "up".

TWO: Thrust down, rotating the rifle to the natural position.

THREE: Return to position of the first beat.

High Cavalry Attack Right Side (3) - ONE: Turn the rifle about, the bayonet pointing upwards about 60°, slings down.

TWO: Push forward and upwards.

THREE: Return to position of the first beat.

High Cavalry Attack Left Side (2) - ONE: Hoist the rifle up over the head, sling facing "up" and angled to the left.

TWO: Bring the rifle down to position of "Charge arms."

Forward Attack (3) - ONE: Bring the rifle back, rotated so the sling faces up.

TWO: With a loud "HAH!" thrust the bayonet forward, in so doing rotating the rifle to the natural position.

THREE: Draw the rifle back to the position of the first beat.

Without waiting to be told and keeping the rhythm, bring the rifle down to the position of "Charge arms." Next count, step forward with the right foot, bringing the feet back into line. Next count, bring the rifle into the "Port arms" position. Next count, shoulder arms. Next count, Number Ones, or rear ranks, advance five paces and form a line with the front rank. The Bayonet Exercise is completed.



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