

**Title:** Basic M4 Carbine Course- Lesson 3

**Type:** Dry Practice (No live ammunition)

**Time:** 2 hours

**Venue:** Weapon Training Classroom

**Students:** 12

**Student Equipment:** 12 X M4 Carbines

12 X USGI 30 round M4 magazines

6 X dummy 5.56mm rounds per student (72)

**Instructor Equipment:** 1 X M4 Carbine

2 X USGI M4 30 round magazines

6 X dummy 5.56mm rounds

**Assistant Instructors (AI'S):** 2 (Names)

### **PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES:**

Prior to arrival of students:

- Write lesson title on board.
- Set up classroom chairs.
- If used, load/check PowerPoint.

On arrival of students:

- Student Safety Check all weapons.
- Check all magazines, no live rounds.
- Safety declaration, check no live rounds brought into classroom.
- Seat.
- Place 1 X M4 carbine, 2 x 30 round magazines under chair.
- Designate Safe Direction for the student practice.

### **CONDUCT OF LESSON**

*This lesson, Basic M4 Carbine-Lesson 3, teaches Fundamentals of Marksmanship for the M4 Carbine, firing positions, loading and unloading the weapon. I am the primary instructor (if first time with students, give name and background) and I will be assisted by (introduce the assistant instructors).*

#### **Review**

**EXPLAIN-** *The previous lesson, Lesson 2, covered the extremely important safety rules, disassembly, cleaning, maintenance, reassembly and function check for the M4 Carbine.*

**PRACTICE AS MUCH AS TIME PERMITS (Have students disassemble and reassemble the weapon, carrying out a Safety Check first, with instructors correcting as required.)**

*Here are some questions for you:*

*What are the Cardinal Safety Rules?*

#### **Introduction**

**EXPLAIN-** *We want to control movement in the carbine as it fires, to improve accuracy. We want to manage the recoil so we can shoot as quickly as possible. We use the combat fundamentals and firing positions to better control movement that exists in our bodies and the weapon. Because we are dealing with a well-designed, small caliber rifle, we can effectively control movement and recoil, allowing rapid and accurate fire.*

Loading and unloading the M4 Carbine safely is a fundamental necessity to using the weapon effectively.

### **Objective**

**EXPLAIN-** At the conclusion of this lesson, you will know the standing, kneeling, battle crouch and prone firing positions, the Fundamentals of Marksmanship as applied to the M4 Carbine, and how to load and unload the weapon.

### **Firing Positions**

**EXPLAIN & DEMONSTRATE-** We are already familiar with the positive control or Ready Position for the M4 Carbine and moving into any firing position starts from and ends in this position. Except during training, all firing positions are the choice of the firer and the decision on which to use will depend on factors such as available cover, range to target and whether firer is moving or about to move. All firing positions are built around the natural point of aim for the shooter.

- The standing position for shooting, is square on to the target similar to a boxing stance. Feet are shoulder width apart, toes pointed towards the target, with the support side foot slightly forward of the strong foot. The knees are slightly flexed, weight evenly balanced on the balls of the feet and the feet flat on the ground. Lean slightly forward at the waist. This is similar to the natural fight or flight position human being naturally adopt under extreme stress.
- The kneeling position from the waist up is exactly the same as the standing position. From the waist down, the firer simply places the knees where the feet had been for the standing position. The elbows can rest on the knees, forward or rearward of the knee, taking care not to place bone on bone as this creates increased unsteadiness, or they can be kept off the knees to facilitate rapid target acquisition left or right.
- The battle crouch or squatting position is a steadier position and lower profile than the standing position but not as steady as the kneeling position. The only difference between the two is the knees do not go to the ground in the battle crouch, the firer remains on the feet.
- The prone or laid down position is the steadiest and most accurate shooting position. The firer lays down directly behind the weapon with both heels flat on the ground. The weapon is supported in the shoulder by both elbows propped up and raising the weapon into the shoulder. The bottom of the magazine can rest on the ground but no undue weight should be added.
- For all firing positions, grip the weapon firmly, not too tight. The shooting hand holds the pistol grip of the weapon with the trigger finger pointing forward along the side of the receiver. The thumb rests on the Safety Selector Switch on the opposite side of the receiver. Left-handed shooters rest the left thumb on the Safety Selector Switch and wrap it around the pistol grip prior to shooting. The rear of the butt sits tightly into the shoulder pocket The non-shooting hand grips the Hand Guard and both hands pull back slightly into the shoulder. The weapon comes up and the head comes down to rest the cheek on the side of the stock, this is often referred to as cheek weld. Sight picture/sight alignment is rapidly achieved and the shooter is ready to fire.

**Ask if any questions**

**IMITATE, PRACTICE AS MUCH AS TIME PERMITS (Demonstrate the positions again and have the students slowly imitate each position with instructors correcting where necessary. When satisfied positions are correct, allow students to adopt the positions quickly and then allow to practice in their own time with oversight.)**

## **Fundamentals of Combat Marksmanship**

**EXPLAIN & DEMONSTRATE-** Although similar in many aspects, combat marksmanship differs from traditional marksmanship in its balance between speed and accuracy. You must be accurate enough to hit your target but do so as quickly as possible. The fundamentals of combat marksmanship are designed to achieve an acceptable level of combat marksmanship in the shortest time. The fundamentals of combat marksmanship for the M4 Carbine are:

- *Sight Alignment for iron sights is the relationship between the front and rear sights. The top of the front sight is centered in the circle of the rear sight, with equal amounts of light showing on all sides. Optical/reticle sights are properly aligned when the reticle or red dot is centered in the tube. Failure to center the reticle or dot in the tube will cause the round to strike in the direction of the offset (as much as 4 inches at 100 meters). Iron sight and optical/reticle sights are independent of each other and are not used together but can be co-witnessed. For combat shooting, both eyes should remain open at all times if possible. The focus point for iron sights is the top, tip of front sight post. Focusing on the front sight post will cause the sights to come into proper alignment. A disadvantage to iron sights is the target will be out of focus, however it is more important for the sights to be in alignment that to clearly see the target. Optical/reticle sights provide the advantage of both the target and reticle being in focus.*
- *Sight Picture combines the relationship of sight alignment to the target. With correct sight alignment, the top of the front sight post should bisect the center of mass of the target. The front sight should be in sharp focus. The target and rear sight should be slightly blurred. For optical/reticle sights, the reticle or red dot, centered in the tube, is placed center mass. In combat shooting, center mass of the target is the center of the biggest part of the target showing.*
- *Trigger Control is a steadily increasing pressure exerted on the trigger straight to the rear. If possible, the trigger should be placed between the tip and the first knuckle of the shooting finger. The shooting finger should maintain contact with the trigger at all times during shot release or firing. The trigger pressed straight to the rear and held with minimal disturbance to the sight picture.*
- *Follow Through are the actions that occur after the shot has been fired. These actions are not sequential but are carried out as quickly as possible in order to be ready to fire follow on, accurate shots. The shooter reacquires sight picture, the finger rides the trigger forward without losing contact until a click is heard or felt and the sear is reset. It is not necessary for the trigger to move any further forward. The shooter assesses the need for follow up shots.*
- *Breathing correctly is important to traditional marksmanship but in combat marksmanship, controlling breathing is not an issue to accuracy, especially at close ranges. As distance increases, breathing control becomes more important and the trigger press should be completed in the natural pause in breathing. Under most combat marksmanship circumstances, breath normally.*

**Ask if any questions**

## **Loading**

**EXPLAIN & DEMONSTRATE (Using a magazine containing three dummy rounds)-** The loading procedure is not a drill and, like the Safety Check, should be conducted deliberately with attention to the actions being performed. The steps to the loading procedure are as follows:

- *Maintaining positive control of the weapon, point the weapon in a safe direction. Keep your finger off the trigger.*
- *Ensure/place the Selector Safety Switch to the safe position.*

- Grasp the charging handle, vigorously pull the charging handle to the rear and watch to see if anything is ejected from the ejection port. Holding the bolt carrier group to the rear, press the bottom of the bolt release and ease the bolt carrier group forward under control until it stops. The bolt carrier group is now locked to the rear and the charging handle can be pushed all the way forward.
- Take a loaded magazine and check the top rounds are seated correctly.
- Insert the magazine into the magazine well until you feel/hear a click. Ensure it is correctly seated by giving the magazine a slight tug.
- Hit the bolt release with the heel of the non-shooting hand allowing the bolt carrier group to go forward. Left-handed shooters reach over the top of the receiver and use the fingertips of the right hand to hit the bolt release.
- Tap the Bolt Assist a couple of times to ensure the Bolt Carrier Group is seated.
- The weapon is now considered loaded. It has a magazine with rounds attached and there is a round in the chamber.

### **Unloading**

**EXPLAIN & DEMONSTRATE (Using a magazine containing three dummy rounds)-** The unloading procedure for the M4 is almost the same as the Safety Check. The only difference is the weapon is known to be loaded. The unloading procedure is as follows:

- Maintaining positive control of the weapon, point the weapon in a safe direction. Keep your finger off the trigger.
- Place the Selector Safety Switch to the Safe position.
- Press the magazine release and remove it. Put it away.
- Grasp the charging handle, vigorously pull the charging handle to the rear and watch to see if anything is ejected from the ejection port. Allow the charging handle to go forward and vigorously pull it to the rear two or three times more. Holding the bolt carrier group to the rear, press the bottom of the bolt release and ease the bolt carrier group forward under control until it stops. The bolt carrier group is now locked to the rear and the charging handle can be pushed all the way forward.
- Look and feel to ensure there is no round in the chamber. Use the index finger of the non-shooting hand up through the magazine well to feel for an empty chamber.
- When satisfied the chamber is empty, hit the bolt release with the heel of the non-shooting hand allowing the bolt carrier group to go forward.
- The weapon is now considered safe and empty.

In some training environments, M4 Carbine users are required to leave the Bolt Carrier Group locked to the rear and the Selector Safety Switch on Safe while moving around or when grounding weapons on a firing line. In these environments complete the Safety Check and then perform the following additional steps:

- Grasp the charging handle, vigorously pull the charging handle to the rear and watch to see if anything is ejected from the ejection port.
- Holding the bolt carrier group to the rear, press the bottom of the bolt release and ease the bolt carrier group forward under control until it stops. The bolt carrier group is now locked to the rear and the charging handle can be pushed all the way forward.
- Place the Selector Safety Switch on Safe.

**Ask if any questions**

**IMITATE, PRACTICE AS MUCH AS TIME PERMITS (Demonstrate the Load and Unload again and have the students slowly imitate each step of the procedures in time with the instructor. When satisfied actions are correct, gradually allow students to speed up, then allow to practice in their own time with oversight.)**

**Final practice, if any**

**Ask if any questions**

**Ask the students questions for final confirmation**

**Summary**

**EXPLAIN-** *Successful combat marksmanship is nothing more than mastering the basics of well-aimed, deliberate fire. If you master your ability (potential) for rapid, aimed fire in training, you will be able to fire accurately and as fast as you need to in combat. Using the firing positions correctly, applying the combat marksmanship fundamentals all aid in winning a gunfight. Remember, loading and unloading your carbine are not drills, take your time and do it right.*

**Look Forward**

**EXPLAIN-** *Your next lesson is Lesson 4 which covers the Emergency Reload and Immediate Action procedures.*