

**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
Martial Arts Center of Excellence  
The Basic School  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
Quantico, Virginia 22134

**DETAILED OUTLINE**

**KNIFE TECHNIQUES**

**INTRODUCTION** \_\_\_\_\_(3 MIN)

1. GAIN ATTENTION. When armed with a rifle, the Marine is issued a bayonet; when armed with a pistol, the Marine is issued a K-bar. To be truly prepared for combat, the Marine must be trained in knife fighting techniques should the situation arise. Knife fighting is in itself an art. The objective in this course and the focus of your instruction is to provide Marines with the knowledge and experience with a knife to cause enough damage and massive trauma to stop an opponent and end an engagement. This instruction will cover knife techniques against an unarmed opponent. When armed with a knife, or any other weapon, the user must use it responsibly...how many of us would allow our two-year old child to play with a knife? As warriors, we need to be act responsibly both on and off duty in a variety of areas. One of these areas is sexual responsibility and we will discuss sexually responsible behavior in this class.

2. OVERVIEW. This lesson will cover knife techniques including angles of attack; target areas of the body; grip, stance, movement; vertical slash, and vertical thrust, and sexual responsibility.

3. INTRODUCE LEARNING OBJECTIVES. The Terminal Learning Objectives and Enabling Learning Objectives pertaining to this lesson are as follows:

a. TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE.

(1) Given a training knife and without the aid of the references, execute knife techniques in accordance with the references. (8550.01.15)

(2) Without the aid of the reference, discuss sexual responsibility in accordance with the references. (8550.01.28)

b. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES.

- (1) Given a training knife and without the aid of the references, **execute a vertical slash** in accordance with the references. (8550.01.15a)
- (2) Given a training knife and without the aid of the references, **execute a vertical thrust** in accordance with the references. (8550.01.15b)
- (3) Without the aid of references, **discuss the MCMAP discipline associated with sexual responsibility** in accordance with the references.  
(8550.01.28a)
- (4) Without the aid of references, **discuss the five values associated with sexual responsibility** in accordance with the references.  
(8550.01.28b)

4. METHOD/MEDIA. This class will be taught by EDIP and guided discussion.

5. EVALUATION. Topics from this lesson will be evaluated by performance and oral examination when requirements are met.

**BODY** \_\_\_\_\_ **(55 MIN)**

**1. INTRODUCTION TO KNIFE TRAINING** (5 MINS)

- a. Purpose of Knife Fighting. The purpose of knife fighting is to cause enough damage and massive trauma to stop an opponent.
- b. Safety Equipment. To safely conduct knife training, each student should be provided a training knife, eye protection, and groin protection.
- c. Safety Precautions During Training. To prevent injury to students during training, ensure the following:
  - (1) Ensure students do not execute the techniques at full speed or with full body contact.

(2) Conduct all practical application periods using only training knives.

(3) Train the practical application portion of knife techniques in two stages:

(a) Begin with students executing the techniques "in the air." Do not allow students to make contact on an opponent or a target during the initial stages of training. At this stage, students should focus on acquiring skills.

(b) As students become more proficient, allow them to pair up and face each other as they perform the techniques so they can acquire a target. Both the student and the opponent are stationary. There should be no contact between students at this stage.

## **2. KNIFE FIGHTING**

(20 MIN)

a. Angles of Attack. There are six angles from which an attack with a knife can be launched:

(1) Vertical strike coming straight down on an opponent.

(2) Forward diagonal strike coming in at a 45-degree angle to the opponent.

(3) Reverse diagonal strike coming in at a 45-degree angle to the opponent.

(4) Forward horizontal strike coming in parallel to the deck.

(5) Reverse horizontal strike coming in parallel to the deck.

(6) Forward thrust coming in a straight linear line to the opponent.

b. Target Areas of the Body. In any confrontation, the parts of the opponent's body that are exposed or readily accessible will vary. The goal in a knife fight is to attack

soft body vital targets that are readily accessible such as the face, the sides and front of the neck, and the lower abdomen or groin.

(1) Neck. Carotid arteries are good target areas because they are not covered by body armor or natural protection.

(2) Lower Abdomen or Groin. The lower abdomen and groin region are not covered by body armor.

(3) Aorta. The aorta, if not covered by body armor, is an excellent target which, if struck, can prove fatal in a matter of seconds or minutes.

(4) Secondary Targets -- The Extremities. There are additional, secondary target areas that will cause a lot of bleeding by severing an artery. These target areas are not immediately fatal, but will often become fatal if left unattended.

(a) Attacks on secondary targets such as the legs can cause a great deal of trauma and prove fatal. For example, the femoral artery located in the thigh is a large artery which, if cut, will cause extensive blood loss.

(b) Attacks on the brachial artery, located between the biceps and triceps on the inside of the arm, can cause extensive bleeding and damage.

(c) Attacks on the radial and ulnar nerves of the arm can cause extensive bleeding and damage.

c. Movement. Consider a 360-degree circle around an opponent. You can move anywhere in this circle to gain a tactical advantage and make accessible different target areas of your opponent's body.

(1) The worst place to be in a confrontation is directly in front of an opponent. The opponent can rely on his forward momentum and linear power to create a tactical advantage.

(2) When facing an opponent, movement is made in a 45

degree angle to either side of the opponent.

Moving at a 45-degree angle is the best way to both avoid an opponent's strike and to put yourself in the best position to attack an opponent.

d. Wearing of the Knife. When armed with a rifle, the Marine is issued a bayonet; when armed with a pistol, the Marine is issued a K-bar.

(1) In either case, the knife must be worn where it is easily accessible and where it can best be retained.

(2) It is recommended the knife be worn on the weak side hip, blade down. The K-bar should be placed so its blade is facing forward.

(3) The knife should be placed behind the magazine pouch where it is easily accessible but not easily grabbed by an opponent.

(4) Ensure the knife is not worn next to a canteen because the canteen can slide on the cartridge belt, covering the knife and making it inaccessible.

e. Grip. Your grip on the knife should be natural. Grasp the knife's grip with your fingers wrapped around the grip naturally as it is pulled out of its sheath. This is commonly known as a hammer grip; the blade end of the knife is always facing the opponent.

f. Stance. The basic warrior stance serves as the foundation for initiating knife techniques.

(1) The left hand serves as a vertical shield protecting the ribs or the head and neck.

(2) The right elbow is bent with the blade pointing forward toward the opponent's head. This position serves as an index point, where all techniques are initiated.

(a) The weapon should be held at a level approximately from the top of the belt to chest high.

(b) The weapon should be kept in close to the body to

facilitate weapon retention.

g. Principles of Knife Fighting.

(1) Always execute movements with the knife blade within a box, shoulder-width across from your neck down to your waistline. The opponent has a greater chance of blocking your attack if you bring the blade in a wide sweeping movement to the opponent. Your attacks should close with the opponent, coming straight to your target.

(2) Always keep the knife's blade tip forward and pointed toward the opponent.

(3) Apply full body weight and power in each of the knife techniques. Full body weight should be put into the attack in the direction of the blade's movement (slash or thrust). Applying constant forward pressure with your body and blade will keep the opponent off-balanced.

### 3. KNIFE TECHNIQUES

(20 MIN)

a. Slashing Techniques. Slashing techniques are used to close with an enemy. Slashing techniques distract the opponent or cause enough damage to close with him. Targets are usually the limbs or any portion of the body that is presented.

(1) Vertical Slash Technique. The slashing motion follows a vertical line straight down through the target. To train the vertical slashing technique, have the student:

(a) Stand facing your opponent.

(b) Thrust your right hand out and bring the weapon straight down on the opponent.

(c) Continue dragging the knife down through the opponent's body. Maintain contact on the opponent's body with the blade of the knife.

(d) Resume the modified basic warrior stance.

b. Thrusting Techniques. The primary objective when

fighting with a knife is to insert the blade into an opponent to cause extensive damage and trauma. This is done with a thrusting technique. Thrusting techniques are more effective than slashing techniques because of the damage they can cause. However, slashing techniques are used to close with the enemy to get in proximity where a thrusting technique can be used.

(1) Vertical Thrust. The thrusting motion follows a vertical line straight up through the target (low into the abdomen region or high into the neck). To train the vertical thrust, have the student:

- (a) Stand facing your opponent.
- (b) Thrust your right hand toward the target, inserting the knife blade straight into the opponent.
- (c) Pull the knife out of the opponent.
- (d) Resume the basic warrior stance.

c. Considerations for Using the Bayonet and K-Bar. The K-bar is a sharp, single-bladed knife designed for cutting and tearing. The bayonet is a dual-bladed knife with a narrower and duller blade. The design of the bayonet makes it more effective for thrusting motions rather than slashing motions.

#### **4. SEXUAL RESPONSIBILITY**

(15 MINS)

As a warrior each Marine's conduct should always be above reproach. Our dealings with others should always be fair, honest and above reproach. This includes our sexual relationships. During your class on the sexual responsibility of the Marine you (learned) (will learn) about sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted diseases, safe sex practices and the Marine Corps policy on pregnancy and parenting. This is vital information that will help you to make correct decisions about your sexual conduct. However, the most important factor effecting your choices should be your moral foundation as a warrior, this is your character.

During your development as a Marine and as you learn the skills of the Marine Corps Martial Art you should be strengthening your character as well as your mind and body. You should not only understand what our Core Values are but should put them into practice as part of your daily life. No one

is asking you to take a vow of celibacy, like every other choice in life you can choose to do the right or wrong thing. Entering into a sexual relationship with a member of the opposite sex is a natural part of being human. It is the type of relationship, and our actions that determine whether it is right or wrong. Let's discuss some of the values involved with our sexual conduct.

Duty. As a warrior your duty is to conduct yourself properly at all times. Your actions should be guided by our Core Values.

Discipline. For each Marine this is self-discipline. The ability to control our actions and not give in to pressure. Have the discipline to practice safe sex, avoid promiscuity and take responsibility for your actions.

Pride. Pride in yourself and the Marine Corps. Remember that certain sexual conduct and practices can bring discredit upon the Marine Corps as well as shame and embarrassment to you and your family. This should always be a consideration when making important life decisions.

Moral Courage. Having the courage to be honest in your relationships. This includes the courage to take responsibility for your actions if the outcome of your sexual relationship results in pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease.

Commitment. Understand that we have committed ourselves as Marine to do the right thing but if we make a mistake we admit to it and live with the consequences of our actions.

**SUMMARY** \_\_\_\_\_(3 MIN)

Armed with a knife, a trained Marine with the warrior mindset will survive on the battlefield. Aggressively thrusting and slashing will overwhelm an opponent, allowing the Marine to continue his mission. A Marine is a warrior whose conduct and actions are above reproach in all that he or she does. We do not practice situational ethics by which we follow our Core Values only when it suits us but ignore them because something feels good. The true warrior understands that its not the easy fight or the simple decisions that make him a warrior it's the tough ones that show how much of a man or woman we are.