

ADVANCE SHEET

MILITARY SYMBOLS

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MILITARY SYMBOLS

INTRODUCTION:

A military symbol is a sign composed of a diagram, number, letter, abbreviation, color, or combination thereof, which is used to identify a particular military unit, activity, or installation by size, branch, arm, duty, equipment, parent unit, and location.

What is a UNIT, ACTIVITY, INSTALLATION, BRANCH, ARM, DUTY, and PARENT UNIT? Without a knowledge of these, military symbols would be meaningless.

In order to work with and better understand military symbols, it is necessary for the student to be familiar with the basic organizational structure of the US Army. (See pages 7 through 9.)

The purpose of this Advance Sheet is to provide essential information in the form of a Glossary of Terms applicable to military symbols. In addition, a brief explanation of interpreting symbols is presented. Also, there is a listing of Branches, Armies, Corps, Divisions, Regiments, and Parent Units.

REFERENCES:

- AR 120-5, Army Field Commanders, DA
- AR 220-5, Designations and Classifications of Units, DA
- AR 220-346, Field Organizations, DA
- AR 320-5, Dictionary of United States Army Terms, DA
- AR 614-100, Combat Arm Details, DA
- Army Information Digest, Feb, Sep, Dec 64; Jul, Aug, Sep 65.
- FM 21-30, Military Symbols, DA, Jun 65.
- FM 61-100, The Division, DA, Jul 65.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS APPLICABLE TO ARMY

MILITARY SYMBOLS

Unit (organization-element) - Any military structure prescribed by competent authority.

TOE - Table of organization and equipment authorized by the Department of the Army which prescribes the mission, structure, personnel, and equipment for a military unit.

Activity - A unit performing a function or mission; e.g., service, recruiting, schooling, naval station, observation post.

Installation - A fixed location with its buildings and all improvements under the control of the Department of the Army used to carry on activities.

Branch - A combat arm or service of the Army.

Combat Arm - A branch specifically designated to perform combat or combat support missions.

Squad - Smallest unit in the military structure, normally 10 men.

Section - Unit larger than a squad but smaller than a platoon.

Platoon - Two or more squads, normally four squads.

Detachment - (For the purpose of military symbols) a platoon size unit separated from its main organization for duty elsewhere.

Company - Unit on a command level above a platoon but below a battalion, normally four platoons.

Battery - Company size tactical unit of the Artillery branch/arm.

Battalion - Unit composed of a headquarters and two or more companies or batteries.

Air/armored cavalry - Combat units with a high degree of mobility, fire-power, shock action, and multiple communications especially designed for reconnaissance, security, and combat operations using organic air or surface modes of transportation.

Regiment - An air/armored cavalry unit on a command level above a battalion and below a brigade usually commanded by a Colonel.

Squadron - An air/armored cavalry battalion size unit.

Troop - An air/armored cavalry company size unit.

Group - A flexible unit composed of two or more battalions on a command level above a battalion and below a brigade.

Brigade - A unit to which groups, and/or battalion and smaller unit(s) are attached to meet requirements; usually smaller than a division.

Command - Normally a brigade size unit composed of groups and/or battalions and smaller units which engages primarily in service support activities.

Division - A tactical unit larger than a brigade and smaller than a corps.

Corps - An organization larger than a division and smaller than a field army; consists of two or more divisions together with auxiliary arms and services; branch.

Army - Largest tactical unit consisting of two or more corps and supporting troops; field army.

Army group - Several field armies under a designated commander.

PROCEDURE FOR INTERPRETING/CONSTRUCTING MILITARY SYMBOLS

The military symbol is a concise diagram; therefore, it is important to understand the terms applicable to such symbols to get the full meaning from them.

Study the preparatory information below and the examples should be easy to follow:

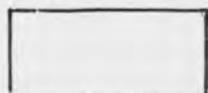
Preparatory information

For the purpose of the examples to follow, only necessary information for their construction is presented here.

1. The size of a unit is shown by placing the "size indication" on top of the basic symbol.
2. Subordinate units are placed to the immediate left of the basic symbol separated by slashes.
3. Parent units are placed to the immediate right of the basic symbol followed by higher echelons of command separated by slashes.
4. Some of the military symbols in FM 21-30 are:

a. Troop unit		Rectangle
b. Company, battery, or troop		Vertical staff
c. Battalion or squadron		Two vertical staffs
d. Artillery		Cannon Ball
e. Armor		Tank Track
f. Cavalry		Bandoleer

Example #1



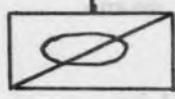
This symbol is a troop unit.



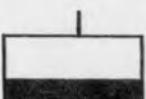
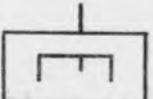
This is a company size unit, but you do not know if it is a company, battery, or troop.



This is an Artillery BATTERY. Battery - that company or troop size unit of the Artillery.



This is an Armored/Cavalry TROOP. Troop - that company/battery size unit of the Armored/Air Cavalry.

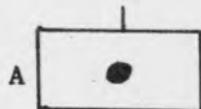


These are all companies.

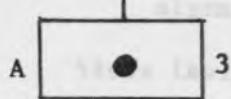
Reasoning: A battery is indicative only of the Artillery. A troop is indicative only of the Air/Armored Cavalry.

Assumption: All other company, battery, or troop "size indications" must be companies.

Example #2



This battery has now been identified as Battery A of an artillery unit.



Further identification is Battery A, 3rd Artillery Battalion

Reasoning: See paragraph 3 in 'Preparatory information'. A battalion is the next higher command above a company, battery, or troop.

Assumption: The only other battalion "size indication" is a squadron. The squadron is indicative only of the Air/Armored Cavalry. All other units on this level of command must be battalions.



Battery A, 3d Battalion, 14th Artillery.
(3d Bn, 14th Arty is the parent unit.)

BRANCHES, ARMIES, CORPS, DIVISIONS

1. Branches.

a. There are thirteen basic branches of the US Army, of which five are Combat Arms.

		SYMBOL
(1)	Adjutant General's Corps (Administration)	A G
(2)	Armor (Combat)	
(3)	Army Intelligence and Security	AIS
(4)	Artillery (Combat)	
(5)	Chemical Corps	
(6)	Corps of Engineers (Combat)	
(7)	Finance Corps (Pay)	
(8)	Infantry (Combat)	
(9)	Military Police Corps	M P
(10)	Ordnance Corps (Maintenance & Munitions)	
(11)	Quartermaster Corps (Supply)	
(12)	Signal Corps (Combat)	
(13)	Transportation Corps	

b. There are nine special branches of the US Army.

- (1) Army Medical Specialist
- (2) Army Nurse Corps
- (3) Dental Corps
- (4) Medical Corps
- (5) Medical Service
- (6) Veterinary Corps
- (7) Chaplains Corps

(8) Judge Advocate General's Corps

(9) Women's Army Corps

2. Armies - There are seven Armies of the US military forces:

(1) First Army - Fort Mead, Maryland

(2) Third Army - Fort McPherson, Georgia

(3) Fourth Army - Fort Sam Houston, Texas

(4) Fifth Army - Fort Sheridan, Illinois

(5) Sixth Army - Presidio of San Francisco, California

(6) Seventh Army - Heidelberg, Germany

(7) Eighth Army - Seoul, Korea

3. Corps - numbered with Roman numerals: I, II, III, etc.

4. Divisions -

a. There are 17 divisions in the active US Army:*

(1) 1st through 5th, 7th through 9th, 24th and 25th Infantry

(2) 1st through 4th Armored

(3) 82nd and 101st Airborne

(4) 1st Cavalry (Airmobile)

(5) NOTE: ROAD (Reorganization Objective Army Division)

All active Army divisions today are organized under ROAD.

*Under the ROAD concept, initially four types of divisions were organized: Infantry, Armored, Airborne, and Mechanized.

A fifth type division was created in July 1965, the 1st Cavalry (Airmobile).

b. The square division of 1917-1939 (two Infantry brigades, each having two Infantry regiments) was organized soon after the United States entered World War I. This square structure and strength of about 28,000 gave the division the striking and staying power necessary for combat in Europe.

c. The triangular division of 1940-1956 (three regiments, each having three battalions; each battalion had three companies; each company had three platoons) was organized as the result of the improved weapons and mechanization in the late 1930's. The structure and the strength of about 15,000 allowed better command and control, and a more flexible division. Under the triangular concept, there were three types of divisions: Infantry, Armored, and Airborne.

d. The pentomic division of 1957-1962 was organized following Russia's explosion of their first tactical atomic weapon. The primary considerations in forming this division were that it should have units that were small, powerful, and self-sustaining. Any massing of troops would be disastrous in an atomic operation. The battle group structure (1400 men; smaller than a regiment, larger than a battalion) met the primary considerations. There were five battle groups each in both the Infantry and Airborne divisions. These battle groups were similar in command structure to the Combat Commands in the Armored Divisions.

e. The ROAD division, 1962-present, was organized because the new structure is thought to be even better than the pentomic. It is more flexible internally and more versatile in employment. The structure consists of a base common to all divisions and the combat battalions vary in numbers and types.

f. The common division base consists of a headquarters and headquarters company, three brigade headquarters and headquarters companies, division artillery, engineer battalion, signal battalion, aviation battalion, armored cavalry squadron, military police company, and a support command.

g. Division trains. Military use of the term "trains" derived from the locomotives and steam engines that supplied the earliest divisions in the US Army. This term was still in use as late as 1961 in the pentomic division even though other type conveyances have replaced the original locomotives. Trains as late as 1961 included a headquarters and band, administration company, medical battalion, ordnance battalion, and quartermaster battalion. Each unit had its own commander. The ROAD concept now has a Support Command to replace the Trains under one commander.

h. Support Command consists of the headquarters and band company, supply and transportation battalion, medical battalion, administration company, and maintenance battalion.

REGIMENTS AND PARENT UNITS

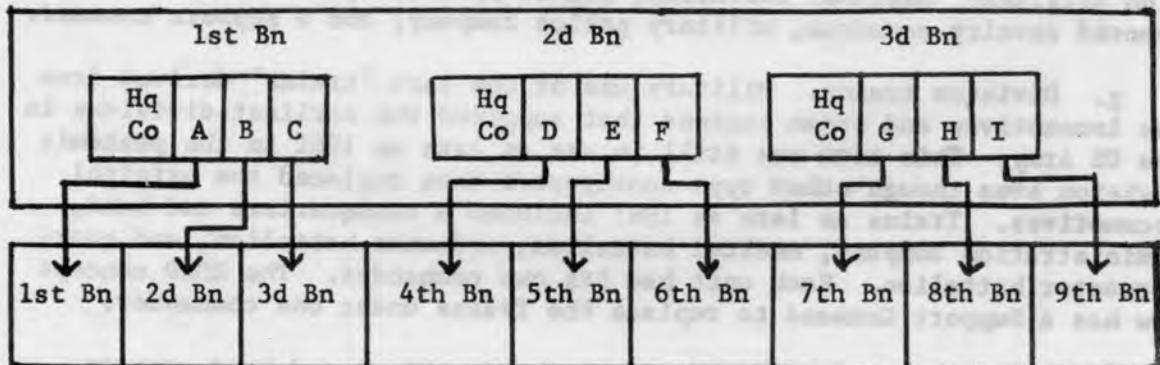
"... to the best of military knowledge, A REGIMENT NEVER LOSES ITS RANK . . ." General George Washington 1775

1. Regiment. The United States Army has only five (5) combat regiments, however, there are over 160 combat regiments on the Army's rolls today. How is that possible?

a. From 1784 to 1917 regiments were the fighting hub of the Army. Even after the division structure was introduced, the regiment remained a distinctive tactical unit. Each regiment had its own motto, colors, and insignia. Changes to the division structure required breaking up the regiment into smaller tactical units to meet the demands of mobility and flexibility. The "parent" regiment from which these smaller units were taken is identified by its distinctive number along with the smaller units number. In this manner the combat regiments proud history is carried on. This method of perpetuating our "Regimental Heritage" was approved by the Secretary of the Army in 1957. It is known as the Combat Arms Regimental System (CARS).

b. Combat Arms Regiments include: Infantry, Armor, Artillery, Cavalry, and Armored Cavalry. An example of "breaking up" a regiment is illustrated as follows:

35th ARMOR REGIMENT (1941 - 1943)



The 35th Armor Regiment had three battalions in 1943; written as 1-35, 2-35, and 3-35.

Under the CARS system only nine (9) Battalions of the 35th Armor are illustrated. Each battalion could subsequently be broken down so that every smaller unit can trace its heritage back to the 35th Armor. Other Regiments are broken down in a similar manner.

c. There are approximately 165 combat regiments on the active Army rolls today; 75 Artillery, 61 Infantry, 9 Cavalry, and 20 Armored. These units are not regimental commands, they are PARENT UNITS of active combat battalions. Each is specifically designated subsequent to the combat battalion designation. Examples:

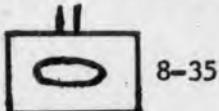
2 - 16 Infantry 4 - 81 Artillery 8 - 35 Armor 6 - 4 Cavalry	}	All Battalion SIZE units
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d. There are five (5) Armored Cavalry Regiments; the 2d, 3d, 6th, 11th, and 14th. These are the only Combat Regimental Commands presently in the Army.

e. The regimental commands in the square, triangular, and early pentomic divisions were eliminated in July 1958. The comparable commands were the Infantry and Airborne division battle groups and the combat commands of the Armored division. The comparable command in the ROAD division is the brigade.

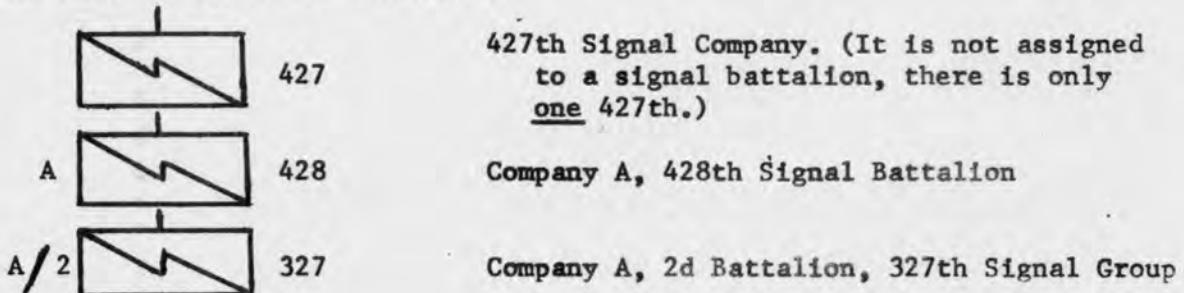
2. Parent Units.

a. In military symbols, Parent Units categorized CARS are always identified by the battalion and the regiment. Example:



8th Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment or 8th of the 35th Armor (Regiment is understood. The size of the unit is Battalion.)

b. IN NON-CARS UNITS, PARENT UNITS ARE THE HIGHEST LIKE UNIT IN THE NORMAL CHAIN OF COMMAND. Examples:



c. Parent units are always placed to the immediate right of the basic symbol.

