

NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS GUIDE

A. General Instructions

1. Notebook: The NCO should provide himself with pencil and notebook in which to enter the names of men forming the details. Orders and instructions given to him verbally should at once be reduced to writing, and not trusted to memory.
2. Parroting commands: NCOs should never repeat commands in formation. If the battalion commander can be heard, then no one (not even officers) parrot the command, if he cannot be heard, then the wing commanders parrot it, if they cannot be heard, then the company commander parrots it, and he should be easily heard among the company.

B. Corporals

1. The corporal should be able to *teach* the School of the Soldier and have a good grasp of the School of the Skirmisher. He is the closest NCO to the private in the ranks and his first and primary concern is the welfare of the men in his care.
2. The duties of a corporal are simple and depend for their successful performance mainly upon his capacity to control and direct soldiers in the performance of their duty. They frequently succeed to the responsibilities of sergeant in his absence and should, therefore, be familiar with his duties. Corporals need to have as much direct contact with the men as possible. While the sergeants may mess together, and even share quarters or camp area together, corporals need to camp and eat with the men in their sections.
3. Corporals should be the first to fall into ranks at roll call or assembly.
4. Drill: Corporals should be thoroughly familiar with Casey's "School of the Soldier" and capable of instructing the men in the ranks both the "School of the Soldier" and the elementary principles of tactics. He should also be familiar with "Drill of the Skirmisher." The section corporal will be in charge of assuring that his section can perform the "School of the Soldier" drill and will drill his section at assigned times.
7. Information: Keep your men informed. Know what is happening and going to happen. Call your men together and explain delays and changes as soon as possible. You should be the source of much of their knowledge.
8. Health: Know the symptoms of heat and cold injuries. Check the men's health frequently. Ensure that they are eating and drinking sufficient water to ward off heat injuries in hot weather.
9. Correcting bad conduct begins with the corporal. Being loud after taps, profane language around women and children, abuse (other than the good-natured kind) in word and deed is unacceptable.
10. Weapons: The corporal is responsible in ensuring that every man in his section cleans his weapon, and that he takes proper care of his weapon in the field. If a weapon needs further maintenance, the section corporal is to take charge it and either make the repair(s) himself or find someone who can make them.

C. Sergeants

1. All sergeants should be able to *teach* "School of the Soldier" and "Drill for Skirmishers," and have a good working knowledge of "School of the Company." They should be able and be prepared to take over as First Sergeant in case of his absence or incapacity.
2. It is difficult to draw the line between the duties of the corporal and those of the sergeant. Sergeants generally have larger details under charge, and have corporals under their direction to assist them. Sergeants are usually entrusted with more responsible duties, and they are supposed to have greater experience, and to approach nearer the commissioned officer in knowledge of all military matters. Sergeants generally have a more general supervision of the men.
3. Posted in the rear of the company when paraded, it is his duty to see that the men pay attention to their duty, preserve order, march properly, and keep closed. In time of battle, it is his duty to keep the men in ranks, not allow them to fall out on any pretext, and to prevent them from misbehaving before the enemy. During the war they were even required to shoot men down if they attempted to run away in times of danger.
4. Other duties: He must see that the men fill their canteens with water before drill or marching out of camp, and that each man has taken care of their weapon, has cartridges, rations, ear protection, etc.

D. First Sergeant

1. The First Sergeant must thoroughly understand and be able to *teach* the School of the Soldier, Skirmisher, and Company and be able to command the company in the absence of an officer. His first duty is to the welfare of the men in the company and to ensure that all the NCOs are kept informed of daily duties required of them.
2. The First Sergeant is in charge of the company, and answers only to the company commander. In reality it is his company more than anyone else's. A company commander sometimes will let the First Sergeant run the company in its daily routine and details. But only if the First Sergeant is capable of performing these tasks. If he cannot, then he is not doing his job as top soldier of the company.
3. As to other duties:
 - a. The duties of First Sergeant are peculiar to his position, and require capacity and knowledge superior to those of the other sergeants.
 - b. He has immediate supervision of the company. He gets his orders from the Captain or officer commanding the company, and sees that they are performed in the company. He communicates and superintends the details of the work which the captain has been directed to be executed.
 - c. The First Sergeant is in charge of training and drilling the company in the School of the Soldier and Company. He oversees and supervises the company drill, and ensures that the covering sergeants and section corporals properly drill the men.
 - d. He keeps rosters, and makes all the details; he superintends the company clerk (if there is one), and assists him in making out the required papers.
 - e. At roll calls, the First Sergeant takes his place six or eight paces, according as the company is small or large, in front of, and opposite the center of his company, facing towards it. If the company is forming without arms, the men fall in and take the position of Parade Rest, and the First Sergeant takes the same position.
 - f. When the First Sergeant commands, "Attention!" the company, if at Parade Rest, takes the position of the soldier, and if with arms, the sergeant adds, "Support - Arms!" The roll call is then called commencing with the sergeants, in the order of rank, until all are called; then corporals, and finally privates. The privates' names should be called in alphabetical order of last names. As each name is called, they answer, "Here!"; and if at Support Arms they come to Shoulder Arms and finally to Order Arms immediately on answering to their names. If the men fall in for roll call without arms, they should come to attention: once their name is called, they answer "Here"; and go immediately to Parade Rest.
 - g. After the roll has been called, the First Sergeant turns to the officer superintending the roll call, and reports the absentees by name. If none are absent without proper authority, he reports, "All present and accounted for..." If the officer should then take command of the company, the First Sergeant takes his post on the right of the company, and acts as right guide.
 - h. The First Sergeant makes out the morning report and signs it, and then submits it to the commanding officer of the company for his signature, after which it is handed in to the regimental or post commander – if it required at that particular event.
 - i. He makes all the details from the company, and sees that a record is kept on the roster. He parades the details, inspects them, and see that they are properly equipped for the duty they are to perform, and then turns them over to a non-commissioned officer to be marched to their posts, or marches them there himself.

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