

Personal Camouflage and Concealment



Good camouflage and fieldcraft are almost as important as good marksmanship – in fact, a well-camouflaged man who is a poor shot will probably survive longer than the badly-concealed sniper.

In an escape and evasion operation, camouflage and concealment are paramount. The hunted man will con-

Remember your legs when adding local vegetation to break up your shape, but don't add too much foliage here or you will trip up.



When you sort out your camouflage leave your rifle resting on your webbing, out of the mud. Make sure the foliage you use matches the area you will be moving through.

ceal himself and sleep by day, and move by night – and here even the cover of darkness will not negate the importance of camouflage.

Personal camouflage (PC) has certain simple rules that will defeat the most obvious sensor on the battlefield – the human eye.

Shape

Your helmet, web equipment, rifle and other kit such as manpack radios have a clear, often square shape – and there are no squares in nature. Break up straight lines by the addition of scrim – neutral-coloured strips of cloth in browns and greens. Camouflaged elasticated pack covers exist, and these can be stretched over packs and radios.

Rifles and LMG/GPMGs have a clear shape, and are often black. Though scrim can be used to break up their line, it is not advisable to fix it to the stock – it may slip when you are firing and by shifting your grip cause you to shoot inaccurately. It is better to cover the weapon with camouflaged tape, or

even green masking tape (tape is a useful aid to PC – see 'Sound')

A discarded vehicle camouflage net is a very useful source of camouflage for PC. It will have nylon 'scrim' that has been treated to give an infra-red reflection similar to vegetation. Fixed to the back of packs and webbing, or in the netting on a helmet, it breaks up shape very well and enhances the chlorophyll-based infra-red camouflage treatment. (see also 'Silhouette').

Shine

In the old days of brass buckles, soldiers were told these should be allowed to grow dull, or be covered with masking tape. However, most web equipment has plastic or alloy fittings that do not reflect – but there are still shiny surfaces even on a modern battlefield.

Binoculars and compass surfaces, even spectacles, can catch the light. There is little that can be done about spectacles, but when using binoculars or a compass make sure that you are well concealed: like radios, they are 'signature equipment' and attract attention. Stow binoculars inside your smock, and take care that your map is not opened up and flapping about – a drab map case with the map folded so that it gives the minimum

Use everything that comes to hand: in this case, a bit of discarded vehicle camouflage net which helps blur the shape of your kit.





Too much

The 'walking bush' looks effective at first sight, but he has so much foliage over his webbing he cannot get at his ammunition.

Too little

The white face and hands reflect the light and stand out horribly, and the lack of foliage reveals the obvious shape of the human figure.

Just right

Proper camouflage breaks up your shape and dulls the skin areas but does not restrict your access to your webbing or block your vision.

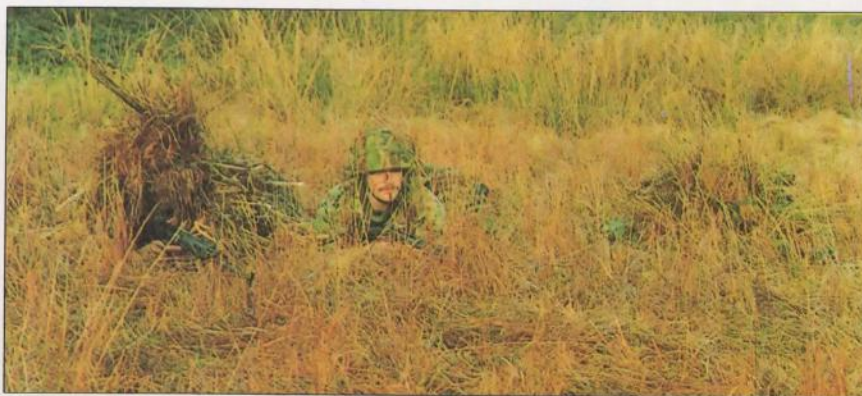
working area is all that is needed. Take care also that the clear cover to the map case does not catch the light.

Shine also includes skin. At night it will catch moonlight and flares, and even black soldiers need to use camouflage cream.

Silhouette

Similar in many respects to shape, silhouette includes the outline

By adding more vegetation to your shoulder straps you can hide the familiar 'head and shoulders' shape of the human figure.



of the human form and the equipment it is carrying. The shape of the head and shoulders of a man are unmistakable and an unscrimmed helmet attracts attention.

The use of vegetation as garnishing helps break up the silhouette. Thick handfuls of grass tucked into equipment can remove the shape of the shoulders, and garnishing on the helmet breaks the smooth curve of the

The man with too much camouflage must sit up in order to see through the jungle on his helmet but the soldier on the right blends in well.

top and the line of the brim.

Silhouette also includes fieldcraft – however well camouflaged you may be, it is little help if you 'sky line' by walking along the top of a hill, or stand against a background of one solid colour.

FACIAL CAMOUFLAGE



1 The first coat

First, get rid of all that white, shining skin. Mix a small quantity of camouflage cream with spit in your hand and rub it all over your face, neck and ears. This gives a full light coverage of camouflage. Then cover your hands with the cream.



2 Breaking up the shape

Now break up the outline and shape of the eyes, nose and mouth. Any pattern that breaks up this familiar format will do: use more if you're going on night patrol. Don't forget your neck and ears.



3 Finishing off

Fill in the rest of your face with earth, loam and green colours, then spit in your hands and rub them over your face to blur it all together. On the move you will probably sweat heavily, so you must top up your face cream as you go along.

Smell

Even the most urbanised man will develop a good sense of smell after a few days in the open. He will be able to detect engine smells, cooking, body odour and washing.

Some smells are hard to minimise. Soaps should be scent-free and activities such as cooking confined to daylight hours when other smells are stronger and the air warmer.

One of the greatest giveaways is smoking: its refuse has a unique smell. Rubbish produced by cooking as well as smoking should be carried out from the operational area and only buried as a second choice: buried objects are often dug up by animals and this can give a good indication of the strength and composition of your patrol or unit as well as its morale. The disciplines of refuse removal are important.

Sound

You can make a lot of noise while out on patrol. Your boots can squeak, your cleaning kit or magazines may rattle in your ammunition pouches. Even your webbing can creak if it is heavy. Fittings on your weapon may rattle. Radios can have background 'mush'. Coughing and talking can carry for long distances in the darkness of a clear night.

You must become familiar with a 'silent routine' in which field signals replace the spoken word, or conversations are conducted in a whisper.

Right: Personal camouflage must be secured so that it does not shift about when you are running.

Below: The familiar round shape of the helmet is broken up and the man's back and shoulders blend in well, but note how an uncamouflaged rifle stands out: there are no straight lines in nature.

Proper stowage of kit, taping of slings and other noisy equipment and a final shakedown before a patrol moves out will reduce noise. If a position is being dug, sentries should be positioned at the limit of noise so that they can see an enemy before he hears the digging.

Colour

Though most modern combat uniforms are now in a disruptive pattern camouflage, there may be times when this is less helpful. If you are evading



HELMET CAMOUFLAGE

1 Kevlar helmet

The new issue Kevlar helmet comes complete with a cover of DPM – standard military camouflage colours – and straps for local camouflage.



2 Disguising the shape

Cover the helmet with strips of scrim and cloth.



3 Adding local camouflage

Insert local vegetation under the elastic. Use plenty, make sure it stays in, and make sure it matches your background.



CAMOUFLAGING YOUR RIFLE



Camouflage the stock and butt with pieces of DPM material from an old pair of combat trousers. Make sure nothing gets in the way of the sights and check that you can load, make ready, and change the gas regulator setting easily. Secure the DPM material with tape and strips of cloth. Tie strips of cloth on the fore end and the barrel too, to disguise the overall shape and outline of the rifle. Green or camouflage tape on the magazine and top cover completes the job.

capture and are unarmed, drab civilian outdoor clothing will be less conspicuous if you encounter civilians.

The trouble with camouflage-type clothing is that in the wrong environment, like cities, it seems to do the opposite and say 'Hey, look at me!' In fighting in built-up areas a camouflage of greys, browns and dull reds would be better. The use of sacking and empty sand bags as scrim covers would help here.

Natural vegetation used to garnish helmets and equipment (see 'Silhouette') will fade and change colour. Leaves curl up and show their pale under-surfaces. You may have put

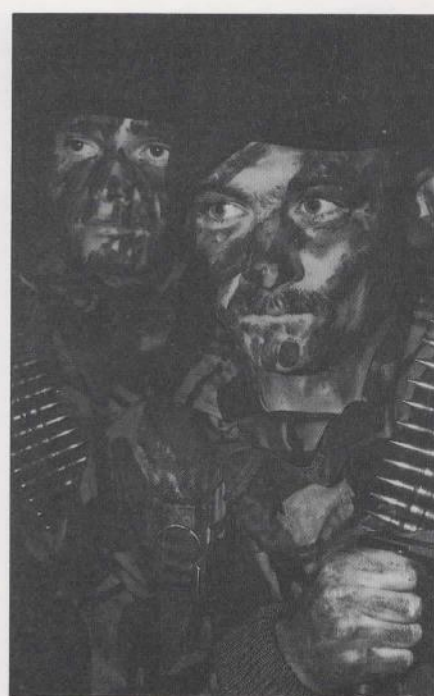
grass into your helmet band and now find yourself in a dark wood; or be wearing dark green ferns when you are moving across a patch of pale, open grass land. Check and change your camouflage regularly.

The most obvious colour that needs camouflaging is that of human skin, and for that you need camouflage cream. As mentioned, even black or brown skin has a shine to it. A common mistake is to smear paint over the front of the face and to miss the neck, ears and back of the hands.

Camouflage cream needs to be renewed as you move and sweat. A simple pattern is to take stripes diagonally across the face – this cuts through the vertical and horizontal lines of the eyes, nose and mouth. Some camouflage creams have two colours, in which case you can use the dark colour to reduce the highlights formed by the bridge of the nose, cheek bones, chin and forehead. The lighter colour is used on areas of shadow.

Association

The enemy may not see you, but he might spot your equipment or refuse and associate that with a possible unit on the move. A cluster of radio antennas shows that a company HQ is on the move or dug in. The cans stacked near a vehicle park, perhaps with white tape around them, are likely to



Royal Marines prepare for the landings at San Carlos. Even at night your skin must be camouflaged because it will reflect moonlight.

be fuel. To a trained observer the unusual – a flash from a plastic map case, or the smell of cooking – will alert him and he will bring his own sensors to bear on the area.

CAMOUFLAGING YOUR BODY & EQUIPMENT

1



1 Before camouflage

The easily recognisable outline of soldier and equipment. Think SHAPE, SHADOW, SHINE, SURFACE and use it as a checklist. Areas to concentrate on are the shapes of your helmet, rifle and 58 pattern webbing; shadow underneath your helmet; and shine from your rifle and digging tool.

2



sacking to your shoulders, to cover the whole of your back. This, like your helmet, should be covered with strips of DPM material.

3



3 After camouflage

The complete picture, with local camouflage secured on equipment and the body with black elastic. It must be secure enough not to fall out when you move or go for cover.

2 How to do it

Sew elastic strips on your webbing to hold local camouflage. Put your spade in a sandbag: it doesn't just shine, it also makes noise! Attach a camouflage net on a piece of