
MANUALS IN THE FM 5-20 SERIES

- FM 5-20 Camouflage, Basic Principles
FM 5-20 A Camouflage of Individuals and Infantry Weapons
FM 5-20 B Camouflage of Vehicles
FM 5-20 C Camouflage of Bivouacs, Command Posts, Supply Points, and Medical Installations
FM 5-20 D Camouflage of Field Artillery
FM 5-20 E Camouflage of Aircraft on the Ground and Airdromes
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FM 5-20 G Camouflage of Rear Areas and Fixed Fortifications
FM 5-20 H Camouflage Materials and Manufacturing Techniques
-

WAR DEPARTMENT FIELD MANUAL
FM 5-20 A

CORPS OF ENGINEERS

CAMOUFLAGE OF INDIVIDUALS AND INFANTRY WEAPONS



WAR DEPARTMENT • FEBRUARY 1944

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FM 5-20A, Corps of Engineers Field Manual, Camouflage of Individuals and Infantry Weapons, is published for the information and guidance of all concerned.

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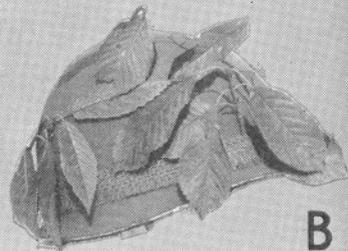
R and H (5); R (4); Bn (4); C 1-4, 8-11, 19, 35, 44, 55 (2); C 5, 6, 7, 17, 18 (4); IBN 5 (100)
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CHECK LIST

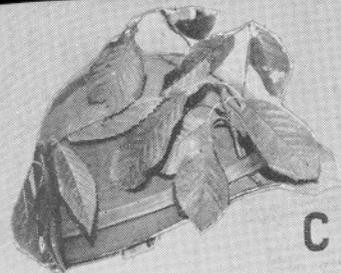
1. INDIVIDUAL (watch form, shadow, texture, color).
 - a. Prepare individual equipment in the following order:
 - (1) Helmet (break form, color, shine; keep garnishing short).
 - (2) Face and hands (darken, disrupt).
 - (3) Weapons (disrupt).
 - (4) Shine (darken, conceal, remove).
 - (5) Canvas equipment (darken).
 - (6) Camouflage clothes, body nets (where necessary; especially patrols, observers, covering parties).
 - b. Choose position carefully for:
 - (1) Fire mission (field of fire, observation, communications).
 - (2) Other factors (concealment, cover, obstacles).
 - c. Consider enemy viewpoint (ground and air; enemy is alert).
 - d. Use natural concealment (terrain features, darkness, mist, shadow).
 - e. Blend with background.
 - (1) Silhouette (avoid becoming one).
 - (2) Shadows (use them, do not make them).
 - f. Avoid careless movement.
 - (1) Move by bounds between good concealed fire positions.
 - (2) Move swiftly or crawl very slowly (when forced to).
 - (3) Select time and place of movement that enemy will least notice.
 - (4) Use concealed routes, buildings of all kinds, burned-out places, gorges, defiles, cliffs, embankments, caves, hollows, ditches, hedges, edges of woods with undergrowth, fence lines, terrain irregularities which contain usable shadows. Keep off roads and paths.
 - (5) Avoid landmarks, lone trees and rocks, fence corners, light ground, edges of woods with no undergrowth, all targets in silhouette.
 - g. Camouflage discipline.
 - (1) Maintain camouflage.
 - (2) Carelessness may reveal the team (move quietly, watch banging equipment).
 - (3) Don't look up at planes.
 - (4) Don't walk or drive in open; make no unnecessary tracks.
 - (5) Disperse on march and in bivouac.
 - (6) At halts during a march, disperse and take cover.
 - (7) Don't throw newspapers, boxes, ration tins, or cans in the open.
 - (8) Don't use open flashlights or matches in a combat area at night.
 - (9) In sudden enemy light, stop moving, or drop.
2. FOXHOLES
 - a. Choice of position.
 - b. Natural concealment.
 - c. Background.
 - d. Tracks.
 - e. Spoil and concealment.
 - f. Covers.
3. SHELTER TENTS
 - a. Strike or cover front.
 - b. Don't pitch in daytime.
4. WEAPONS
 - a. Know how flat-top garnishing works. different backgrounds.
 - b. Know how to blend nets with quickly, properly. c. Know how to erect net easily,



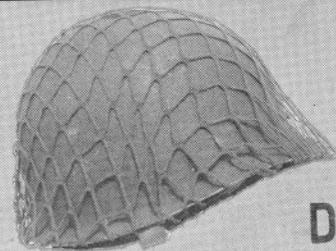
A



B



C



D



FIGURE 7.

HELMET CAMOUFLAGE

The outline of your helmet is one of the striking characteristics of a soldier's equipment. Its curved, familiar shape can be identified by the enemy. One of your first steps in preparing for the job of staying alive to fight is to disrupt both the form of your helmet and the strong, straight-lined shadow it casts. Here are six ways of disrupting its form, all of which, except **A**, will reduce its shine at the same time.

A uses a disruptive paint pattern on the helmet. Take care to carry the pattern across the curved lines of the edges, especially those seen from the front. Besides ordinary non-glossy paint, liquid vesicant

chemical agent detector, M5, can be applied to the helmet in a mottled pattern to give two kinds of protection at once. Under conditions of great heat or extremely rough handling, it may be necessary to renew this paint each week.

B uses a strip of burlap or osnaburg around the base of the helmet. Foliage can be slipped into the band and held in place. Do not use too much foliage. Do not place the band too high.

C uses the same principle as **B**, but here the issue rubber band is used.

D shows a helmet covered with a mesh helmet net. By itself, this net aids in toning down the helmet and eliminating some of the shine, but the shape of the helmet is still there.

E shows the helmet net put to better use. Foliage has been inserted in the mesh. It is held securely and can be quickly replaced with fresh materials when the old materials wilt and change color. The main point is to break up the shape of the helmet with short natural material which will not readily catch in surroundings and which will not disclose the head when it is moved slightly.

F is an improvised helmet cover made of a circular piece of osnaburg, burlap, or other cloth, 20 inches in diameter. A 1-inch hem is sewn around the edges, a tape or drawstring is pulled through it, and the whole thing is pulled tightly onto the helmet. It is painted to break up the solid color. Slits 2 inches wide have been cut in it to allow for the insertion of foliage.

No matter what kind of helmet camouflage you use, it is incomplete if the shadow underneath the helmet is not broken up by arranging the bits of foliage so that pieces of it hang over the rim of the helmet. Small irregular pieces of cloth, similarly arranged, will accomplish the same purpose.



E



F



FIGURE 8.



FIGURE 10.

SKIN TONEDOWN



FIGURE 9.

Your face is light in color and, like your canvas equipment, is a beacon to the enemy observer — who usually has the sighting end of a rifle at his eye. Color your face, neck, and hands to get rid of that light tone (fig. 8). Gloves may be worn. Coloring may be done by painting them in a disruptive pattern (fig. 9), or it may be done by toning them down in an even color (fig. 10).

On the face, disruptive patterns should cut across the nose line, cheek bones, eye sockets, and chin lines.

Lampblack, burnt cork, or just plain mud can be used as toning materials. Some soils contain harmful bacteria and should not be used in mud form to darken the face unless a medical officer has determined that they are safe to use.

A mesh mosquito face net (fig. 11), properly toned down, is an effective method of breaking up the outlines of the face. Such a net can be dyed in strong coffee or in an issue dye.



FIGURE 11.