



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARINE SPECIAL OPERATIONS SCHOOL
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
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A&S
31 Aug 09

"DISCLAIMER: This program is tailored for a basically-trained Marine who is preparing to attend MARSOC's Assessment and Selection Course. One should consult a physician before beginning any strenuous exercise program, such as the one described here, or any diet modification, especially if there is a history of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, or any other adverse medical conditions. The United States Government and any service member or civilian employed by the United States Government disclaims any liability, personal or professional, resulting from the misapplication of any training procedure, technique, or guidance described in this guide."

From: Officer-in-Charge, Assessment and Selection, Marine Special Operations School

To: Marines Preparing for Assessment and Selection

Subj: MARSOC ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION (A&S) PREPARATION GUIDE

Encl: (1) Preparation Guide Execution Matrix
(2) A&S Short Card
(3) Exercise Descriptions

1. Situation.

a. All members of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) are Recruited and Screened. Marines intended to serve as Critical Skills Operators (CSOs) are then Assessed and Selected (A&S). A&S is a program designed to determine whether or not a CSO candidate has the necessary attributes to successfully complete Special Operation Forces (SOF) entry level training and follow on assignment to an operational unit. CSOs must be mature, intelligent, mentally flexible, determined, and physically fit. They must be complex problem solvers who are comfortable working in an ambiguous environment. Candidates with these attributes are selected and subsequently assigned to MARSOC.

b. This document is designed to assist prospective candidates in attaining the appropriate level of physical fitness to be successful at MARSOC's A&S. Marines attending A&S perform physical tasks involving obstacles, swimming while wearing utilities, and travelling long distances cross country while carrying a rucksack. Total body strength and physical endurance are mission critical at A&S.

2. Mission. Marines chosen to attend A&S conduct physical conditioning prior to reporting in order to physically and mentally prepare for successful completion of A&S without injury and to help ensure they are capable of SOF entry-level training and subsequent assignment to a Marine Special Operations Company (MSOC).

3. Execution.

a. Commander's Intent.

(1) Purpose. The purpose of this document is to assist the prospective candidate in raising his level of fitness and to enable him to physically prepare himself for the A&S program.

(2) Method. Marines follow a physical fitness training regimen that gradually increases their functional fitness level. Over ten weeks, the prospective candidate can increase his functional fitness to a level that allows successful completion of the course.

(3) Endstate. Every candidate who attends A&S successfully completes the A&S program physically intact and is present for the A&S board.

b. Concept of Operations.

(1) This is a ten-week program. The Preparation Guide Execution Matrix spells out exactly what tasks will be required for completion each day. This program will require you to train for six days a week with one day of rest (Sunday is your rest or weather day). You will be training some muscle groups hard on one day and concentrate on another muscle group or skill the following day to avoid over training injuries. The program starts out slow with less demanding tasks, then ramps up over ten weeks to the level required of an A&S candidate. There is a rest and recovery period built into the last week to afford recovery just prior to arrival at A&S. This program is designed to bring you right up to check in day, but if you are bumped to another class after commencing the program, continue the program and maintain your gains. Do not let holidays hinder your work up. The program is designed to be done anywhere; this workout does not require anything that is not readily available to a Marine at any Marine Corps Base or military installation. The daily training period should not exceed 1.5 hours, except for Saturdays which is the long hike day.

(2) The preparation guide provided will prepare you for the initial screening at A&S. Upon arrival at A&S you will be required to demonstrate your ability to execute the following tasks in order to continue in training:

(a) Run a 225 PFT, or higher.

(b) Demonstrate the ability to properly conduct an abandoned ship drill from a six meter platform (IAW CWS 4). Swim 300 meters continuously in utility blouse and trousers without CBE and boots using the modified breast stroke or side stroke. Tread water in a utility blouse and trousers unassisted for ten minutes, then transition to the survival float using the blouse or trousers (no boots) for flotation for five minutes.

(c) Hike 12 miles with a 45 pound pack in 4 hours or less. Water is not included in the weight of the ruck.

c. Scheme of Maneuver:

(1) Conduct the exercises on the Preparation Guide Execution Matrix.

(2) Use the Preparation Guide Execution Matrix in conjunction with the A&S Short Card contained to conduct your daily routines.

d. Coordinating Instructions.

(1) Fitness Habits of Action.

(a) Establish Smart Fitness Habits of Action: before and after each workout, 10-15 minutes should be devoted to stretching exercises.

(b) Maintain a well balanced diet and increase your water intake while conducting your daily routines.

(c) Do not allow inclement weather to interrupt your training if you can help it. At A&S there is very little "inclement weather".

(d) Your workouts should be conducted in a progressive manner to avoid injuries. Overtraining or exceeding the progressive training plan will not allow proper bone growth and connective tissue conditioning. Progressive training will also ensure gains in physical strength and endurance are maintained and not easily lost. Prior to each workout, 10 to 15 minutes should be devoted to performing stretching exercises. After stretching, a 5-10 minute warm up that will warm all major muscle groups should be conducted to help prevent injury and ensure you get maximum performance from your workout.

(e) Ensure you eat and hydrate properly throughout training.

(2) Swimming Events.

(a) All swim events are designed to be done in utilities, without boots.

(b) Utilize the breaststroke or the sidestroke while swimming and swim in utilities if possible.

(c) Swim at a fast pace and give as much effort to each workout as possible.

(d) While treading water, vary your routine by treading with only your feet, with your hands out of the water, and then with only your arms.

(e) When you start treading water, determine if you can tread for fifteen minutes without stopping; if you cannot, break it up into manageable lengths of time and then gradually lengthen the time as you get better.

(f) Swimming is a requirement for A&S and these exercises will build your endurance and cardiovascular performance.

(3) Hiking Events.

(a) There are 2 hiking days per week; one is for working on technique and speed, the other is to work on endurance and speed over longer distances. Work to improve your technique and keep track of your hike times to track progression and improvement. Also, this will give you the ability to gauge your pace and help you determine distance travelled on an unmarked or unknown course. Improve gradually, but always seek to improve your time and endurance. As you put on miles you will also condition your feet to the task. It is imperative that your mind and body are conditioned to hike.

(b) Select boots that are comfortable and well broken in, but not worn out. Use insoles specifically designed to absorb shock to reduce injuries.

(c) Wear thick socks. The socks you choose are as important as the boots you use; they should allow cushion, they should not allow rubbing and they should wick sweat away from your feet. You want your feet as dry as possible because wetness causes rubbing and it also makes your skin soft and spongy which leads to further degradation.

(d) Practice proper rucksack march/walking techniques.

(e) The weight of your body must be kept directly over feet, and the sole of the boot must be placed flat on the ground by taking small steps at a steady pace.

(f) Step over or around obstacles; never step on them.

(g) When traveling up steep slopes, always traverse them; move in a zig zag pattern rather than straight up.

(h) When descending steep slopes, keep your back straight and knees bent to absorb the shock of each step. Do not lock your knees and maintain sure footing.

(i) Practice walking as fast as you can with a ruck on your back. Do not run with a ruck on during training, it may cause injury.

(j) A good hike pace is accomplished by continuous movement with short breaks; 5 min every 6-8 miles, or every hour in hot weather for example.

(k) You can hike along a road or cross country. Strive for the time goals and keep records. It is recommended that you hike along a road with a training partner and ample water.

(l) Doing squats will strengthen the muscles that you use when you hike. Do squats with and without weight for time and repetition. If you are not able to hike, work your legs with squats. The strength training regimen on the A&S Short Card intentionally works leg muscles to improve leg strength for hiking with a ruck.

(m) If you are not able to hike because of your duty station (on a ship or austere FOB), then do squats with your rucksack; one hundred repetitions, five times or until muscle fatigue. Additionally, use a stair-stepper to build muscle strength and endurance.

(4) Running Events.

(a) Mondays. The runs on Mondays are designed to be done at a comfortable pace. If you cannot carry on a conversation with your training partner, you're running too fast. If you use a heart monitor to measure your level of exertion, you should be running between 65 to 75 percent of maximum.

(b) Speed Work Wednesdays. If you want to run at a fast pace, you need to train at a fast pace at least once a week. Interval training, where you alternate fast running with jogging or walking, is a very effective form of "speed work." The training schedule begins in Week 1 with a workout of 5 x 400 meters and peaks in Week 9 with 10 x 400 meters. Run the 400s at about the pace you would run in a mile or 1600m race. Walk or jog between each run for about three minutes or until you can max out the 400m run again. Although the best venue for "speed work" of this sort is on a 400-meter track, these workouts can be done on the road or on trails, either by using measured courses or by running

hard approximately the length of time you would run a 400 on the track. For instance, if you normally run 400s in 90 seconds, do fast reps at that length of time and don't worry about distance.

(5) Strength Training. Perform the A&S Short Card to max effort with no breaks if possible. Add repetitions as you improve and decrease repetitions if necessary in the beginning. Attempt to perform all exercises. As the weeks progress, you will see the workout requires two repetitions of the A&S Short Card. This card is designed to hit the major muscle groups and provide a total body work out. It is recommended that you commit the A&S Short Card to memory for uninterrupted execution. One cycle of the A&S Short Card should not exceed 30 minutes; once you are getting through in better than 20 minutes, either start over or increase repetitions by five. As you progress in the program, you may replace some exercises if you get bored of the standard A&S Short Card, but remember to keep the same general simplicity and cycle of muscle groups. The three max sets of dead hang pull ups can be done either at the beginning of the A&S Short Card or upon completion, and should be done every time the card is performed. You may allow yourself up to three minutes between the pull ups and the other exercises. Additionally, there are stretching exercises built into the A&S Short Card for the following purposes: (1) stretch, (2) catch a breath, and (3) keep your blood going at the same time. You can replace these stretches with alternates, as long as they meet these criteria.

4. Admin and Logistics. Gear Common to All (GCTA).

- a. Alice Pack (or ILBE), packed with 782 gear to weigh 45 pounds. Do not use your water source to count toward 45 pound pack weight.
- b. Water source for use during PT events (bottle, canteen, etc.).
- c. Hydration system in addition to canteen or water bottle (for use on hikes).
- d. Reflective belt or road guard vest.
- e. An area where you can run 400, 800 and 1600m intervals (track, lightly trafficked road or PT field) .
- f. Pull Up Bar.
- g. Green USMC Running Shorts.
- h. Green T-Shirt.
- i. Green USMC Sweat Shirt.
- j. Green USMC Sweat Pants.
- k. 1 Set of utilities (for swimming, hiking and PT).
- l. 1 pair of running shoes (2 are recommended).
- m. Two pair of USMC regulation combat boots (broken in).
- n. Boot socks (Experiment with different hiking/trekking/backpacking socks; wool socks are highly recommended).
- o. Foot care kit with the following at a minimum:
 - (1) Mole skin.
 - (2) Ample foot powder.
 - (3) Petroleum based ointment (Vaseline, bag balm, etc.).
 - (4) Band aids.
- p. Swim goggles (optional).
- q. Digital watch for keeping time.
- r. Notebook/journal for logging progress.

5. Command and Signal. None.

Preparation Guide Execution Matrix

Enclosure (1)

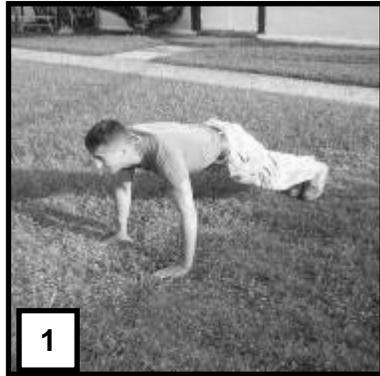
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Week 1	Stretch & hydrate	-3 mi run -Short Card x 1	-Swim 300m -15 min Tread (3x 5min.)	-Run 5 x 400m at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-3 mi hike (1hr or less) -Asses feet/gear	-Short Card x 1	-4 mi hike (1:20 or less) -Asses feet/gear
Week 2	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-4 mi run -Short Card x 1	-Swim 300m -15 min Tread (10+5 min)	-Run 6 x 400m at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (1:40 or less) -Asses feet/gear	-Short Card x 1	-6 mi hike (2hrs max) -Asses feet/gear
Week 3	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-5 mi run -Short Card x 1	-Swim 5x100m max effort -15 min Tread	-Run 7 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:20 or less)	-Short Card x 2	-8 mi hike (2:40 max)
Week 4	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-6 mi run -Short Card x 1	-Swim 500m -15 min Tread	-Run 8 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:15)	-Short Card x 2	-10 mi hike (3:20 max)
Week 5	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-3 mi run -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike	-Max effort PFT -Swim 300m -15 min Tread	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-Short Card x 2	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:10)
Week 6	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-6 mi run @ max effort -Short Card x 1	-Swim 500m -15 min Tread	-Run 10 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:10)	-Short Card x 2	-12 mi hike (4:00 max)
Week 7	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-3 mi run -Short Card x 1	-Swim 5 x100m hard -15 min Tread	-Run 11 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:10)	-Short Card x 2	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:10)
Week 8	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-6 mi run -Short Card x 1	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-Max effort PFT -Swim 300m -15 min Tread	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-Short Card x 2	-12 mi hike (Goal of 3:30)
Week 9	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-6 mi run at race pace	-Swim 500m -15 min Tread	-Run 10 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike (Goal of 1:10)	-Short Card x 2	-14 mi hike (4:40 max, set your own goal)
Week 10	Rest, Stretch, hydrate & Recover	-3 mi run to loosen up -Short Card x 1	-Swim 300m -15 min Tread	-Run 6 x 400 at mile pace -Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike without a pack	-Short Card x 1	-5 mi hike without a pack

Enclosure (2)

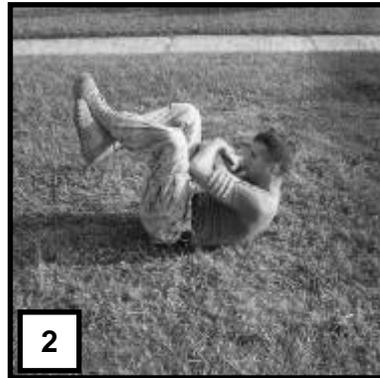
A&S Short Card

1. 30 Push Ups
2. 30 Air Squats
3. 30 Crunches
4. 10 Burpees
5. 10 Windmills (stretch/relax)
6. 30 Push Ups
7. 30 Mountain Climbers
8. 30 Flutter Kicks
9. 10 Burpees
10. 10 Cherry Pickers (stretch/relax)
11. 30 Push Ups
12. 30 Star Jumpers
13. 30 Back Extensions
14. 10 Burpees
15. 10 Chain Breakers (stretch/relax)
16. 30 Push Ups
17. 30 Lunges
18. 30 Hello Dollies
19. 10 Burpees
20. 10 Trunk Twists (stretch/relax)
21. 3 max sets of dead hang pull ups

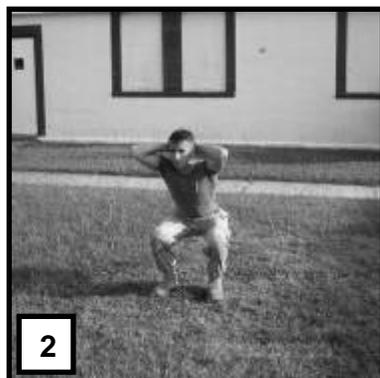
Push Ups



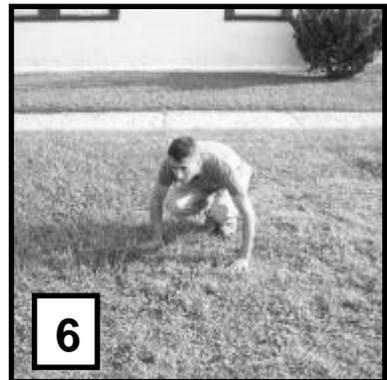
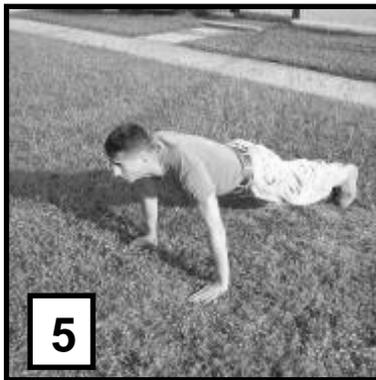
Crunches



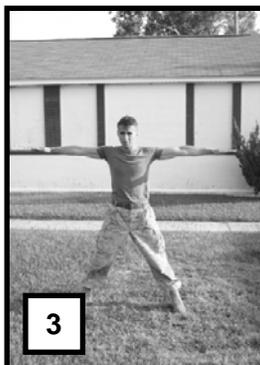
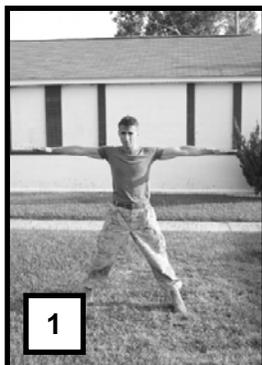
Squats



Burpees



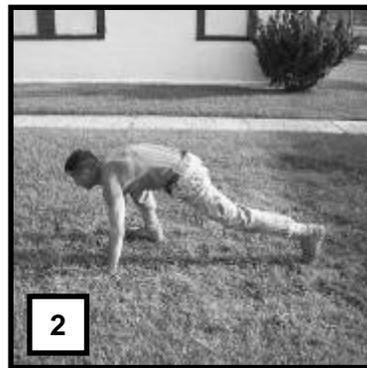
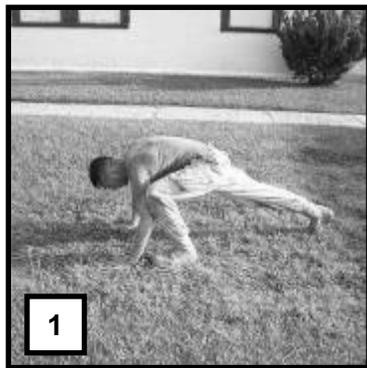
Windmills



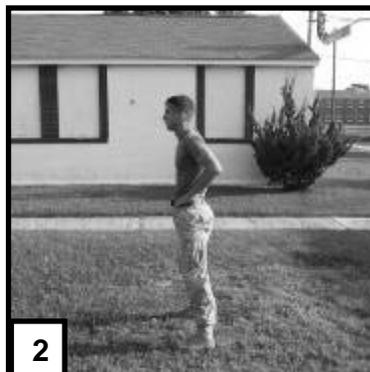
Flutter Kicks



Mountain Climbers



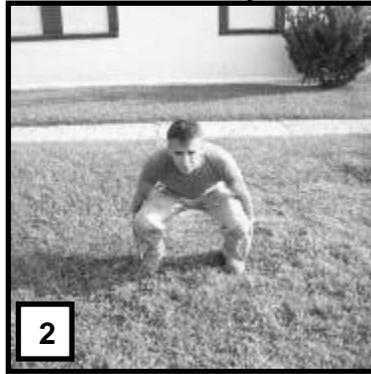
Cherry Pickers



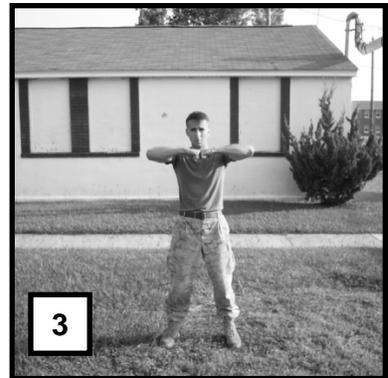
Back Extensions



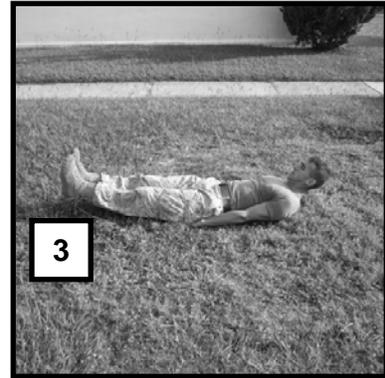
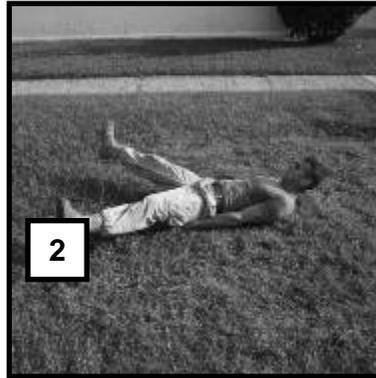
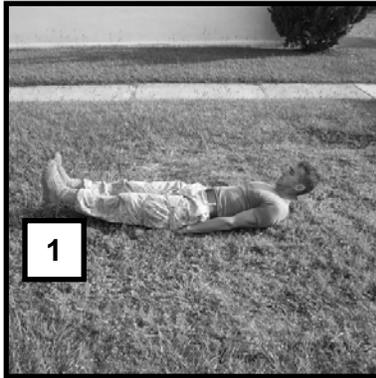
Star Jumpers



Chain Breakers



Hello Dollies



Lunges



Dead Hang Pull Ups

