



AIR ASSAULT HANDBOOK

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"The US Army describes air assault operations as an assault force, using the firepower, mobility, and total integration of helicopter assets, maneuver on the battlefield under the control of the ground or air maneuver commander to engage and destroy enemy forces or to seize and hold key terrain."

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Overview

Conditions to be met

The following conditions must be met for the student to be considered a successful air assault school graduate:

- 1. Receive Air Assault Briefing**
 - a. Includes terminology, helicopter specifics, etc
- 2. One Successful Combat Dismount From UH-60**
 - a. Must be a live drill with a flight crew
- 3. Three Successful Rappels from UH-60**
 - a. 1-Hollywood, 1-Forest/Rural terrain, 1-Urban terrain
 - b. No Injuries Sustained

Terminology

CHALK

- A chalk refers to a specific aircraft load of passengers (*i.e. a group of soldiers*) travelling in a single aircraft. The number of passengers in each chalk varies based on the passenger size, aircraft capacity, or other mission specifics.

CHALK LEADER (CL)

- The person responsible for the loading/unloading of a chalk.

HIT TIME

- The hit time refers to when the first helicopter touches down at the LZ, this is used during time-sensitive missions.

LANDING ZONE (LZ)

- The intended zone where troops will dismount the helicopter.

PICKUP ZONE (PZ)

- The intended zone where a helicopter will pick up troops.

PAX

- PAX is short for passengers.

RAPPEL NUMBER

- The rappel number is the number assigned to each assaulter within a chalk, this is to track accountability of soldiers and order of dismount.

Aircraft Assignment

ROLE OF THE CHALK LEADER

The purpose of the Chalk Leader (CL) is to ensure accountability of all soldiers, this includes pre-loading of the aircraft to landing in the drop zone.

The organic composition of a platoon, squad, or fireteam is often sacrificed in order to maximize space inside the aircraft—

Example

A UH-60 BlackHawk has a troop capacity of 8 slots, this won't facilitate an 11man squad. The solution - 8 soldiers from that squad will board the aircraft, they'll be assigned a chalk number and a chalk leader, that leader will be temporarily responsible for ensuring they make it to their intended destination. The remaining 3 soldiers will travel under a different aircraft, chalk, and chalk leader until the squad can reform at their destination.

Specific responsibilities of the Chalk Leader:

- Ensuring all chalk members have required equipment.
- Coordinating with aviation crew for aircraft assignment and loading.
- Ensuring all chalk members depart/arrive base to the area of operations

Additional Tasks:

- The Chalk Leader typically is the last person to disembark from an aircraft, ensuring all others have exited.

Following Tasks:

- When all chalk members have reached their intended destination, the chalk dissolves back into its organic composition, including the Chalk Leader position.

HELICOPTER SPECIFICATIONS



Helicopter specifications

It's important for all soldiers to understand the basics of the helicopters they work with.

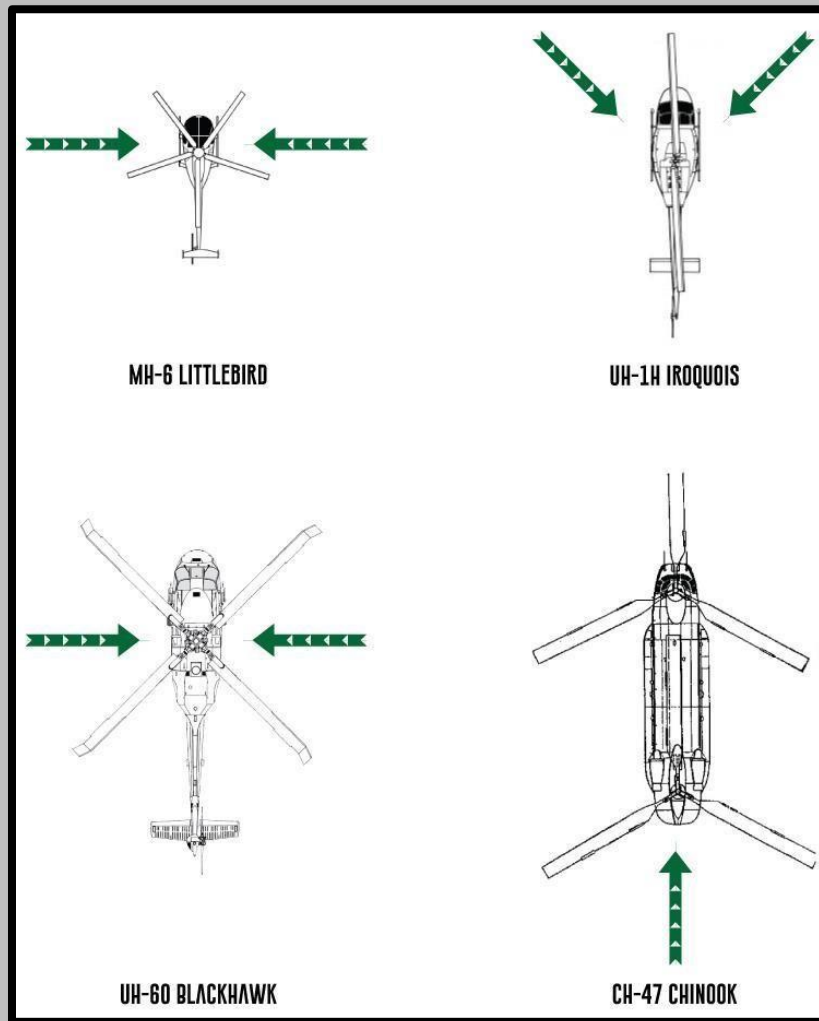
Basic Guidelines

Mastery of these basic guidelines will ensure your survival when working around helicopters:

- Approach the aircraft while crouching if the blades are spinning
- Never rush the aircraft as it's trying to land
- Listen to the crew chief and pilots

TAIL ROTOR = BAD

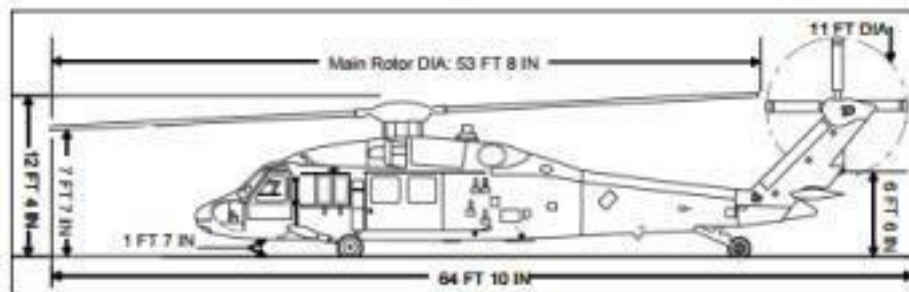
The image below shows the safe direction from which to approach the aircraft.



Rotary-wing Aircraft

These are the common (and some uncommon) aircraft you'll use during air assault.

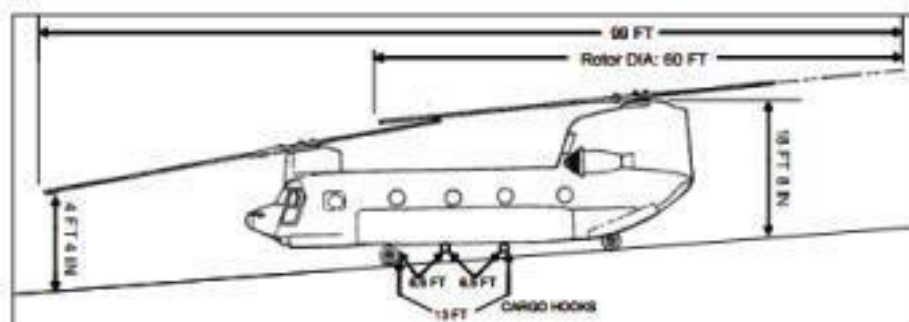
ASSAULT / LIFT AIRCRAFT



UH-60A/L/M Blackhawk

Airspeed: Maximum 156 knots
 Crew: (4) Pilot, Co-pilot, 2 x Crew Chiefs
 Troop Capacity: (12 Pax) w/ seats
 Missions: Air Assault & Air Movement
 CASEVAC / MEDEVAC
 Sling load & Re-supply Operations
 FRIES/SPIES, Rappelling and Parachute Operations

ASSAULT SUPPORT AIRCRAFT



CH-47D/F Chinook

Airspeed: Maximum 170 knots
 Crew: (4) Pilot, Co-pilot, 2 x Crew Chiefs
 Troop Capacity: (24 Pax) w/ seats
 Missions: Troop and Cargo Transport
 Sling load Operations
 Waterborne Operations
 Mass casualty evacuation during CASEVAC

ADDITIONAL MILITARY AIRCRAFT



UH-1H Iroquois

Airspeed:	Maximum	124 knots
Crew:	(4) Pilot, Co-pilot, 2 x Crew Chiefs	
Troop Capacity:	(9 Pax) w/ seats	
Missions:	Combat Assault Casualty Evacuation Sling load & re-supply operations	

ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS



AH-6J/MH-6J Little Bird

Airspeed:	Maximum	152 knots
Crew:	(2) Pilots	
Troop Capacity:	(6 Pax) on outboard seats	
Missions:	Perform infiltration, ex-filtration and close air support of special operations forces.	



AIR MOVEMENT

Air movement

Non-combat loading

For non-combat loading into aircraft:

1. STANDBY

- a. Allow aircraft to land and settle, wait for signal from pilot or crew chief before approaching.

2. PERMISSION TO LOAD

- a. The Chalk Leader will approach the Crew Chief/Pilot - he'll relay how many PAX and ask for permission to board.

3. LOAD IN

- a. The Chalk Leader will signal for his team to load in, single file.



Combat **LOADING**

For loading during combat operations:

1. STANDBY

- a. Allow aircraft to land and settle, wait for signal from pilot or crew chief before approaching.

2. PERMISSION TO LOAD

- a. This is usually done over the radio as the helicopter is landing.

3. SECURITY AND LOAD IN

- a. Chalk leader will signal when to load in, remain in security position.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY

- a. Troops loading onto the helicopter need to walk past the Chalk Leader, he'll be head-counting how many of his guys load onto the bird.

5. LAST MAN AND DUSTOFF

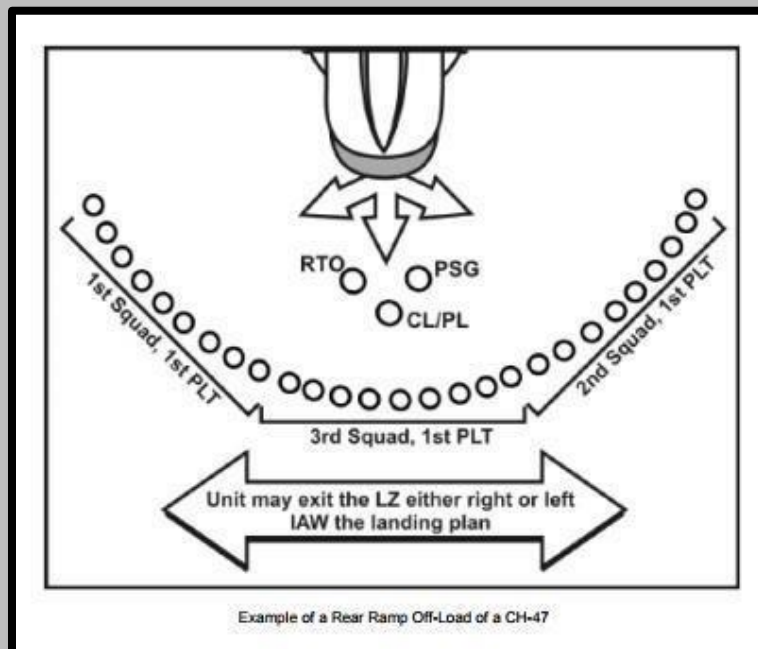
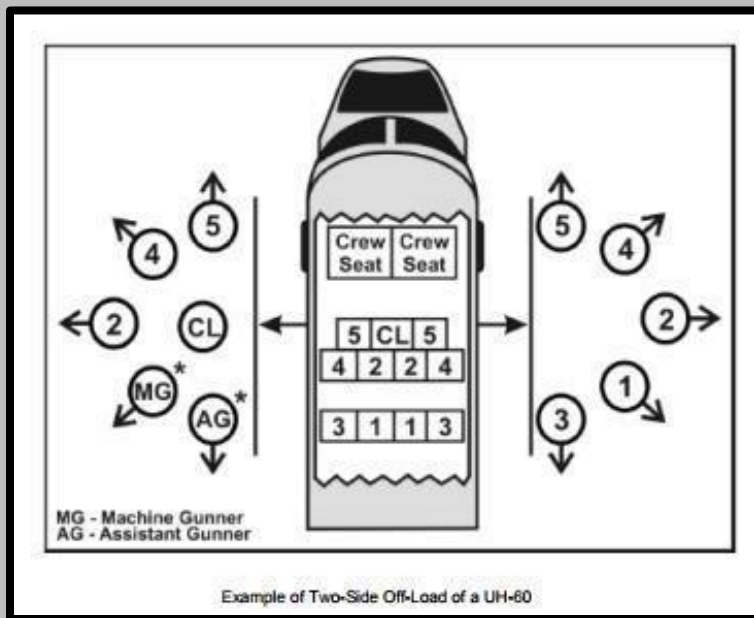
- a. The Chalk leader will be the last to load on, he'll signal to the crew chief that he is the, "Last Man."



Combat UN LOADING

For unloading an aircraft during combat operations:

1. **STANDBY FOR DISMOUNT**
 - a. Wait until the crew chief has signaled it is safe to dismount.
2. **SETUP SECURITY**
 - a. Following the dismount, spread out and set up security.





Air assault

Phases of Air Assault

Air assault is broken into three phases: Preparation, Inflight, and Rappelling. Although the scripts for air assault may change over time, the process always remains the same.



Phase I

- preparation

The following checks will be done before stepping onto the bird:

1. ASSIGN CHALK

- a. Chalks will be organized and a Chalk Leader will be assigned.

2. EQUIPMENT CHECK

- a. All soldiers will check their equipment.

3. ASSIGN RAPPEL NUMBERS

- a. All troops will be assigned a rappel number that will later be used for exiting the aircraft

4. LOAD IN

- a. Chalk Leader will go through the proper steps to loading his team onto the aircraft

Phase II



- INFLIGHT

The inflight is straightforward and requires no other management other than listening and repeating commands from the air crew.

1. APPROACH

- a. As the helicopter approaches its final destination, the ETA for the hit time is relayed throughout the aircraft - *“Two minutes... One minute... Thirty Seconds... Standby...”*

Phase III



- Rappelling

The helicopter must be in a hover at a height between 20m to 90m before they're able to deploy ropes.

1. ROPES DEPLOYED

- a. The crew chief will deploy the ropes and call out "ROPES AWAY / ROPES DEPLOYED" followed by a "GO, GO, GO."

2.

DISMOUNT

- a. The Chalk Leader will take over and call out rappel numbers in groups of two (it's safe for two rappellers to be descending at the same time).
- b. Middle-Mouse select the '**FAST-ROPE**' option.

Phase IV

- c. While hanging from the rope, hold '**S**' to descend, and press '**V**' to brace before touching the ground to prevent injury.
- d. The Chalk Leader will relay, "LAST MAN OUT" before his descent.

3. TOUCH DOWN AND MOVE

- a. Immediately after touching the ground, GET OUT OF THE WAY, take up a security position, forming 360-degrees.

4. CUT ROPES

- a. The crew chief will cut ropes after the last rappeler has safely landed.

