

MACHINEGUN Defense in Urban Terrain

Machineguns are the backbone of the infantry defense.

Defensive Positions

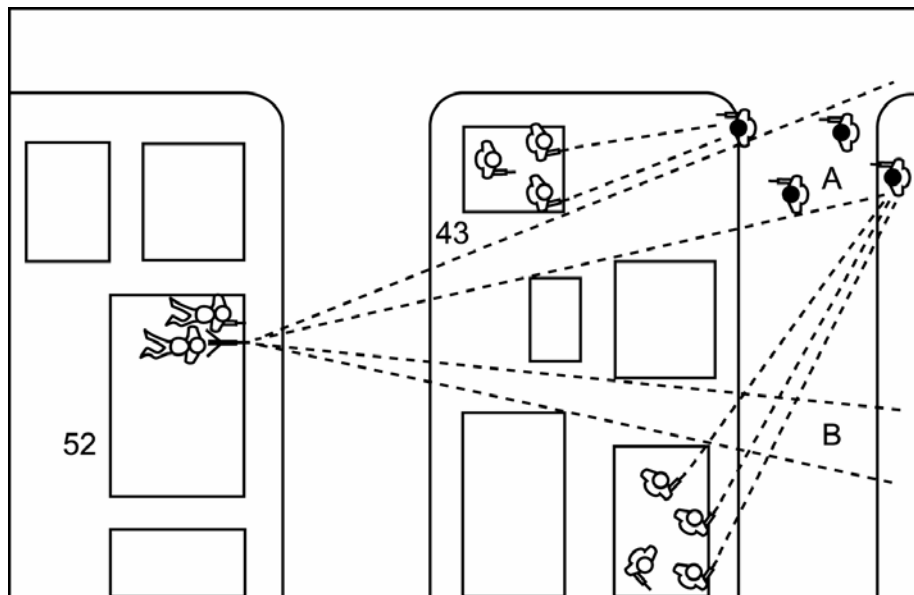
Positions with deep and narrow sectors of fire—'keyhole' positions—are best for machineguns. Double keyholes, primary and secondary sectors separated by frontal protection, are far better than one wide-open sector. Machinegun positions should have defilade protection on both sides.

This protects the gun from the concentrated return fire of multiple enemy units. Narrow sectors limit the enemies that may see you to return fire. When enemy units cannot overwatch each other and concentrate their fire against you, their mutual support is defeated.

The strongest positions are entrenchments or structures that protect you from intense direct and indirect fire. The enemy *will* target your machineguns.

Observers and defensive positions on your flanks need positions with wider visibility, but machineguns need the concealment and protection of narrow keyhole sectors.

Know how the enemy may exploit your dead space. Cover it with mortars and rifle grenades.



Enemy overwatching units cannot see or fire on Building 52. Enemy indirect fire is difficult to adjust onto Building 52. The Building 52 position has defilade on both sides to protect against the eventual enemy flank attacks from the north or south.

Alternate Positions

In the illustration, the primary positions permit interlocking fields of fire in both zones **A** and **B**. The machinegun's deep fields of fire permit the gun to remain in position and provide overwatch as the rifle squads reposition one block to the west. New sectors would then include the intersection northwest of Building 43, Building 43 itself, and the other buildings of that block.

Keep yourself hidden

The enemy cannot respond if he cannot find you. Camouflage your positions well. Engage the enemy in the flank whenever possible to reduce your risk of detection. Use keyhole positions to mask your firing signature. Move positions when the enemy finds you and begins coordinated action against you. Every machinegun position needs a withdrawal plan.

Develop an eye for Defensive Positions

Keyhole sectors are challenging to emplace, but their concealment confuses the enemy and reduces friendly casualties. This type of position is very difficult for the enemy to find and dislodge.

MACHINEGUN Defense in Urban Terrain - continued

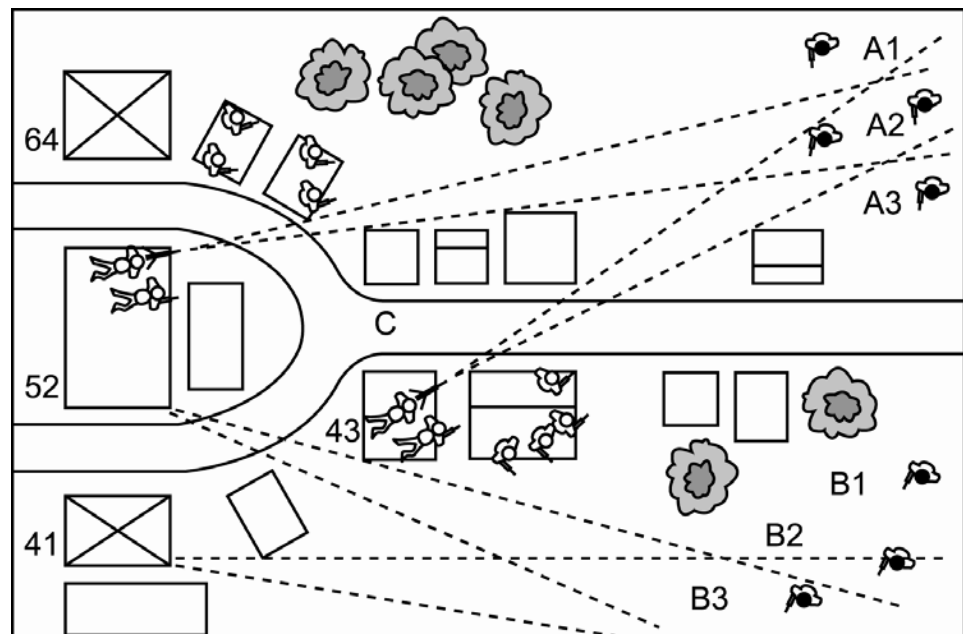
Interlocking Sectors of Fire

Machineguns mutually support each other, interlocking their sectors of fire on likely kill zones.

Rifle squads should be positioned to provide observation of secondary sectors and flank protection. When machineguns are turned outboard for flank protection, this disperses their effectiveness.

Alternate and supplementary positions should also attempt to be mutually supporting and interlocking.

Machineguns are slow to change sectors and slow to move their positions. Establish positions carefully. Select covered routes between positions. Plan how and when units will change positions.



The enemy is expected in zone A, so the primary sectors of the two machinegun teams in Buildings 43 and 52 interlock in zone A. The keyhole sectors of fire protect the machineguns. Enemy units at A1 or A3 cannot see, return fire, or adjust fire on Buildings 43 or 52. Rifle squads provide observation of secondary sectors, flank protection, and additional interlocking fires.

Another enemy approach is through zone B. The machinegun team in Building 43 moves to Building 41 so that the sectors of both team's supplementary positions interlock in zone B. The keyhole sectors of fire hide and protect the machineguns against overwatching enemy units in B1 and B2.

If the enemy seizes the outlying buildings and starts working west along the road, interlocking fire can be brought against zone C from Buildings 41 and 64.