**3-32. PATROL BASE OCCUPATION**

A patrol base is established using the following steps. a. The patrol base is reconnoitered and established the same as an ORP or RRP, except that the platoon will enter at a 90-degree turn ([Figure 3-22](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/7-8/ch3.htm#fig3_22).)



NOTE: This action is METT-T dependent; if there is nothing to be gained by doing this step, then the unit does not do it (for example, flat desert terrain.

b. The platoon leader leaves a two-man OP at the turn. The platoon sergeant and the last fire team will get rid of any tracks from the turn into the patrol base.

c. The platoon moves into the patrol base as depicted in [Figure 3-22](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/7-8/ch3.htm#fig3_22). (Squads will occupy a cigar-shaped perimeter.)

d. All squad leaders move to the left flank of their squad sector.

e. The platoon leader and support element or weapons squad leader start at 6 o'clock and move in a clockwise manner adjusting the perimeter (meeting each squad leader at his squad's left flank). If the platoon leader and support element leader find a better location for one of the machine guns, they reposition it.

f. After the platoon leader has checked each squad's sector, the squad leader and another squad member report to the CP as an R&S team.

g. The platoon leader issues the three R&S teams a contingency plan and remind them that they are looking for the enemy, water, built-up areas or human habitat, roads and trails, and any possible rally points. (Squads occupying patrol base on their own do not send out R&S teams at night.)

h. The R&S team departs from the left flank of their squad's sector and moves out a given distance, as stated by the platoon leader in his instructions. The team moves in a clockwise direction and reenters the patrol base at the right flank of their squad's sector. The R&S team, if at all possible, should prepare a sketch of the squad's front and report to the CP.

i. Once all squad leaders (R&S teams) have completed their reconnaissance, they report back to the platoon leader at the CP.

j. The platoon leader gathers the information from his three R&S teams and determines if the platoon is going to be able to use the location as a patrol base.

**3-33. PATROL BASE ACTIVITIES**

If the platoon leader determines that he will be able to use the location as a patrol base, he gives the following information to his platoon sergeant and squad leaders. Platoon leader also disseminates other information such as daily challenge and password, frequencies, call signs. Squad leaders return to their squads, give out information, and begin the priorities of work as stated by the platoon leader. The patrol base must be sterilized upon departure.

a. **Security.** Only one point of entry and exit is used. Noise and light discipline are maintained at all times. Everyone is challenged. Squad leaders supervise the placement of aiming stakes and ensure Claymores are put out. Each squad establishes an OP and may quietly dig hasty fighting positions. Squad leaders prepare and turn in sector sketches to include range cards.

b. **Alert Plan.** The platoon leader states the alert posture (for example, 50 percent or 33 percent) and the stand-to time for day and night. He sets up the plan to ensure positions are checked periodically, OPs are relieved periodically, and ensure that at least one leader is up at all times.

c. **Withdrawal Plan.** Platoon leader designates which signal to use if contact is made (for example, colored star cluster), the order of withdrawal if forced out (for example, squads not in contact will move first), and the rendezvous point for the platoon (if the platoon is not to link up at an alternate patrol base).

d. **Maintenance Plan.** Platoon leader ensures that machine guns, other weapon systems, communication equipment, NVDs are not broken down at the same time for maintenance. Redistribute ammunition.

NOTE: Weapons are not disassembled at night.

e. **Sanitation and Personal Hygiene Plan.** The platoon sergeant ensures the platoon slit trench is dug and marked at night with a chemical light inside the trench. Squad leaders designate squad urine areas. All soldiers accomplish the following daily: shave; brush teeth; wash face, hands, armpits, groin, and feet; and darken (polish) boots. Soldiers ensure that no trash is left behind.

f. **Mess Plan.** No more than half of the platoon eats at one time.

g. **Water Resupply.** Platoon sergeant organizes a watering party. They carry canteens in an empty rucksack.

NOTE: Squads have the same requirements with their squad patrol base as platoons.

\*The platoon should remain in single file. The platoon sergeant follows directly behind the guide so that he can count each soldier that passes through the passage point. He gives the count to the guide, tells him how long to wait at the passage point (or when to return), and confirms the running password. If the platoon makes contact after it is past the departure point, it fights through. Soldiers return to the departure point only if they become disorganized. They then reoccupy the initial rally point and the leader reports to higher headquarters.