

CHAPTER 2

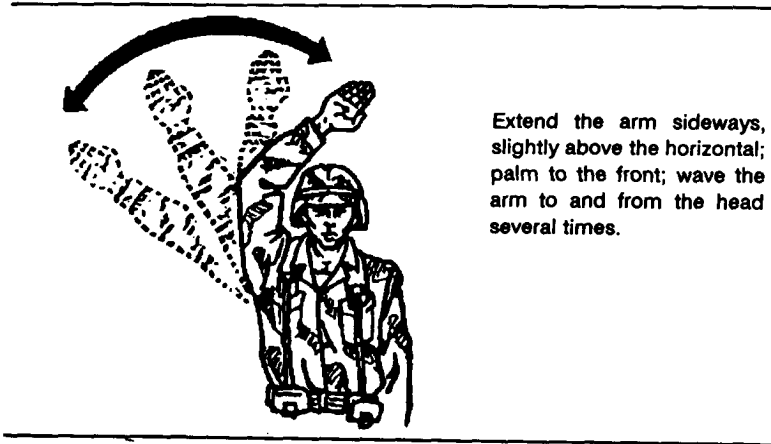
Arm-and-Hand Signals for Ground Forces

2-1. General

Signals illustrated with a single arrowhead indicate that the signal is not continuously repeated; however, it may be repeated at intervals until acknowledged or the desired action is executed. Signals illustrated with double arrowheads are repeated continuously until acknowledged or the desired action is taken. Signals are illustrated as normally seen by the viewer. Some signals are illustrated in oblique, right angle, or overhead views for clarity.

2-2. Signals to Control Vehicle Drivers and/or Crews

These are the arm-and-hand and light signals used to guide and direct vehicles. Flashlights are used at night to direct vehicles. Blue filters should be used whenever possible in order to preserve the driver's night vision. Chemical lights can also be used and have less effect on the driver's night vision (Figures 2-1 through 2-22).



Extend the arm sideways, slightly above the horizontal; palm to the front; wave the arm to and from the head several times.

Figure 2-1. ATTENTION.

Extend the arm toward the person being signaled; then raise the arm slightly above horizontal, palm outward.

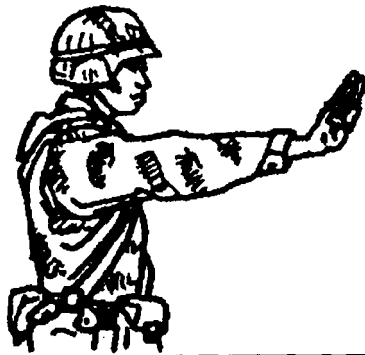


Figure 2-2. I AM READY, or READY TO MOVE, or ARE YOU READY?

Two or three movements upward with the open hand, palm uppermost.



Figure 2-3. MOUNT

Raise both arms and cross wrists above the head, palms to the front.

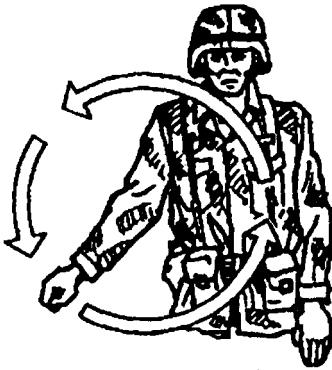


Figure 2-4. DISREGARD PREVIOUS COMMAND, or AS YOU WERE.



Raise both arms sideward to the horizontal; bend both arms at the elbows and place both hands across the face, palms to front.

Figure 2-5. I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.



DAY

Simulate cranking of engines by moving the arm, with the fist, in a circular motion at waist level.



NIGHT

Move a light to describe a horizontal figure 8 in a vertical plane in front of body.

Figure 2-6. START ENGINE, or PREPARE TO MOVÉ.



DAY

Raise the hand upward to the full extent of the arm, palm to the front. Hold that position until the signal is understood.



NIGHT

Move a light horizontally back and forth several times across the path of approaching traffic to stop vehicles. Use the same signal to stop engines.

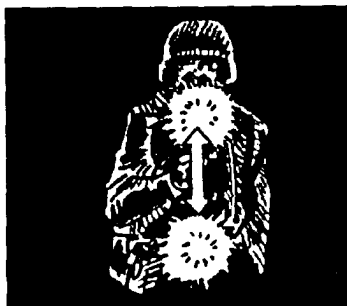
NOTE: For alternate signal to stop vehicles, see Figure 2-17.

Figure 2-7. HALT, or STOP.



DAY

Raise the fist to shoulder level; thrust the fist upward to the full extent of the arm and back to shoulder level (rapidly) several times.



NIGHT

Move a light vertically several times in front of the body.

Figure 2-8. INCREASE SPEED.



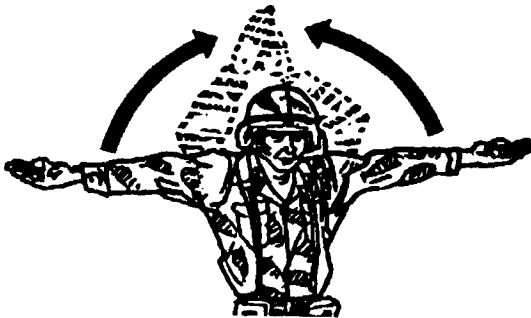
Face the direction of movement; hold the arm extended to the rear; swing the arm overhead and forward in the direction of movement (hold at the horizontal), palm down.

Figure 2-9. ADVANCE or MOVE OUT.



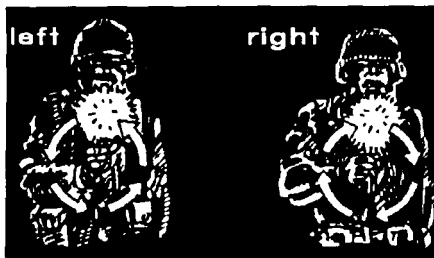
Extend the arms overhead, palms inward, then slowly lower arms to a horizontal position.

Figure 2-10. OPEN UP.



Extend both arms parallel to the ground, palms uppermost, then move the arms upward and inward toward the head.

Figure 2-11. CLOSE UP.



DAY

Extend the arm horizontally to side, palm outward.

NIGHT

Rotate a light to describe a circle 12 to 18 inches in diameter in the direction of the turn.

Figure 2-12. RIGHT or LEFT TURN.



DAY

Extend the arm horizontally sideward, palm to the front; wave the arm slightly downward several times, keeping the arm straight. Do not move arm above horizontal.

NIGHT

Hold a light at shoulder level; blink it several times toward the vehicle.

Figure 2-13. SLOW DOWN.



Move the hands and forearms backward and forward, palms toward the chest.

Figure 2-14. MOVE FORWARD.



DAY

Face the vehicle(s) (unit) being signaled, raise the hands to shoulder level, palms to the front. Move the hands forward and backward.



NIGHT

Hold a light at shoulder level; blink it several times toward vehicle(s).

Figure 2-15. MOVE IN REVERSE (for stationary vehicles).



Face the vehicle(s) being signaled, extend the forearms to the front, palms inward and separated (width of the shoulders). Bring the palms together as the vehicle(s) approaches. The vehicle(s) must stop when the palms come together.

Figure 2-16. CLOSE DISTANCE BETWEEN VEHICLES AND STOP.

Extend the arm parallel to ground, hand open, and move the arm across the body, in a throat-cutting action.



Figure 2-17. STOP ENGINES.



Extend the arms, make two or three movements up and down, hands open toward ground.

Figure 2-18. DISMOUNT.

Cross the wrists at the throat; point the index finger in direction of steer. Make a fist of the other hand.



Figure 2-19. NEUTRAL STEER (track vehicles).

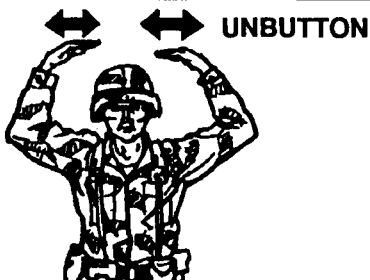


Clasp the hands together, palms facing, at chin level.

NOTE: Alternate signal to stop vehicles, see Figure 2-7.

Figure 2-20. STOP (alternate signal to stop track vehicle).

BUTTON UP



For **BUTTON UP**, place both hands, one on top of the other, palms down, on top of the helmet. The arms are back and in same plane as the body. For **UNBUTTON**, give **BUTTON UP** signal, then separate the hands, moving them to each side in a slicing motion; repeat.

Figure 2-21. **BUTTON UP** or **UNBUTTON**

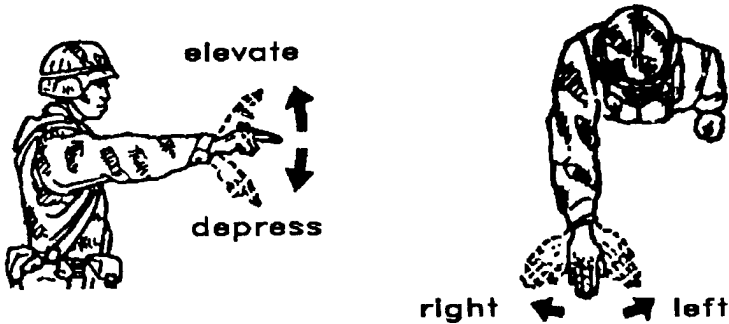


Hold the fist out with thumb up.

Figure 2-22. **MESSAGE ACKNOWLEDGED.**

2-3. Signals for Crew-Served Weapons

Members of crew-served weapons must communicate. Often, this is in environments where visual signals are the best means of transmitting information (Figures 2-23 through 2-28).



Extend one arm in the direction of the gunner concerned. Move the hand vigorously in the direction of desired correction (elevate, depress, right, or left). Flex the arm at the wrist and extend one finger for each mil (or for each 100 meters of range) of desired correction. For machine guns, an extended finger indicates 1 mil for tripod guns and 1 meter for bipod guns.

Figure 2-23. TRAVERSE RIGHT (LEFT), or ELEVATE (DEPRESS).



Raise the hand (on the side toward the new direction) and move it across the body to the opposite shoulder, palm to the front; then swing the arm in a horizontal arc, extending the arm and hand to point in the new direction. For slight changes in direction, move the hand from the final position to the desired direction of movement.

Figure 2-24. MOVE OVER, or SHIFT FIRE.



Drop the arm sharply from the vertical position (usually from the ARE YOU READY signal position, Figure 2-2) to the side. When a single weapon (of a group) is to be fired, point, with the arm extended, to that particular weapon, and then drop the arm sharply to the side. The signal is usually used as a fire command for indirect fire weapons.

Figure 2-25. FIRE.



Extend the arm in front of the body, palm down, and move it through a wide horizontal arc several times. For machine guns, when giving the signal again, moving the arm faster means to change to the next higher rate of fire. To slow the rate of fire, move the arm slower. This signal is used primarily for direct fire weapons.

Figure 2-26. COMMENCE FIRING.



Raise the hand in front of the forehead, palm to the front, and swing the hand and forearm up and down several times in front of the face.

Figure 2-27. CEASE FIRING.



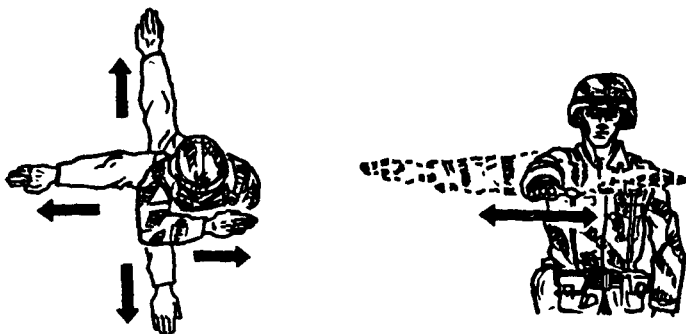
Strike the fist of one hand several times in rapid succession against the palm of the other hand.

Figure 2-28. OUT OF ACTION.

2-4. Signals for Combat Formations and Battle Drills

a. Signals, General (Figures 2-29 through 2-57).

- (1) Leaders of dismounted units use arm-and-hand signals to control the movement of individuals, teams, and squads. These signals are used by infantry and also by combat support and combat service support elements organized for infantry missions (Figures 2-29 through 2-45).
- (2) Leaders of mounted units use arm-and-hand signals to control individual vehicles and platoon movement. When distances between vehicles increase, flags (wrapped and tied) can be used as an extension of the arm to give the signals. From some vehicles (for example, Bradley, M2), the arm-and-hand signals will be distorted (Figures 2-46 through 2-50).
- (3) Signals for drills are illustrated in Figures 2-51 through 2-57.



Extend either arm vertically overhead; wave the arm and hand to the front, left, right, and rear, with the palm toward the direction of each movement.

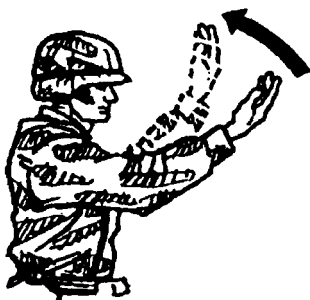
Figure 2-29. DISPERSE.



Raise the arm vertically overhead, palm to the front, and wave in large, horizontal circles.

NOTE: Signal is normally followed by the signaler pointing to the assembly or rally site.

Figure 2-30. ASSEMBLE or RALLY.



Point toward person(s) or unit(s); beckon by holding the arm horizontally to the front, palm up, and motioning toward the body.

Figure 2-31. JOIN ME, FOLLOW ME, or COME FORWARD.

Simulate the movement of the right hand in removing the bayonet from the scabbard and fixing it on the rifle.



Figure 2-32. FIX BAYONETS.

Raise the fist to the shoulder; thrust the fist upward to the full extent of the arm and back to shoulder level; do this rapidly several times.



Figure 2-33. INCREASE SPEED, DOUBLE TIME, or RUSH.

Extend the arm horizontally sideward, palm to the front, and wave the arm slightly downward several times, keeping the arm straight. Do not move the arm above the horizontal.

NOTE: This is the same signal as SLOW DOWN when directing vehicles (Figure 2-13). The difference in meaning must be understood from the context in which they are used.



Figure 2-34. QUICK TIME.



Hold the rifle in the ready position at shoulder level. Point the rifle in the direction of the enemy.

Figure 2-35. ENEMY IN SIGHT.



Extend the arm at a 45-degree angle from the side, above the horizontal, palm down, and then lower the arm to the side.

Figure 2-36. TAKE COVER.



Extend the arms downward and to the sides at an angle of 45-degrees below the horizontal, palms to the front.

Figure 2-37. WEDGE.

Raise the arms and extend them 45 degrees above the horizontal.



Figure 2-38. VEE.



Extend the arms parallel to the ground.

Figure 2-39. LINE.

Raise one arm above the head and rotate it in a small circle.



Figure 2-40. COIL.



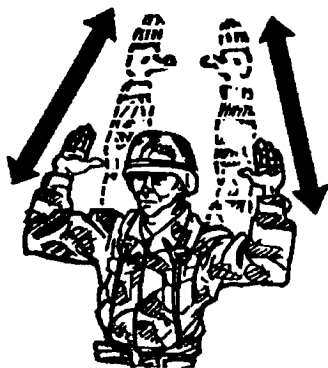
Extend the right arm and raise it 45 degrees above the shoulder. Extend the left arm 45 degrees below the horizontal and point toward the ground.

Figure 2-41. ECHELON LEFT.



Extend the left arm and raise it 45 degrees above the shoulder. Extend the right arm 45 degrees below the horizontal and point toward the ground.

Figure 2-42. ECHELON RIGHT.



Extend the arms so that upper arms are parallel to the ground and the forearms are perpendicular. Raise the arms so they are fully extended above the head. Repeat.

Figure 2-43. STAGGERED COLUMN.

Raise and extend the arm overhead. Move it to the right and left. Continue until the formation is executed.

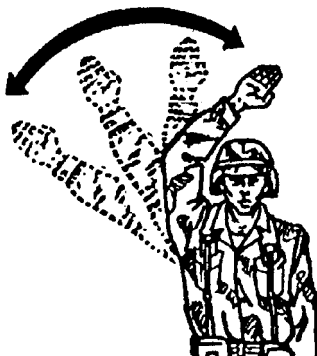


Figure 2-44. COLUMN.

Extend the arms parallel to ground. Bend the arms until the forearms are perpendicular. Repeat.



Figure 2-45 HERRINGBONE

- b. Mechanized Movement Techniques. Signals for movement techniques are used by mechanized units to indicate which manner of traversing terrain will be used by a unit (Figures 2-46 through 2-50).

Extend the arm overhead and swing it in a circle from the shoulder.

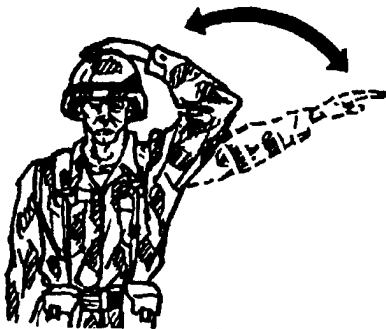


Figure 2-46. TRAVELING.



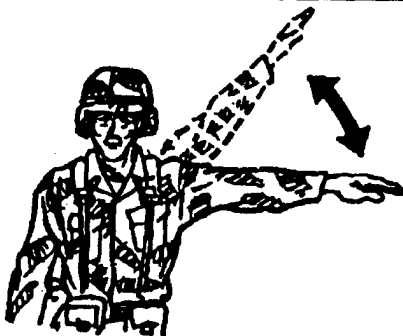
Extend both arms and raise them up and down.

Figure 2-47. TRAVELING OVERWATCH.



Extend one arm to a 45-degree angle. Bend the arm and tap the helmet. Repeat.

Figure 2-48. BOUNDING OVERWATCH. COVER MY MOVE.



Extend the arm to the left and raise it up and down.

Figure 2-49. MOVE TO LEFT.

Extend the arm to the right and raise it up and down.

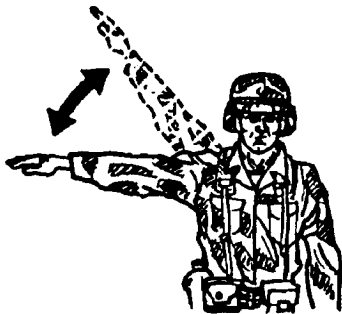


Figure 2-50 MOVE TO RIGHT

- c. **Drills.** Drills are a rapid, reflexive response executed by a small unit. These signals are used to initiate drills (Figures 2-51 through 2-57).

Extend the left arm parallel to the ground. Bend the arm until the forearm is perpendicular. Repeat.

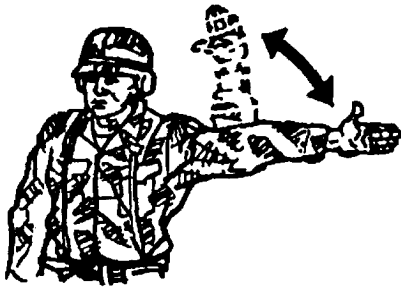


Figure 2-51. CONTACT LEFT.

Extend the right arm parallel to the ground. Bend the arm until the forearm is perpendicular. Repeat.



Figure 2-52. CONTACT RIGHT.



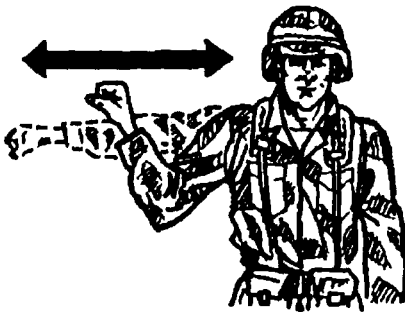
Extend both arms parallel to the ground. Raise the right arm until it is overhead. Repeat.

Figure 2-53. ACTION LEFT.



Extend both arms parallel to the ground. Raise the left arm until it is overhead. Repeat.

Figure 2-54. ACTION RIGHT.



Raise the fist to shoulder level and thrust it several times in the desired direction of action.

Figure 2-55. ACTION FRONT (RIGHT, LEFT or REAR), FIGHT ON FOOT, or ASSAULT FIRE (DISMOUNTED TROOPS).

Bend the arms with forearms at a 45-degree angle. The forearms are crossed. Repeat.

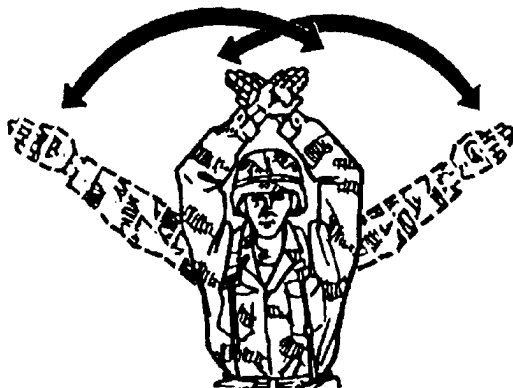


Figure 2-56. AIR ATTACK.



Extend the arms and fists. Bend the arms to the shoulders. Repeat.

Figure 2-57. NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL, CHEMICAL ATTACK.

2-5. Patrolling Arm-and-Hand Signals

Patrolling is conducted by many type units. Infantry units patrol in order to conduct combat operations. Other units patrol for reconnaissance and security. Successful patrols require clearly understood communication signals among members of a patrol (Figures 2-58 through 2-63).



Point at the palm of one hand with the index finger of the other hand.

Figure 2-58. MAP CHECK.



Tap the heel of boot repeatedly with an open hand.

Figure 2-59. PACE COUNT.



Raise the hand to the ear with the thumb and little finger extended.

Figure 2-60. RADIOTELEPHONE OPERATOR FORWARD.

Tap the back of the helmet repeatedly with an open hand.



Figure 2-61. HEAD COUNT.

Draw the right hand, palm down, across the neck in a throat-cutting motion from left to right.

NOTE: This movement is the same as Figure 2-17, STOP ENGINES. The difference in meanings is understood from the context in which it is used.



Figure 2-62. DANGER AREA.

Raise the fist to head level.



Figure 2-63. FREEZE.

2-6. Signals to Control Convoys

- a. Traffic Control. These signals are normally used by authorized officials (civilian and military police, and personnel at traffic control points) to direct traffic. At night, these signals are given with a flashlight or a lighted wand (Figures 2-64 through 2-68).



Stand facing traffic with the arms raised, palms open, in the same plane as the shoulders.

Figure 2-64. LEFT AND RIGHT TRAFFIC STOP.



Stand facing traffic with the arm raised, palm open.

Figure 2-65. FRONT TRAFFIC STOP.

Stand with the back to traffic, the arm raised, palm open. Rotate the upper body so the palm faces traffic.



Figure 2-66. REAR TRAFFIC STOP.

Stand with the right side facing traffic, left arm extended, palm open. The right arm is parallel to the ground and bent with the palm at shoulder level.



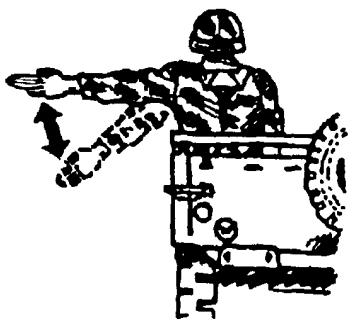
Figure 2-67. TRAFFIC FROM RIGHT, GO.

Stand with the left side facing traffic, right arm extended, palm open. The left arm is parallel to the ground with the palm at shoulder level.



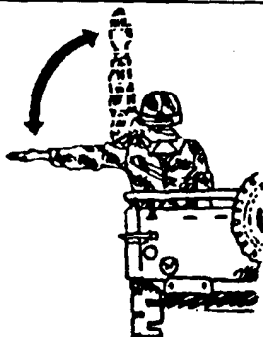
Figure 2-68. TRAFFIC FROM LEFT, GO.

- b. Convoy Control. In addition to traffic control personnel, convoy commanders can use arm-and-hand signals to convey messages (Figures 2-69 through 2-72).



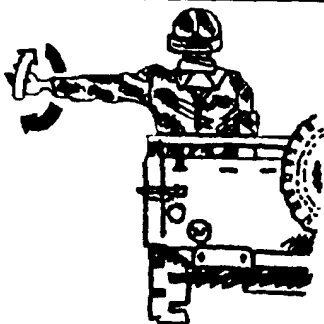
Extend the left arm horizontally to the side, palm to the front, then move the arm downward to an angle 45 degrees below horizontal. Repeat several times.

Figure 2-69. OPEN UP (EXTEND DISTANCE BETWEEN VEHICLES).



Extend the left arm sideward to the horizontal, palm up, and raise it to the vertical. Repeat several times.

Figure 2-70. CLOSE UP.



Extend the left arm horizontally to the side, palm to the front, and describe large circles to the front by rotating the arm clockwise from the elbow.

Figure 2-71. PASS AND KEEP GOING.

Face the unit being signaled and raise the hand to shoulder level in front of the body, palm to the front; extend the arm forward to its full extent in a pushing motion, keeping the palm to the front.

NOTE: This is done when the commander's vehicle has halted.



Figure 2-72. MOVE IN REVERSE.

2-7. Signals for Recovery Operations

Although recovery operations normally involve maintenance personnel who know the arm-and-hand signals required, all soldiers should be familiar with some basic signals in order to assist in recovery (Figures 2-73 through 2-80).

Extend the arm to the side and bend it upward at the elbow. Extend the index finger from the fist, rotate the hand slowly.



Figure 2-73. RAISE THE HOIST WINCH CABLE.



Hold the arm downward and out slightly from the side. Extend the index finger from the fist, rotate the hand slightly.

Figure 2-74. LOWER THE HOIST WINCH CABLE.

Extend the arm and fist toward the operator, thumb pointing up.

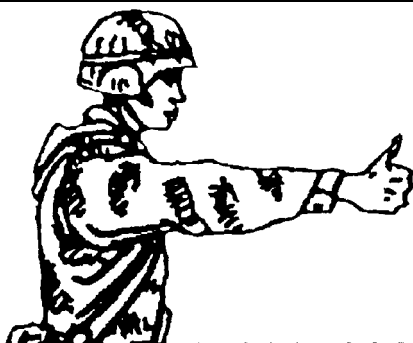


Figure 2-75. RAISE THE BOOM.

Extend the arm and fist, thumb pointing down.

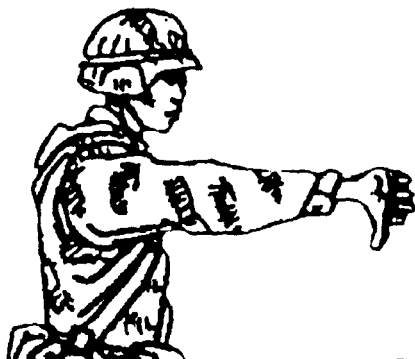
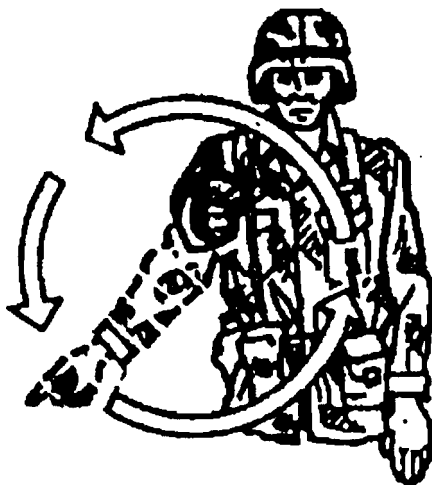


Figure 2-76. LOWER THE BOOM.



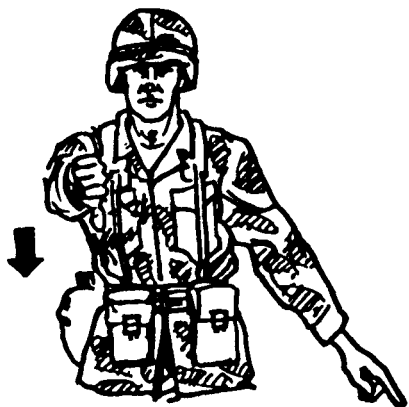
Point at the operator with the index finger. Rotate the arm in a circular motion.

Figure 2-77. IN HAUL THE MAIN WINCH.

Bend the arm, bringing the hand in front of the chest. Move the hand down and away from the body at belt level, circling back to the chest. Repeat until the signal to stop.



Figure 2-78. PAY OUT THE MAIN WINCH.



Point at the spade with the index finger of the left hand. While pointing with the left hand, extend the right arm and fist toward the operator, thumb pointing down.

Figure 2-79. LOWER THE SPADE.



Point at the spade with the index finger of the left hand. While pointing with the left hand, extend the right arm and fist toward the operator, thumb pointing up.

Figure 2-80. RAISE THE SPADE.