Orders Shorthand

In order to receive and issue orders rapidly and concisely, leaders need to develop an orders shorthand technique. *The following is only a guide* – the best shorthand is whatever works for you.

1. **Amounts** are numerals in parenthesis.
   
   Twelve vehicles = (12) veh 
   Four meals-ready-to-eat = (4) MREs

2. **Cardinal Directions** are capital letters in parentheses.
   
   North = (N) 
   East = (E) 
   Northwest = (NW) 
   South-southeast = (SSE)

   The orientation of a road, river, or other linear terrain feature: North-South = (N)-(S)

   Left = (L) and Right = (R) should be avoided, but are sometimes needed.

   **Azimuths** are degrees or mils, grid or magnetic.
   
   $317^\circ$ mag $3200$mils 
   $3200$mils grid

3. **Distances** are metric abbreviations.
   
   100 meters = 100m 
   17 kilometers = 17km 
   5 nautical miles = 5nm

4. **Place Names** are capitalized. **Control Measure Names** are capitalized.
   
   Town of San Rafael = SAN RAFAEL 
   Naktong River = NAKTONG River 
   Phase line Gold= PL GOLD 
   Route Lincoln = RTE LINCOLN

5. **Locations** are MGRS six- or eight-digit coordinates, often with a space between the easting and northing, either with or without the prefix.
   
   876 678 
   8756 9837 
   QR 8757 6786 
   SU 4576 9273

   **Horizontal datum**, if not well defined, is included in parenthesis.
   
   876 678 (WGS-84) 
   8756 9837 (NAD-27)

   GS 3617 is “Grid Square 3617” a 1km grid square defined by the lower left-hand corner.

   Vicinity of 876 678 = vic 876 678 
   At 876 678 = @ 876 678

6. **Unit Sizes** are abbreviated. **Key Billets or Teams** are acronyms.
   
   Team = Tm 
   Section = Sect 
   Company = Co 
   Detachment = Det 
   Fire Support Team = FiST 
   Forward Observer = FO 

   Squad = Sqd 
   Platoon = Plt 
   Battalion = Bn 
   Regiment = Regt 
   Forward Air Controller = FAC
7. **Specific units** are abbreviated.

- Company "K"/Kilo Company/Kilo Battery = K
- 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines = 3/5
- 2nd Platoon, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marines = 2/B/1/8

8. **Time** is four digits, with or without a colon.

- 0600
- 18:30
- No Later Than = NLT
- No Earlier Than = NET
- At = @ (At 2230 = @2230)
- Around = ~ (Around 1500 = ~1500)

- D = (D-Day) the day an operation commences
- H = (H-hour) the hour an operation commences
- L = (L-hour) the hour a landing occurs (air/sea)
- L +3 = 3 days after the landing

- H - 0:30 = 30 min before H-hour
- H + 3:00 = 3 hours after H-hour

9. **Tactical Missions and Terms** are usually capitalized acronyms and abbreviations.

- **ABF** = Attack By Fire
- **FS** = Fire Support
- **A/C** = Aircraft
- **GS** = General Support
- **A/F** = Airfield
- **HHQ** = Higher Headquarters
- **AIZ** = Attack In Zone
- **IOT** = In Order To
- **AOA** = Avenue of Approach
- **LOC** = Line of Communication
- **AP** = Attack Position
- **ME** = Main Effort
- **ATK** = Attack
- **MTC** = Movement To Contact
- **BOF** = Base of Fire
- **O/C** = On Call
- **BPT** = Be Prepared To
- **O/O** = On Order
- **CATK** = Counterattack
- **OOM** = Order Of Movement
- **CG** = Center of Gravity
- **O/W** = Overwatch
- **CIZ** = Clear In Zone
- **POF** = Priority of Fire
- **CV** = Critical Vulnerability
- **PoL** = Passage of Lines
- **DEF** = Defend
- **POS** = Position
- **DIZ** = Defend In Zone
- **REIN** = Reinforced
- **DS** = Direct Support
- **RES** = Reserve
- **EN** = Enemy
- **RIPv** = Relief In Place
- **FIT** = Follow In Trace
- **SBF** = Support By Fire
- **FOF** = Follow-On Forces
- **WTH** = Withdraw

10. **Tactical Control Measures and Fire Support Coordination Measures** are usually capitalized acronyms and abbreviations.

- **AA** = Assembly Area
- **OBJ** = Objective
- **BP** = Battle Position
- **ORP** = OBJ Rally Point
- **CP** = Check Point
- **PL** = Phase Line
- **EA** = Engagement Area
- **RP** = Release Point
- **LD** = Line of Departure
- **SP** = Start Point
- **LOA** = Limit Of Advance
- **TGT** = Target
11. **Common Words** are abbreviated.

prev = Prevent  
hwy = Highway  
est = Establish  
rd = Road  
fm = From  
prot = Protect  
rt = Route  
bldg = Building  
mvmnt = Movement  
al = Alternate  
spt = Support  
inf = interfere

12. **Generic Weapons and Equipment** are capitalized acronyms.

AA = Anti-Aircraft  
HF = High-Frequency  
AT = Anti-Tank  
MG = Machinegun

13. **Ammunition sizes and Amounts** are abbreviated.

81 millimeter = 81mm  
.50 caliber = .50cal  
Sixty-two rounds = (62)rds

14. **Friendly Weapons and Equipment** are referred to by nomenclature.

M-203  
M-240G  
SMAW  
AT-4  
AV-8B  
CH-46  
PRC-113  
PVS-14  
HMMWV  
M-1A1  
LAV  
M-198

15. **Enemy Weapons and Equipment** are referred to by nomenclature or NATO designator.

AK-47  
BTR-60  
BMP-2  
BRDM  
SAGGER  
HIND  
SPIGOT  
HIP

16. **Orders Headings** are abbreviated and followed by a colon.

S = Situation  
EN = Enemy  
Fr = Friendly  
M = Mission  
E = Execution  
CoO = Concept of Operations  
FSP = Fire Support Plan  
Coord Inst = Coordinating Instructions  
A = Admin & Logistics  
C = Command & Signal

17. **Task Organizations** are specified.

+ or att = Attached (Co K w/Heavy Machineguns and combat engineers attached = K + HMG + CEB)  
- or det = Detached (3rd Battalion, 5th Marines w/Co K detached = 3/5 – K)