

# ENEMY FORCES



**watch your back**

Get advice from your local medical centre, physiotherapist or APTC Remedial Instructor

# ENEMY FORCES

**Slouching in a position where your back is unsupported stretches your back ligaments and joints and weakens your back and abdominal muscles.**

**This leaves you vulnerable to back pain.**

## GOOD SITTING POSITION

Good sitting posture maintains the natural curves in your back.

Using a chair of the correct height provides support to the lower back, and encourages good posture.

## GOOD STANDING POSTURE

Good standing posture maintains correct body alignment.

Your shoulders and hips should be in the same vertical line when looked at from the side.

Pulling your abdominal muscles in slightly assists in maintaining a good position.

**Sitting or standing in a poor position for longer than 1 hour will weaken your back and predispose you to lower back pain.**

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# FULLY LOADED

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## KEEP YOUR BACK STRONG

Strengthen your abdominal and back muscles.

These muscles will help to support and protect your back during lifting.

See your APTCI if you need a specific program.

## KEEP YOUR BACK FLEXIBLE

Your back needs to be flexible as well as strong to work properly.

To achieve this you should stretch the correct muscles in your legs and back at least once a day.

## KEEP IT CLOSE

By keeping the object close to you when lifting you will decrease the chance of straining your back.

## LIFT PROPERLY

Sticking your bottom out and bending your knees will keep the normal arch and alignment of your back. This will discourage twisting and jerking movements that may harm your back.

## ASSESS THE LIFT

If you try to lift an object that is too heavy you are at risk of damaging your back.

Do not attempt to lift items by yourself if you know they are too heavy.

Always get help or use a lifting aid if one is available

**Don't ignore persistent back pain, seek help from your Medical Officer, GP or Unit Physiotherapist.**

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# RAPID REACTION

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## RAPID REACTION

### PROGRESSION

If you progress the amount of activity too much in any one session, you risk developing injury from overloading your body.

Your body needs more time to adapt and get used to increasing levels of activity.

Progress your activity levels by a maximum of 10% in each training session.

To maintain cardiovascular fitness you need to train for at least 3 sessions of 20 minutes duration per week.

If you do not maintain your cardiovascular fitness, your muscles will fatigue quickly making you vulnerable to injury.

### VARIETY

By only performing one type of activity for example running, you may develop an imbalance in your muscular system.

This can overload specific parts of your body and predispose you to injury.

By varying the type of exercise you undertake, you will reduce the chance of repetitive or overtraining injuries occurring.

### RECOVERY

It is essential that you take a rest from training at least one day a week. If you do not let your body recover, you may develop fatigue and overuse related injuries.

### PREPARE FOR BFT/CFT

Many soldiers injure themselves because they have not prepared for fitness tests.

You must anticipate specific military tests such as BFT and CFT, and prepare your body by performing build up training specifically for them.

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# COMMAND AND CONTROL



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For further information contact your Unit Health and Safety Rep.

# COMMAND AND CONTROL

## ADJUST THE TOOLS, NOT YOUR BODY

A poor work station will encourage you to sit and work in poor postural positions.

You should ensure that your chair, keyboard, mouse, monitor, and lighting are adjusted properly to encourage the best possible posture.

## MOVE

Change your position frequently to avoid static postures for long periods of time.

Sitting or standing in a poor position for longer than 1 hour will weaken your back and predispose you to back pain.

Slouching in a position where your low back is not supported will over-stretch your back ligaments, make your back muscles inactive causing your back to become weak and vulnerable to back pain.

## RELAX

By performing regular relaxation exercises for shoulders when sitting you will decrease the chances of developing tight and painful neck and back muscles.

## CHANGE

By always using one hand for activities in one body position you will encourage joints and muscles to become stiff. You should try to alternate your activities and or hands when performing tasks to avoid this happening.

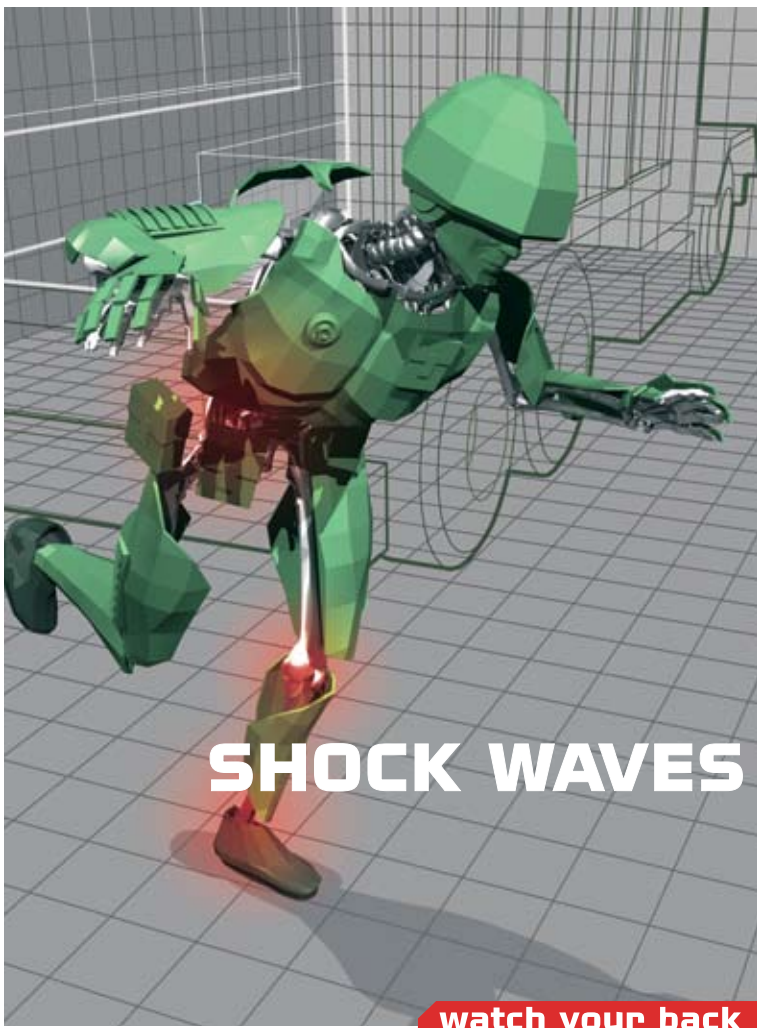
## STRETCH

For every 20 minutes of continuous work, take 5 minutes to stretch hands, arms, shoulders, and back. This will help maintain flexibility and avoid muscle tightness.

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# SHOCK WAVES

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**When you jump off a vehicle without assessing the jump, you take the risk of landing awkwardly, losing your balance and causing injury to your back, knees and ankles.**

three points of contact whenever possible. Your troop/gunnery Sgt can repeat this advice and demonstrate if required.

## PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE

Every time you land from jumping off your vehicle up to 10 times your body weight will be compressed through the joints in your legs and back. If you jump repetitively throughout your army career these high loads can cause cumulative damage causing early wear and tear in your joints.

## WHEN JUMPING OFF FROM YOUR VEHICLE TRY NOT TO LAND ON ONLY ONE FOOT

If you have to jump onto uneven ground, try to keep your feet together and roll over if necessary. Landing with your feet wide apart in this situation may cause you to twist and cause injury.

## REMEMBER THE TRAINING ADVICE FOR MOUNTING AND DISMOUNTING VEHICLES

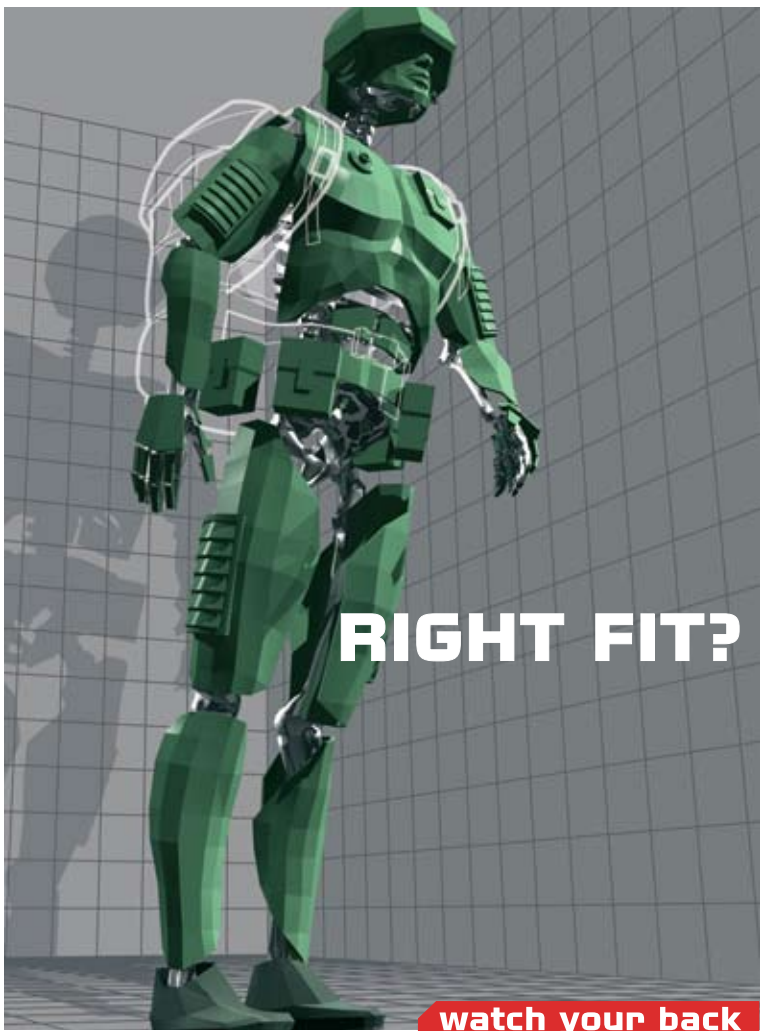
Make sure that you assess the climb and use any foot plates and tow hooks, maintaining

## ARE YOU CARRYING OR WEARING HEAVY KIT?

Extra caution needs to be taken when wearing extra kit such as body armour. This adds additional weight and may knock you off your balance resulting in injury.

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# RIGHT FIT?

**The military issue Bergen comes in two sizes: Long back and Short back. Make sure that you have been issued the correct size for your back.**

### BE COMFORTABLE

By taking time to adjust the waist and shoulder straps of your Bergen correctly you will ensure the most comfortable fit and minimise the risk of skin irritation or back pain.

### CAN YOU USE WEBBING AND A DAY SACK INSTEAD?

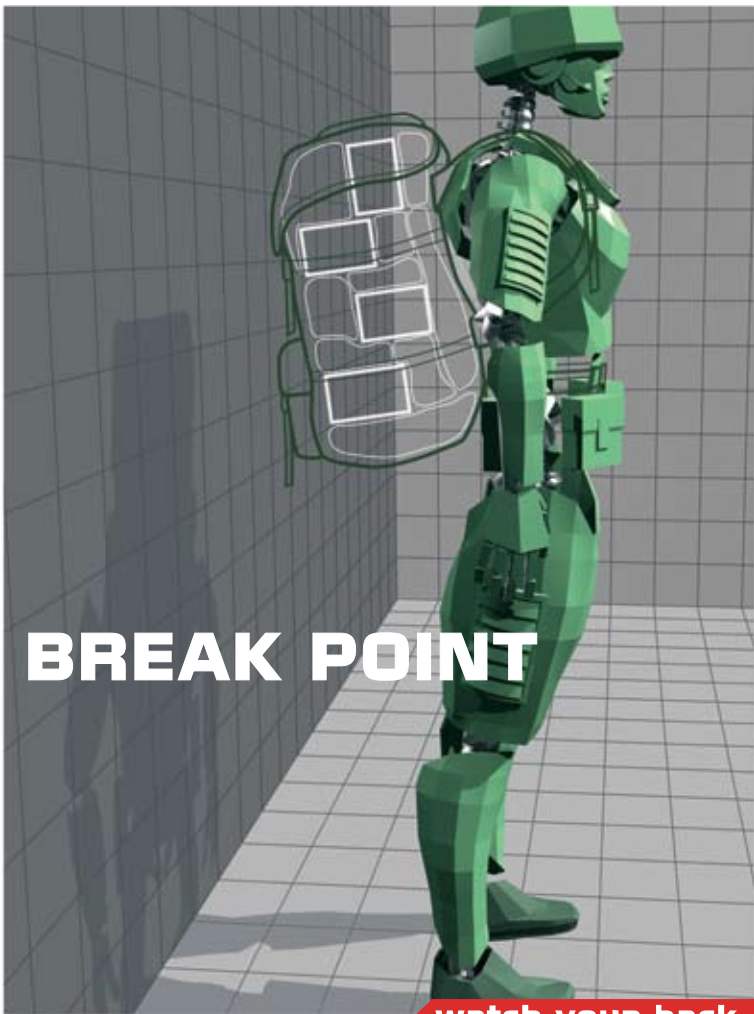
When performing ACFTs you may have the option of using webbing and day sacks instead of a Bergen. This is at the discretion of your regiment.

### HAVE YOU PREPARED YOUR BODY PROPERLY?

It is important that you anticipate your ACFTs or scheduled exercises and ensure that you have prepared your body properly. It is mandatory to attend your units build up training. Gradually increasing the load and distance of your training will ensure that your muscles, joints, bones and cardiovascular system are prepared.

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# BREAK POINT

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## WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU

If you are going on exercise, make sure that you take only what is really necessary. This will keep the weight of your pack down and thereby cause the minimum amount of stress on your back. If you are unsure whether you should take an item, the chances are you don't need it and won't use it. Leave it behind (providing the item is not on your units SOP packing list!)

## HOW HEAVY SHOULD YOUR PACK BE?

You should only ever carry the minimum amount required for that particular task. If the task is an ACFT, your APTCI will inform you of the required load that is specific to the role of your regiment.

## WHERE TO PLACE THINGS?

Placing the heaviest items at the bottom of your Bergen will encourage your spine to lean backwards and cause strain on the joints in the low back area. If you place them at the top it may knock you off balance. Try to distribute the weight evenly or in the middle of your Bergen to avoid these problems. Place soft items at the bottom of your pack to increase comfort and cushioning.

## PLANNING

Taking the time to plan the packing of your Bergen can reduce the chances of suffering low back pain.

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# SOFT TARGET

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## DON'T BE A **SOFT TARGET**

### **CORE STABILITY: BUILDING A HARD AND STABLE FOUNDATION**

Core stability Exercises target the muscles **deep** within the abdomen that stabilise the spine and provide a solid foundation for all movement.

Don't just concentrate on your six pack!

For more advice on Core Stability and Exercises to strengthen your core contact your APTC Remedial Instructor or Unit Physiotherapist.

**Carrying excess weight can predispose you to suffering from back pain.**

### **FUNCTIONAL FITNESS**

Core stability not only reduces your chances of suffering from back pain but also improves your balance and overall athletic and sporting performance.

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