OP/LP Observation Post and Listening Post | **Student Companion Guide**
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COMPANION GUIDE TO ONLINE TRAINING

Use alongside the online lessons at fortunefavorsthepreparedd.com/mag-05-landing/

MAG-05
OP/LP — OBSERVATION POST AND LISTENING POST
STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

Early Warning and Perimeter Security for Families and Groups

Condensed reference tables and blank worksheets for use alongside the online course.
11 lessons · 8 worksheets · glossary and quick reference card

Edition v1.0 | 2026

Semper Paratus, Semper Gumby

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MAG-05 OP/LP — Observation Post and Listening Post

Companion Guide to Online Training

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This guide is not standalone.

It contains condensed reference material and blank worksheets only. The instruction — the reasoning behind every rule summarized here — lives in the online lessons. Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon. Working from this guide without having completed the corresponding lesson will give you rules without the judgment needed to apply them.

ONLINE TRAINING ACCESS

The MAG-05 course is delivered online at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/mag-05-landing/. Lessons unlock in sequence, and each chapter of Part I below assumes the matching lesson has already been completed.

INSTRUCTOR-LED GROUP TRAINING

Groups running MAG-05 together should complete the online lessons individually, then use the Part II worksheets as the basis for a shared siting and rehearsal exercise on their own ground. Lesson 11 is built for exactly that use.

How to Use This Companion Guide

Complete the online lesson first, every time.

Each chapter in Part I opens with "Reference for Lesson N" and assumes that lesson is done. The tables here are memory aids, not substitutes.

What this guide contains

Part I gives you the condensed reference tables from each lesson — the things worth having on paper at 0300 when the lesson itself is not in front of you. Part II gives you blank worksheets to fill in for your own ground. Part III holds the glossary, a single-page quick reference card, the doctrinal sources, and the open items still outstanding on this course.

What this guide does not contain

No instructional content, no knowledge check answers, and no worked solutions to the practicum. Those stay in the online course, because the reasoning is the part that matters and a table cannot carry it.

Required workflow

1. Complete the online lesson in full, including every knowledge check.
2. Turn to the matching chapter in Part I and confirm you can explain each row, not just read it.
3. Fill in the matching Part II worksheet for your own ground while the lesson is fresh.
4. Carry the worksheets to the ground. They are designed to be used outdoors, not filed.

The rule most groups skip

Every worksheet in Part II asks you to walk the ground rather than assess it from a window or a map. Dead ground in particular cannot be found from the post — it is invisible by definition. A worksheet completed from the kitchen table records what you assumed, not what is there.

Guide Map — What to Reference When

When you need to…	Turn to…
Remind yourself what a post is for, and what it is not	Part I, Chapter 1
Choose a position, or defend a choice someone else made	Part I, Chapter 2 · Worksheet 2
Plan the walk in, the halt, and the walk out	Part I, Chapter 3 · Worksheet 4
Search a sector properly, day or night	Part I, Chapter 4 · Worksheet 5
Work the sector by ear, or run a cross-fix	Part I, Chapter 5 · Worksheet 6
Draw a sector sketch, panoramic sketch, or map overlay	Part I, Chapter 6 · Worksheet 7
Get an observation to the main position in a usable form	Part I, Chapter 7
Set manning, rotation, and noise and light discipline	Part I, Chapter 8 · Worksheet 8
Decide what happens if the post is compromised	Part I, Chapter 9 · Worksheet 4
Check a whole network of posts for gaps	Part I, Chapter 10
Run the practicum on your own ground	Part I, Chapter 11 · Worksheets 1–8
Hand a post over mid-shift	Worksheet 8
Look up a term used in the course	Part III, Glossary
Carry one page into the field	Part III, Quick Reference Card

PART I — QUICK REFERENCE

Chapter 1 — Reference for Lesson 01: Eyes and Ears

Observation post and listening post compared

	Observation Post (OP)	Listening Post (LP)
Primary sensor	Sight, usually assisted by optics	Hearing, unassisted
Sited for	Line of sight onto the approach; seeing without being seen	How sound arrives — landform, wind, water, background noise
Works best	Daylight and good visibility	Darkness, fog, dense vegetation, any restricted visibility
Typical detection	Movement, shape, shine, color out of place	Footfall, voices, vehicles, metal on metal, dogs
Range	As far as ground and optics allow	Shorter, but unaffected by darkness

Capabilities and limitations

Capability	Matching limitation
Field as many as you have people for	Each covers a limited sector; the rest of the ground is uncovered
Round-the-clock coverage — with day and night observation devices	Without that equipment, coverage lapses after dark even while manned
Remains undetected through lack of movement	Concealment fails the moment discipline does
Works day and night, static, minimal logistics	Can be bypassed or overrun; needs support within reach
Extends the security perimeter beyond what you can hold	Weak in open terrain and against overhead observation

What the post is not

Not a fighting position — it is sited for concealment, which makes it a poor place to fight from.

Not a patrol — moving abandons the sector it was placed to cover.

Not a checkpoint — the moment it interacts with anyone it stops being a sensor.

The post's job is to tell you they are coming. Once it has, it has already done its job.

Chapter 2 — Reference for Lesson 02: Siting the Post

The six siting questions

Question	What it decides
What must this post detect?	Whether you need to identify faces, count people, or merely know something moved. Sets required range.
Who is coming, and how?	On foot or vehicle, day or night, familiar with the ground or not.
What does the ground allow?	Sightlines, dead ground, concealment, background, routes in and out. Usually overrules the rest.
How many people do you have?	Two to four per shift, continuously. Limits how many posts you can genuinely sustain.
How long will it be there?	Four hours and four days are different problems in concealment, sanitation, and pattern.
Who else is out there?	Neighbors, livestock, dogs, hunters, delivery drivers. False reports get a post ignored.

Standoff — what sets each limit

Limit	Set by
Near limit	The point at which crossing time is long enough for the actions in your plan to actually run.
Far limit	Support. Beyond the distance help can reach in time, you have placed people outside your perimeter, not extended it.
Between the two	Terrain decides. The position goes where the ground offers a sector; the distance is whatever that turns out to be.

Finding dead ground

You cannot find it from the post — it is invisible by definition. Have someone walk the approach at normal pace while the observer notes every point at which they disappear and reappear. Do it once in daylight and once at last light; the two results will not match.

Checks before committing to a position

Check	Why it has failed a real position
Sightline from lying height, not standing	A meter of height changes what the sector contains.
What is behind you, from their side	Walk out to the approach and look back. If you can pick it out, so can they.
Where the sun sits	A position facing the morning sun is blind for two hours and will flare.
Covered route in and out	If the answer is no, the position is wrong however good the sector.
Any natural reason to walk there	A hide beside the only blackberry patch gets found by a neighbor first.
Holds in weather	Wind and rain change both what it can do and how long anyone stays in it.

Chapter 3 — Reference for Lesson 03: Occupation and Concealment

The occupation sequence

Phase	Standard
Route in	Concealed route, below the skyline. Prefer the longer covered line over the shorter exposed one.
Halt	Stop short and watch the site for 10–15 minutes before occupying. A good site is a place other people also want to be.
Occupy	Move in by a concealed approach. Build from what is already there; cut sparingly and from elsewhere.
Depart	Leave by a different route, and change routes on successive nights. Sterilize the position before you go.

Hide construction

Rule	Reason
Use natural features first	Already consistent with the surroundings; nothing to match.
Cut vegetation from well away	A gap cut around the position points at the position.
Control the spoil	Fresh soil is a different color for days. Spread thin or carry it out.
Break the outline, do not just cover it	A shape covered evenly is still a shape.
Check overhead concealment	Free at construction, impossible to fix later.
Stay back from openings	If observing from a building, interior darkness conceals; standing in the opening does not.

Signature is more than sight

Cooking, tobacco, soap, insect repellent and woodsmoke all travel further than expected and are unmistakably human. So does rubbish. Everything that goes in comes out — wrappers, cases, bottles, cigarette ends.

Time in position

Standard	Detail
24 hours maximum in one position	Tracks converge, crushed vegetation does not recover, reliefs become predictable.
If you cannot move the position	Vary everything else: route in, relief timing, number moving, direction of approach.
Antenna	Site it masked from the direction you are observing. Remove it on departure — it is a straight manufactured line that outlives your occupation.

Chapter 4 — Reference for Lesson 04: Observation Technique

The strip method

Parameter	Standard
Start point	The ground nearest you, then work outward.
Band depth	50 meters or less — shallow enough that the whole band is within attention.
Band relationship	Overlap the previous band. Where two searches merely meet, you have created a seam.
Direction	Alternate each band — right to left, then left to right.
Pauses	Detection happens in the pauses. A continuously moving field of view resolves nothing.

What betrays a concealed thing

Cue	What gives it away
Shape	Nature has few straight lines, right angles, or symmetries.
Shine	Glass, metal, wet plastic, spectacles, watch faces.
Shadow	A shadow with no object, or one that falls the wrong way.
Silhouette	Anything set against a lighter background, especially sky.
Spacing	Natural things are irregularly spaced. Even spacing means someone placed them.
Color and texture	Cut vegetation is a different green and wilts on its own schedule.
Movement	Easiest to detect, least reliable to wait for. A bonus, not the method.

Optics — known errors and corrections

Error	Correction
Ground appears flattened; dead ground is hard to distinguish	Never assess concealment through optics alone — confirm on foot.
Distances in line ahead read shorter than they are	Adjust range estimates before reporting them.
Distances abreast read longer than they are	Same — know which way the error runs.
Object lens flashes in bright weather	Fit a shade: not less than 15 cm for a 50 mm objective, 10 cm for a 30 mm. Card or paper will do; cup hands if nothing else.
Image unsteady	Press eyepieces to the upper eye socket and rest the elbows so head, hands and arms form one wedge.

After dark

Look a little to one side of the object, then a little to the other — the center of the eye is nearly blind at low light, the edges are not.

Search with short, jerky movements and short pauses. A smooth sweep gives the eye nothing to fix on.

Lower the head close to the ground to raise contrast against the skyline.

Dark adaptation takes about 30 minutes and is destroyed in a second by white light.

Chapter 5 — Reference for Lesson 05: Listening Technique

Siting for the ear

Factor	Effect
Wind	Dominant. Carries sound downwind, suppresses it upwind, and raises the noise floor around your own ears.
Temperature	On still clear nights, cool air near the ground bends sound back down and carries it much further.
Water	Continuous broadband noise masks footfall completely within a surprising distance.
Landform	Draws, valleys and cuttings channel sound along themselves.
Ground and vegetation	Hard or frozen ground transmits footfall; leaf litter and snow absorb it. Foliage dulls distant sound as well as quieting it.
Your own noise	Breathing, clothing, radio, a shifting elbow — all closer to your ear than anything you are listening for.

What to record for every sound

Field	Note
Time	Makes a cross-fix possible. Two bearings only combine if they refer to the same moment.
Nature of the sound	Describe before you interpret. The receiver needs what you heard to judge what you think it was.
Estimated distance	Give a bracket, not a figure. If two listeners disagree, record both.
Magnetic azimuth	Face the sound, hold steady, let the needle settle, read it.
Which compass	Instruments develop consistent errors. Without this, a systematic bias silently corrupts every fix.

Cross-fix conditions

Condition	Why
Same event, same time	Two bearings taken minutes apart on a moving source intersect where it never was.
Posts genuinely separated	Nearby positions give near-parallel bearings; the intersection wanders with a degree of error.
Report the fix as an area	Bearing error from compass, ear and observer facing makes the result a zone, not a point.

Highest-value hour of training in the course, and it costs nothing

Have someone drive, walk, or close a car door at measured distances along each approach, at night, while listeners record what they hear and what they estimate. Repeat in different wind conditions. Every listener who does this once becomes markedly better, because they now have reference points for their own ground.

Chapter 6 — Reference for Lesson 06: Sketching and Mapping

Three products, three jobs

Product	Answers	View
Sector sketch	What is this post responsible for, and what can it not see?	Plan, from above
Panoramic sketch	What does the sector look like from here?	Perspective, from the eye
Map overlay	Where exactly did this happen, in terms the group can plot?	Traced onto the map

Sector sketch — the six required elements

Element	Note
Post position, with north	Everything else is relative to it.
Left and right limits, with bearings	The sector boundary, and what makes the seam with the next post checkable.
Range arcs	Converts "just past the second arc" into a distance without re-estimating.
Numbered reference points	Fixed features with bearing and range. The reporting speed-up.
Dead space, labeled with its cause	The only element a relief cannot discover by sitting there and looking. Never omit it.
Data block	Post, grid, date-time group, observer, declination. Unsigned sketches get thrown away.

Reference points are a reporting tool, not a drawing tool

"Two people, forty meters left of RP 2, moving north" is faster to whisper than a grid, harder to mishear, and unambiguous to anyone holding the same sketch. Agree the numbering in advance and make sure every copy matches.

Panoramic sketch

Rule	Reason
Draw only what breaks the skyline	It is a profile, not a landscape. Everything else is clutter.
Exaggerate the vertical	An accurate profile is nearly a straight line. Say on the drawing that you have done it.
Run an azimuth scale along the bottom	Turns the sketch from a picture into an instrument.
Label each feature with bearing and range	A feature named but not located is half a data point.
Sign and date it	Same as the sector sketch.

Map overlay — the procedure

Step	Detail
1. Orient the map, lay the sheet over it	Hold it steady while you work.
2. Trace grid intersections at two opposite corners	These tick marks locate the overlay. Two, not one — a single tick leaves the sheet free to rotate.
3. Sketch what you saw in its true position	Exactly where it would fall on the map underneath.
4. Mark your own position with an X	The receiver needs to know where the observation was made from to judge it.
5. Complete the marginal data	Map title and scale, date and hour observed, signature, lower right. Notes in the margin with arrows.

A symbol with no time on it is a rumor

Every plotted observation carries the time it was made. An overlay that cannot be aged will either be acted on wrongly or ignored entirely.

Chapter 7 — Reference for Lesson 07: Reporting from the Post

Separate the fact from the reading

The shape of a report

FACT: Three men, treeline north of the creek, RP 2 to RP 3, 0247, moving west to east, no vehicles, at least one carrying a long object.

ASSESSMENT: Movement is deliberate and spaced rather than casual. My read is reconnaissance rather than passers-by. Confidence moderate — no faces or equipment seen clearly.

The assessment is welcome. It just has to be labeled, so the receiver can accept the facts and reject the reading.

What goes in — the observation

Element	At a post
Size or strength	How many. Count if you can, bracket if you cannot, and say which you did.
Activity	Described, not interpreted. "Single file, stopping every fifty meters" beats "patrolling".
Location and direction	Where, by reference point or grid, and which way they are heading.
Identification	Who, if you can tell. Unknown is a legitimate entry.
Time of observation	When you saw it, not when you transmitted. These differ.
Equipment and weapons	As observed. "Long object, could not identify" beats a guess stated as fact.

What goes in — about you

Element	Detail
Your location	By terrain feature, by grid, by back azimuth from two definitely located points, or by back azimuth and distance from one.
Your intentions	Staying, observing, withdrawing. Prevents the main position acting on the assumption you are still there.
Source, if secondhand	If someone else told you, say so and say who.

Written, verbal, or sketched

Method	When
Written	Preferred. Block letters, items numbered, paragraphs separated. Survives the messenger's memory.
Verbal	When writing is impractical, the information is uncomplicated, or a messenger carrying paper may be intercepted.
Sketch	When the information is hard to describe. Stands alone or supplements the written message.

Two habits

Reread the message before it goes, and have the second person at the post read it too.

If in doubt a message got through, summarize it in the next one. A receiver who gets it twice has lost nothing.

Negative reports matter when the group formed an expectation. "Nothing came" answers a live question. Send it at the scheduled check-in.

Chapter 8 — Reference for Lesson 08: Manning, Rotation, and Discipline

Two rotations, two different problems

Rotation	Interval	Solves	Cost
Role swap, in place	20–60 min	Attention decay on the glass	None — nobody moves
Shift relief, from base	Hours	Cold, fatigue, hunger, sanitation	Movement to and from the position

Two to four people per post. Two is the working minimum. With one there is no way to relieve the observer without somebody walking out, which is the traffic you were trying to avoid.

Noise

Rule	Note
Nothing above a whisper	Close, mouth near the other person's ear. Not quiet talking.
Prepare gear before you move	Tape what rattles, secure what swings. At the main position, not in the hide.
Hand signals for routine traffic	A dozen agreed signals cover most of a shift.
Earpiece, not speaker	A speaker at the position masks the sector continuously for both of you.
Move slowly	Almost all noise from a static position comes from changing position quickly.

Light

Rule	Note
Red only, lowest usable, shielded, pointed down	Dark adaptation takes ~30 minutes to build and about one second to destroy.
Phones and screens stay off	A screen at minimum brightness is still white light at close range.
Pack so you can find things by touch	Removes most of the reasons anyone reaches for a light.
Cover anything that glows outward	Watch faces, device indicators, luminous sights.

Cold, wet, and fatigue

Rule	Why
Layers on before you get cold	A static observer generates almost no heat. The walk out feels warm and misleads you.
Insulate from the ground	More heat is lost downward than to the air. A mat beats another jacket.

Rule	Why
Eat and drink on a schedule	Both get skipped, and both degrade attention before anyone feels hungry.
Plan sanitation before occupying	Unplanned, it becomes movement and noise at the worst moment.
Rest is not sleep	If both people need sleep, the post needs relieving.

The failure nobody causes — and the audit that finds it

Every discipline can be perfect and the post still gets given away by the traffic to it: reliefs at fixed times, same route, same pair, radio checks on the hour.

Have someone in the group write down everything they know about the post's routine from memory alone, without asking anyone. Whatever they produce is what an attentive outsider could also assemble. Fix the items on that list in order.

Countermeasures: vary relief times by 20–30 minutes at random; vary the route; vary who goes; vary check-in times; move the position where you can.

Chapter 9 — Reference for Lesson 09: Actions On

What counts as compromise

Trigger	
You are seen, or you believe you were seen	The second half matters. You will rarely know.
You are heard	Someone stops, turns, and listens toward the position.
A light shows from the position	For any reason.
Anyone moves directly toward the post	In a way the route they were on does not explain.
Anything of yours is found	A track leading in, a dropped item, the position itself while unoccupied.

The threshold is deliberately low because the costs are asymmetric: a false alarm costs a position and a night, a missed compromise costs the post, possibly the people, and the warning your family was depending on.

The sequence

Step	Detail
1. Do not engage	Unless being overrun or escape is impossible. The post is sited for concealment, which makes it a poor place to fight from.
2. Report	About ten seconds: who you are, what you have, where it is, that you are compromised, which way you are going.
3. Withdraw by the primary route	Alternate if the primary is where the problem is.
4. Dogleg via a rally point	Never the straight line home — it points at your family. The stop lets you count heads and check your back.

Scope note on rally points

This course covers using rally points as withdrawal destinations. Choosing them well — ground findable in darkness, defensible, off the obvious approach — is a terrain skill covered in NAV-05, alongside linkup and route contingencies.

Decided before occupation, never at the time

Decision	Because at the time
What counts as compromise	Nobody will want to be the one who called it early.
Primary and alternate routes off	You will take the route you know, which is the one you came in on.
Near and far rally points	A pair separated in darkness needs somewhere agreed, not somewhere decided.
How the post gets extracted if it cannot walk out	An injured observer 800 meters out has no improvised answer.
What the main position does on the report	The people at the post cannot also run the response.
What happens if nothing is heard at all	Silence is the likeliest signal and the easiest to rationalise away.

Chapter 10 — Reference for Lesson 10: The Post Network

Seams and gaps

Principle	Detail
Overlap, do not merely touch	A seam that only meets has no tolerance. An observer at the far edge of his arc, a post that shifts, a relief — any of those opens it.
Site the set, not the posts	Posts sited one at a time each cover their own approach and leave the ground between as nobody's job.
Common reference points on shared ground	Otherwise the same vehicle is reported as two contacts in two places.

> **The only audit that works**
>
> Have someone walk each approach at night while every post reports what it detects, then compare reports against where the walker actually went. A map check tells you what the network was designed to do. Walking it tells you what it does.

Fewer posts than approaches — the normal condition

Do	Instead of
Rank approaches by what is likely, and man the top two	Manning four thinly — an exhausted observer on a short shift is not coverage
Use choke points to buy coverage	Spreading posts along a frontage
Put unmanned aids on the rest	Accepting the gap and doing nothing

Low-tech aids

Aid	What it does	Placement
Tripwire with can cluster	Noise at the moment of passage	Set back from the trail, not on it
Dry gravel or brush	Nobody crosses it quietly	Across the approach, too wide to step over
Marker stick, string, raked dust	Shows at first light that someone passed	Somewhere you will actually check each morning
Mirror on a stick	See around a corner without exposing your head	Angled so it cannot flash toward the sector

What the network cannot do

Limit	Consequence
Open terrain	A post depends on concealment. Without it the position is visible or it is not where you need it.
Overhead observation	Ground-level concealment is not concealment from above. Fix at construction; impossible later.
Bypass	A network covers approaches. Someone outside all of them is not detected.
Sustainment	The real ceiling is how many people can be out in week six, not on night one.

Chapter 11 — Reference for Lesson 11: Practicum

No answers are printed here.

The practicum scenario and its feedback live in the online lesson. What follows is the checklist for the second half — the part on your own ground, which is the part that matters and which nobody can do for you.

The seven steps

Step	What you do	Worksheet
1. Revisit your approach list	Read the Lesson 01 list again with nine lessons behind you, and change it.	1
2. Site one post properly	Every Lesson 02 check, on the ground: lying height, look back from the approach, sun, standoff, background.	2
3. Find the dead ground	Walker on the approach, observer noting disappearances. Once in daylight, once at last light.	3
4. Build the sector sketch	All six elements. Then hand it to someone who has never been there.	7
5. Write the order	Six lines: position, manning, comms, compromise, routes and rally points, what the main position does.	4
6. Occupy it at night, four hours	Two people, real weather, real darkness. Strip search, sound log, role swap every 30 minutes.	5, 6
7. Debrief against what you predicted	Use the table below.	8

Debrief — what a wrong answer tells you

Question	Finding
Did the sector match your sketch?	Sketches made in daylight routinely overstate what is observable at night.
What did you hear that you did not expect?	Your acoustic picture was assumption rather than your ground.
When did your attention actually go?	Inside thirty minutes means your rotation interval is too long.
How cold did you get, and when?	Cold arrives earlier than anyone plans for. This sets your real shift length.
Could the relief have used your sketch?	Ask them. The only honest test of Chapter 6.
What did you not write down that you should have?	It will be the same thing next time unless the form changes.

The finding that matters most

Compare the approach list you wrote after Lesson 01 against what you know after occupying a position against one of them. The gap between those two documents is the actual measure of what this course was for. Most groups find that the approach they worried about is not the one that would be used, and the one that would be used is not covered by anything.

PART II — WORKSHEETS

Every worksheet in this Part is intended to be reproduced and carried to the ground. Fill them in outdoors, on the position, not at a table.

Worksheet 1 — Approach Inventory

List every way a person on foot or in a vehicle would naturally arrive at your ground — the ways the terrain and roads suggest, not the ways you would choose. One row per approach.

#	Approach — where it starts and where it arrives	On foot / vehicle / both	Covered or open

Worksheet 2 — Post Siting

One sheet per candidate position. Complete on the ground, including the walk out to the approach to look back.

Item	Entry

Prompt	Your entry
Approach this post covers	
Position (grid or description)	
Standoff from main position	
Sector: left limit / right limit	
Can it be supported in time? How?	
Background behind you, seen from the approach	
Sun direction, and hours affected	
Dead ground within the sector	
Natural reason anyone would walk here	
Holds in weather? What changes?	

The check people skip

Walk out to the approach and look back at the position. Write down what specifically gives it away. If nothing does, write that too — and have a second person repeat it, because you know where to look and they do not.

Worksheet 3 — Dead Ground Log

Walker moves along the approach at normal pace. Observer at the position records every point at which the walker disappears and reappears. Run once in daylight and once at last light — the results will differ.

Run (day / last light)	Disappears at	Reappears at	Feature causing it	Approx. width

Worksheet 4 — Occupation Plan Card

Complete before anyone walks out. One card per occupation.

Element	Entry
Position and sector	
Personnel and roles	
Route in (describe, with covered stretches)	
Halt point — where you watch from, for how long	
Route out (must differ from route in)	
Alternate route out	
Rally point 1 (near)	
Rally point 2 (far)	
Communications: primary / alternate	
Scheduled check-in times	
What triggers withdrawal	
What the main position does if we do not return	

Cross-reference

The last four rows are a contingency brief in miniature. PLN-07 covers that brief in full, and NAV-05 covers choosing rally points that can actually be found in darkness. Until those courses are live, this card is the minimum.

Worksheet 5 — Observation Log

Time	What (shape / shine / shadow / silhouette / spacing / color / movement)	Where in sector	Range	Action taken

Worksheet 6 — Sound Log

One line per sound. The compass column is not optional — without it a systematic instrument error cannot be found later.

Time	Nature of sound	Est. distance (bracket)	Azimuth (mag)	Compass used

Worksheet 7 — Sector Sketch

Draw the post at the bottom center. Mark left and right limits with their bearings, range arcs, numbered reference points with range and bearing, and any dead space. Fill in the data block — an unsigned, undated sketch gets thrown away.

Post	Grid	Date-time group

Observer	Magnetic declination	Sheet / scale used

RP	What it is	Bearing	Range
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Worksheet 8 — Post Log and Handover

Carried at the position. The handover block is completed by the outgoing observer and read back by the incoming one before the outgoing observer stands down.

Time on	Observer	Time off	Anything seen or heard this shift

Handover — read back before standing down

Item	Entry
Sector limits and any change to them	
What has been seen or heard, and when	
What has changed in the sector since last light	
Anything expected during this shift	
Communications state and next check-in	
Withdrawal trigger and routes, confirmed	

PART III — APPENDIX

Glossary

Term	Meaning as used in this course
Approach	A route by which someone would naturally arrive at your ground, suggested by terrain and roads rather than chosen by you.
Azimuth	A horizontal direction expressed in degrees clockwise from north. Magnetic azimuth is read directly off a compass.
Compromise	The point at which the post has been seen or heard, or someone moves directly toward it. Triggers withdrawal, not a fight.
Cross-fix	A location obtained by plotting bearings to the same event from two separated posts. The result is an area, not a point.
Dead ground	Ground within the sector that cannot be observed from the position. Invisible from the post by definition.
Hide	The constructed or natural position from which the post observes.
Listening post (LP)	A post built around hearing rather than sight, sited for how sound arrives.
Mutual support	Two posts whose sectors overlap and which are near enough to see, report on, or cover each other.
Observation post (OP)	A post built around sight, sited for line of sight onto an approach.
Rally point	A pre-designated location where a withdrawing element regroups and counts heads.
Sector	The arc of ground a post is responsible for observing, bounded by a left and right limit.
Seam	The line where two adjacent sectors meet. A seam that only touches becomes a gap.
Skylining	Presenting an outline against open sky, which reads as a hard shape at ranges where nothing else is visible.
Standoff	The distance a post sits forward of the main position.
Sterilize	To remove every trace of occupation from a position before departing.

Quick Reference Card

One page. Reproduce, fold, and carry.

Before you go

Plan card complete	Route in, halt, route out, alternate, two rally points
Someone knows	Where you are, how long, what if you do not return
Gear checked	Nothing rattles. All that goes in comes out.
Comms	Primary and alternate set, times agreed, earpiece not speaker

Occupying

Move	Concealed route, below the skyline, longer covered line
Halt	Watch the site 10–15 minutes before you occupy it
Build	Use what is there. Cut elsewhere. Control spoil. Check overhead.
Check	What is behind you, from their side
Antenna	Masked from the sector. Removed on departure.

Observing

Day	Near band first, 50 m max, overlap outward, pause in each
Night	Off-center vision. Short jerky moves and pauses. Head low.
Optics	Ground looks flatter than it is. Fit a shade. Rest elbows.
Rotate	Swap the observing role in place every 20–60 minutes.

Listening

Record	Time, nature, distance bracket, azimuth, which compass
Distance	Give a bracket. If two listeners disagree, record both.
Cross-fix	Same event and time, separated posts. Fix is an area.

If compromised

Do not fight for it	Its job was to tell you they were coming.
Report first	Then withdraw — primary, or alternate if unusable
Never straight home	Dogleg via a rally point. It points at your family.

Doctrinal Sources

Source	What this course draws from it
MCRP 3-11.3, Scouting and Patrolling	Observation post selection and approach; the 10–15 minute pre-occupation watch; the 24-hour manning limit; departure by a different route; antenna masking and removal; the overlapping-strip ground search; night observation technique; simple, panoramic and overlay sketching; report content and position reporting.
FM 34-2-1, Reconnaissance and Surveillance	OP/LP capabilities and limitations; the distinction between posts and patrols, and the warning that patrols used for extended surveillance are a misallocated asset; the requirement for a supporting security element.
Camp X / SOE Syllabus (STS 103)	Observation through field glasses — flattening of ground, distance distortion in line ahead and abreast, object-lens flash and shade dimensions, sector searching with overlap, and the steadying technique.
FM 2-0, Intelligence	Terrain, weather and threat factors affecting the siting of static detection assets.
Fortune Favors the Prepared, "Observation Posts (OP) and Listening Posts (LP)"	The civilian and grid-down framing on which this course is built.

Open Items

Tracked here rather than silently resolved. Current as of this edition.

#	Item	Status
1	MAG-01 through MAG-04 are planned but not built; MAG-05 ships first and stands alone	Confirmed — no prerequisites
2	PLN-07 (contingency brief) referenced in Chapter 9 and Worksheet 4; course not yet live	Open — next build
3	NAV-05 rescoped to rally points, linkup and route contingencies; GOTWA consolidated under PLN-07	Open — second build; Training Development Plan needs updating
4	Whether NAV-05 covers linkup between two separated groups, or only a returning element	Open — decision pending
5	Companion guide palette diff against COM-03 reference file	Open — reference file not yet supplied
6	Cross-file color diff of the course HTML against a shipped fftp-vec file	Open — reference file not yet supplied
7	Course renumbering, if MAG series numbering changes before launch	Open