Marine Corps Martial Arts & Force Fitness Semi Annual Newsletter

A message from Human Performance Branch

Marines,

As we continue to enhance the physical and mental readiness of our force, your role as Martial Arts Instructors and Force Fitness Instructors remains vital. Your leadership on the deck, in the gym, and across the battlespace directly shapes our warfighting capability.

We're moving forward with key initiatives to align human performance programs more closely with operational demands. Stay engaged—your feedback, expertise, and innovation on the ground are crucial to our shared success.

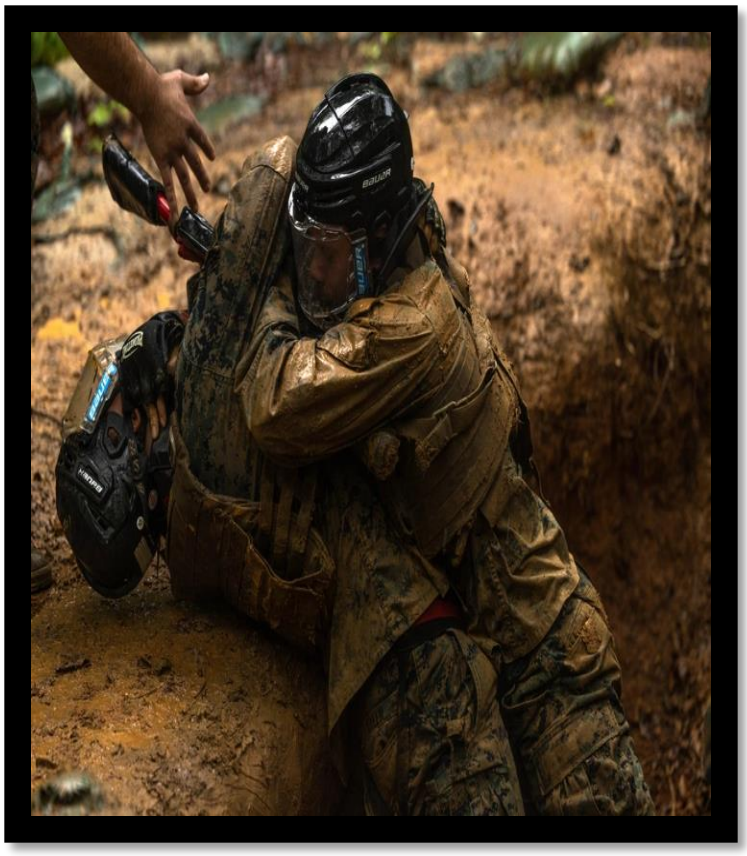
Thank you for your relentless commitment to building a more lethal, resilient, and combat-ready Corps.

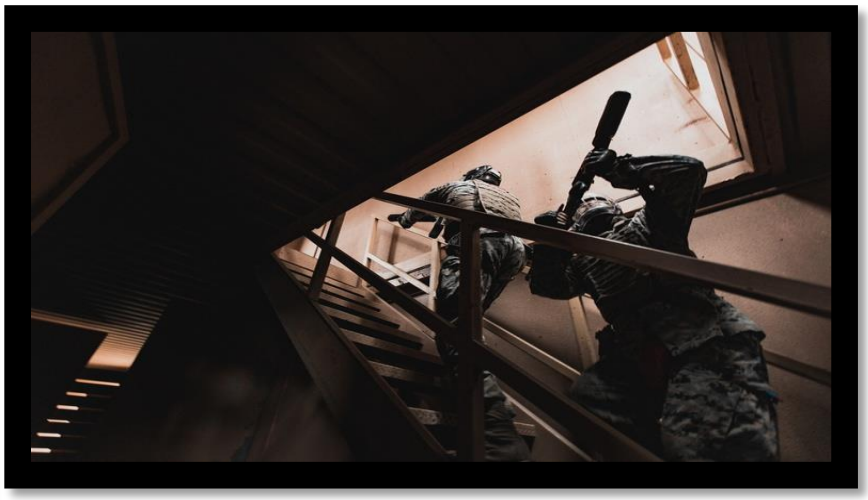
Semper Fidelis,
Human Performance Branch

Evolving the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP)

The MCMAP continues to adapt to modern threats while honoring traditional combat values. This edition highlights new training methodologies integrating cutting-edge biomechanics and mental resilience techniques designed to maximize combat effectiveness.

- **MAIT Course Prep:** Your success in the MAIT Course starts now. New preparation guidelines are available, covering vital topics such as nutrition, combat conditioning, and student expectations. Download the **"MAI/T Preparation "** document and review the **"MAI/T Prep Cards "** on MarineNet today.
- **Prepare for the Battlefield: Enhanced MAIT Course Training!** The MAIT Course now features even more realistic, battlefield-like scenarios designed to hone your decision-making skills under pressure. Coupled with workshops and free sparring, these new training modules provide a comprehensive and effective close combat skillset.





Marines Sharpen Combat Skills in MAIT Courses

Marines engaged in realistic combat training during Martial Arts Instructor Trainer Courses at Marine Corps Base Quantico, focusing on building search and engagement skills in simulated building scenarios and close-quarters fighting in training holes; these courses aim to enhance the Marine Corps' lethality by training Marines to excel in chaotic combat scenarios.

Force Fitness Focus: Optimizing Physical Readiness

U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant, Albert Ludwig, a force fitness instructor trainer with Training Command, right, interacts with Bowie State football players prior to a force fitness physical training event at The Basic School on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, Aug. 9, 2025. FFI's invited BSU's football team to a team building PT aiming to train the players on cooperation and small unit leadership in preparation for their upcoming regular season.

U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Philip Newcomb, (left) a student with Force Fitness Instructor Course 3-25, conducts the obstacle course at The Basic School on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, June 12, 2025. The FFI course trains Marines to improve their warfighting capability to maximize unit physical readiness and optimize mental and physical performance. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Braydon Rogers).

Gunnery Sergeant Jack Pavao, a Force Fitness Instructor, evaluates FFI students on Camp Lejeune, NC, as part of a curriculum designed to enhance mental and physical performance, reduce injuries, and maximize unit readiness through functional exercise science.

2025 Force Fitness Symposium After Action

- Units' Fitness Program should integrate physical training, nutrition education, injury prevention, and collaboration with Human Performance professionals.
- Questions to ask yourself as a Force Fitness Instructor: Does the unit have an established PT battle rhythm? Is it improving fitness broadly? Is it enjoyable, repeatable, and purposeful?
- What Force Fitness Instruction is not: lectures, power points, "All-Hands" training. What it should be! Whiteboard sessions, movement development sessions, peer coaching, nutrition feedback
- **"Introduction to Coaching"** class on Marine Net!!
- Leverage assets, refer to the chart below.

MAI/T	Schedule weekly or bi-weekly sustainment or technique block instruction. Follow with free sparring or training.
MCIWS	Create swim progression aimed at developing the skill of swimming.
Athletic Trainers	Conduct movement analysis and aid in training plan design by identifying appropriate mobility exercises.
Chaplain	Frequent group discussions on purpose, values, and sense of belonging.
MFLC	Lead mindfulness and mental skills sessions.
SemperFit/WARR S&C	Conduct performance assessments. Collaborate on training plan design. Frequent coaching feedback and mentorship.
Dietitian or Nutritionist	Invite them to the workspace to have organic conversations about nutrition. They see how Marines operate naturally.

The 39th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Eric M. Smith, left, speaks with force fitness instructors within 2nd Marine Logistics Group during a showcasing event at the 2nd Marine Logistics Group Human Performance Center.

25 Years of MCMAP: Forging Warriors, Enhancing Readiness

Marine Corps Ret. Gen. James L. Jones, 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, speaks to Marines attending the Marine Corps Martial Arts 25th anniversary symposium hosted by the Martial Arts and Fitness Center of Excellence on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, Oct. 8, 2025. The goal of this symposium was to provide the Fleet Marine Force with instructions and practical application on the new tan-black belt syllabus and the new free sparring events while integrating guided discussions fostering character development and recounting the storied tradition of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant, Karyme Camargo, a Martial Arts Instructor and a transmissions chief, conducts knife techniques on Gunnery Sergeant Jesus Cervantes, a MAI and basic aircraft maintenance Marine.

U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Arkel Brown, left, a Martial Arts Instructor Trainer and mortarman, with the Martial Arts and Fitness Center of Excellence, The Basic School, speaks to Marines attending the Marine Corps Martial Arts 25th anniversary symposium.

U.S. Marine Corps Ret. Gen. James L. Jones, 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, center, Martial Arts Instructor and Instructor Trainers, and former Martial Arts Fitness and Center of Excellence staff pose for a group photo during the Marine Corps Martial Arts 25th anniversary symposium.

Get IGMC ready: Expert tips for Human Performance!

-Boost Supervision: Assign a MAIT/FFI to the training section to directly support the Operations Chief and enhance oversight of fitness and martial arts programs.

-Policy Driven Fitness: Develop and implement a clear unit policy that integrates structured MCMAP and physical fitness training into the yearly training schedule or existing battle rhythm. This ensures consistent and documented fitness development.

-Master the MCOs: Ensure your training sections, FFIs, and CPTRs have a thorough understanding of *all* Marine Corps Orders (MCOs) related to annual fitness tests. Emphasize standardized repetition counting (pull-ups, ammo can lifts) to ensure fair and accurate testing.

-Invest in MAI Development: Prioritize sending qualified MAIs from your Battalion to the Martial Arts Instructor Trainer Course. This will build internal expertise and improve MCMAP instruction quality.

-Data-Driven Decisions: Require your Unit FFI to provide the commander with in-depth analyses of Annual Physical Fitness Test (PFT) and Combat Fitness Test (CFT) data. Highlight trends and areas for improvement.

-Commander Education: The FFI should proactively deliver targeted command briefs that improve the Commander's understanding of the unit's overall fitness level, MCMAP program effectiveness, and related performance metrics.

-Collaborative Training Approach: Conduct regular monthly meetings with MAITs, MCIWS, and Athletic Trainers to collaboratively discuss training goals, identify challenges, and share best practices.

-Accessible Resources: Implement a system (e.g., QR code platform) to share standardized diets, Workout of the Day (WOD) plans, and key Points of Contact (POCs). This ensures that program information is easily accessible to all Marines.

-Promote Water Survival: Consistently publish and actively promote Marine Corps Water Survival Program (MCWSP) qualification requirements and training opportunities throughout the unit.

-Track & Maintain Water Survival Readiness: Implement a system to regularly assess and track MCWSP qualification status to ensure all Marines meet mandated training requirements.

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