

Importance of High-Altitude Assault Training

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Abstract: Recent armed conflicts in the Middle East and other regions demonstrate that nearly 80% of modern military engagements occur in urban areas, where the enemy often hides among civilians and uses high-rise buildings as defensive strongholds. These circumstances make high-altitude assault training a crucial element in preparing elite military units to operate effectively in dense, multi-story environments while minimizing civilian casualties. This article examines the tactical significance, methods, and practical applications of high-altitude assault training for special-purpose units. Emphasis is placed on reconnaissance and maneuvering in urban infrastructure, covert movement, room entry techniques, casualty evacuation, and the use of specialized alpine equipment. Vertical descent methods, including both positive and negative techniques, as well as emergency descent options without standard devices, are analyzed. The article further outlines the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for fighters to conduct high-risk operations in urban warfare. Drawing on national and international military experiences, the study underscores the vital role of high-altitude assault training in enhancing operational efficiency, safety, and mission success in modern combat scenarios.

Keywords: high-altitude assault training, admission, cadet, building (construction), special equipment, climbing equipment, safety, requirement, order, tactics.

Recent combat operations in the Middle East and around the world have clearly demonstrated that nearly **80% of modern military engagements** are taking place **in urban areas and populated settlements**. For the enemy, the most advantageous tactic remains operating among civilians and taking cover in buildings and infrastructure — often using innocent people as human shields to force the opposing side into meeting their demands.

Such conditions significantly complicate efforts to either **rescue hostages** or **neutralize enemy forces**, as any action must be weighed against civilian safety and complex structural environments. This once again highlights the **critical importance and relevance of High-Altitude Assault Training**, a specialized discipline aimed at preparing elite units to operate effectively in **multi-story buildings and dense urban environments**.

Moreover, in order for **urban combat units within the Armed Forces and security structures** to conduct high-risk operations **efficiently and with minimal casualties**, it is essential to continuously analyze modern warfare trends and **study the tactical experiences of foreign militaries**. Doing so informs **practical training modules** and ensures that High-Altitude Assault Training remains up-to-date, rigorous, and mission-effective.

The skills and experience necessary for military personnel to conduct combat operations in urban areas and populated settlements are developed through **specialized tactical and high-altitude assault training exercises**.

High-Altitude Assault Training plays a vital role in preparing cadets (or military servicemen in active units) to operate effectively in high-rise buildings and other urban infrastructure. This includes **conducting reconnaissance and seizing elevated positions**, moving covertly and safely through multi-story environments, and utilizing **specialized alpine equipment and assault gear** appropriately. Cadets are taught how to **ascend and descend buildings**, enter rooms through windows, and maintain personal and operational safety during complex maneuvers.

In addition, trainees gain hands-on experience in **administering first aid** to injured personnel and evacuating casualties from within buildings — all of which form essential components of the course.

As modern conflict increasingly centers around urban warfare, **high-altitude assault training has become one of the most essential elements** in preparing units for real-world missions in densely populated environments.

During practical sessions, cadets **repeatedly execute assigned tasks** - individually, in pairs, or as part of a unit - **under the close supervision of an instructor**. This hands-on repetition strengthens their tactical understanding and ensures skill mastery. Instructors guide the cadets through practical application, correct their mistakes, and help them learn to make effective, independent decisions in dynamic scenarios. Importantly, theoretical instruction is never allowed to replace or dilute the practical nature of the training.

Distinctive Features of High-Altitude Assault Training

- 1) Studying the layouts of urban and regional residential areas, including methods for covert and silent ascent and descent on rooftops of high-rise buildings, and organizing artificial support points;
- 2) Learning how to enter rooms in high-rise buildings through windows and doors, tactics for encountering, capturing, or neutralizing enemies during movement, and ensuring safe maneuvers;
- 3) Mastering tactical, special-tactical, and technical methods and techniques for movement within high-rise buildings in urban environments;
- 4) Acquiring knowledge of methods for evacuating hostages and the wounded from high-rise buildings.

High-altitude assault training is applied during special operations aimed at capturing or eliminating illegal armed groups and militants entrenched in high-rise buildings within urban settings.

Based on extensive experience and analysis of numerous special operations, these complex tasks are assigned to specially trained assault unit fighters who possess advanced practical skills in high-altitude assault, are deeply proficient in explosive operations, and have professional-level technical and tactical knowledge.

Conducting Special Operations in Urban Environments

Planning and successfully executing special operations in urban settings involves a high degree of responsibility and complexity. During operations in multi-story high-rise buildings, **combat tactical groups** are organized, with the **high-altitude assault group** playing one of the most crucial roles.

Members of the high-altitude assault group must be thoroughly familiar with the tactical and technical characteristics of alpine equipment, proper usage techniques, and maintenance procedures.

The essential equipment for a high-altitude assault fighter includes:

- 1) Safety belts (waist-leg harness or chest-waist-leg harness);
- 2) Main rope;
- 3) Carabiners;
- 4) Specialized descent devices (SDDs);
- 5) Ascenders;
- 6) Protective helmet;
- 7) Protective goggles with mask;
- 8) Tactical gloves;
- 9) Knee and elbow pads;
- 10) Comfortable and flexible clothing;
- 11) High-traction footwear.

Military personnel who have not undergone high-altitude assault training are strictly prohibited from performing independent descents using specialized descent devices.

Securing ropes on building rooftops and ensuring safety involves diverse methods. In all cases, stations must be set up in accordance with alpine training safety protocols and self-preservation rules. Such stations can be installed on rooftops near ventilation shafts, elevator shafts, and waste disposal chutes.

Using alpine equipment to develop initial descent skills primarily involves mastering vertical descent techniques from buildings.

Vertical Descent Techniques from Buildings

Vertical descent from buildings is carried out in two main ways: the **negative method** and the **positive method**.

- 1) The **negative method** involves descending with the rope anchored at the heel level of the descender, typically secured at the rooftop.
- 2) The **positive method** involves descending with the rope anchored at the shoulder level of the descender, also secured at the rooftop.

In multi-story buildings, various techniques are used to practice descent elements (both during daytime and nighttime) utilizing alpine equipment.

Initially, trainees learn to stand on the wall without a weapon, secure the descent device to the stopping system, jump off the wall, walk, and slide down.

Next, trainees practice descending without a weapon using the “**spider**” **technique**, as well as descending headfirst. Exercises include walking down the wall backward (face away from the wall), descending in the “spider” position, and moving headfirst down the wall.

In emergency situations, when descent devices are unavailable, descent from buildings can be performed in two ways:

- 1) Using carabiners and auxiliary knots to descend;
- 2) Descending without special equipment.

Techniques for turning headfirst, observing rooms, and entering buildings through windows — both with and without weapons — include:

- 1) Turning headfirst and observing rooms using the unarmed “**spider**” technique;
- 2) The method of pointing the head downward;
- 3) Transitioning to the “spider” position while facing head downward.
- 4) Unarmed entry into buildings through windows using the “Pendulum” technique;
- 5) Unarmed entry into buildings through windows using the “180° Pendulum” technique.
- 6) Entry into rooms by **jumping through windows**.

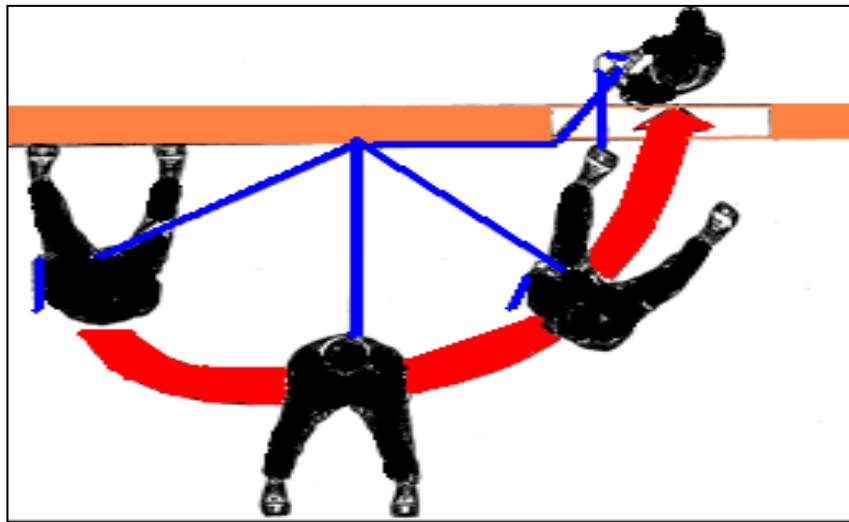


Figure 2: The “180° Pendulum” Technique

All the above-mentioned techniques and methods constitute the essential skills that every combatant must know and be able to perform.

Requirements for Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies of a High-Altitude Assault Fighter

A fighter must possess knowledge and skills in the following areas:

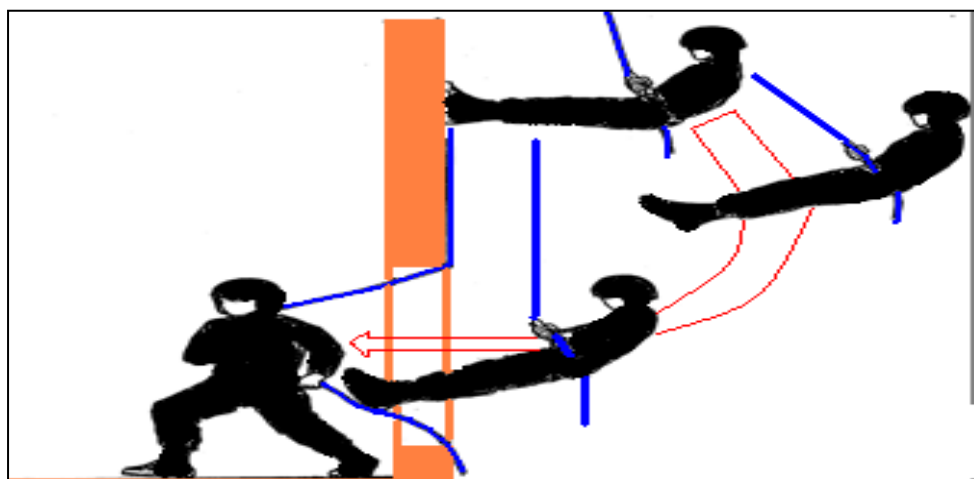


Figure 3: Side View of Entry by Jumping Through a Building Window

- Organizational structure, composition, armaments, combat techniques, tasks, and capabilities of special-purpose units;

- Conducting combat operations within urban areas, including the movements and actions of military personnel and units;
- Methods and tools for commanding special-purpose units;
- Procedures for drafting, reproducing, accounting, and storing relevant documents;
- Understanding the characteristics of urban combat and their impact on unit maneuvers during battle;
- Organizing and conducting cooperative combat operations with units from other security agencies in urban environments;
- Movements and actions of military personnel and units during urban combat;
- Decision-making and situational modeling;
- Safe, covert, and efficient movement within high-rise buildings;
- Providing first aid to the wounded and injured, as well as their transportation (evacuation).

Conclusion. High-altitude assault training has become an indispensable component of modern military preparedness, particularly in light of the increasing prevalence of urban warfare. By mastering specialized descent techniques, covert entry maneuvers, casualty evacuation, and the proficient use of alpine equipment, military personnel acquire the skills necessary to operate effectively in high-rise environments where traditional combat approaches are insufficient. The training ensures not only operational success but also the safety of both servicemen and civilians in complex urban settings. Moreover, the continuous adaptation of training programs to incorporate lessons learned from global conflicts and foreign military practices guarantees that tactical units remain capable of meeting evolving threats. Ultimately, high-altitude assault training equips special-purpose units with the knowledge, confidence, and technical expertise required to perform decisive missions in densely populated areas while reducing risks and casualties.

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