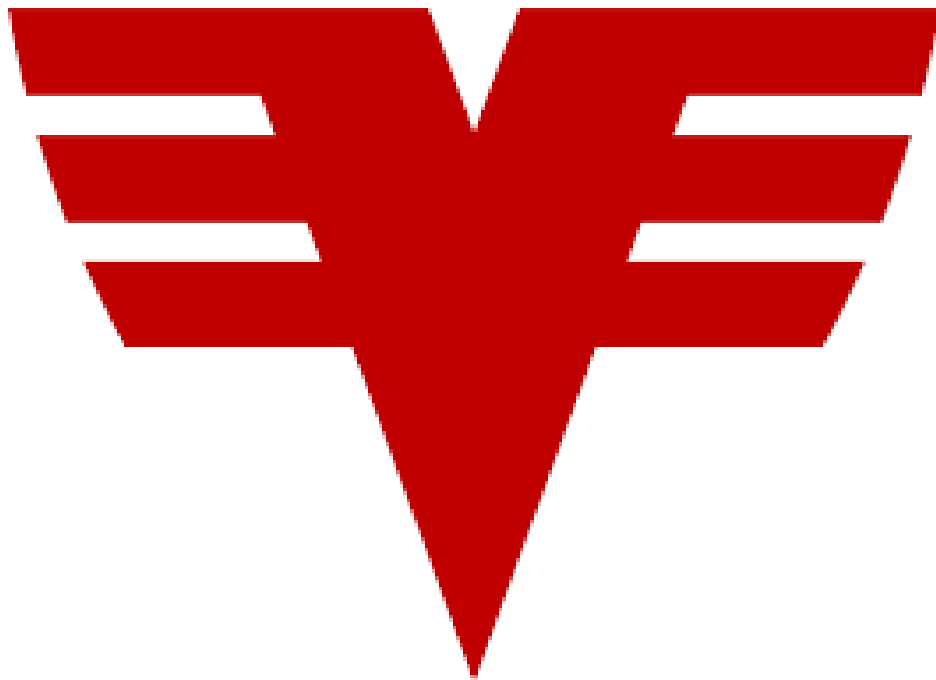


Handbook for Members of the 353rd Infanterie Division



7/15/2026 Edition

The 353. Infanterie Division Reenacted

At the time of this writing (February 2020) the 353. Infanterie Division is both the largest German unit and the largest unit of any nationality within the WWII Historical Reenactment Society (HRS). As such, there is a need for clear communication, definitions, as well as procedures for how to handle things as they arise. We are an active unit that does a lot and tries to cover all aspects of life for typical German Army (Heer) soldiers and not just combat. Our members portray the common German Infantry soldiers and associated support personnel. Our goal is to promote awareness and understanding on the part of the public. These elements being the world history from 1939-1945; specifically the military history of WWII, through the staging of public educational exhibitions, lectures, displays, and reenactments of typical battles fought between the Allied and Axis forces in WWII.

Non-Political Statement

The 353rd is strictly a non-political organization. The 353rd and its members are in no way affiliated with any real, radical political organizations (i.e., KKK, Aryan Nation, American Nazi Party, etc.), nor do we represent, embrace or advocate, the philosophies and or political goals of any radical, political, fascist, racist, anti-Semitic organizations and/or individuals and/or any supremacist doctrine. We are not Nazis! The 353rd and its members have no affiliations with either the hate groups of today or the political ideologies of Germany from 1933 to 1945 (NSDAP/Nazi Party). We do not condone any activities that may be construed as exemplifying the Nazi regime within the framework of Nazi Party politics, nor do we tolerate any activities that may be construed as Pro-Nazi ideology. If you are looking for such activities or support such organizations you are not welcome here. Look elsewhere, we have no place for you.

Who we represent

Most of the members our unit reenacts ordinary soldiers of the fifth company of the 941. Infanterie Regiment of the 353. Infantry Division. We are not a rank-heavy unit. Despite being the largest unit in the HRS our highest-ranking officers are platoon or company level. We have a small number on non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and the remainder are enlisted personnel. The 353rd Infanterie Division was formed Nov. 5, 1943 in Brittany, France as part of the 21st wave of recruitment. It was typical of most mid-late war divisions in that it was created with veteran soldiers pulled from various companies of older divisions that were mauled in fighting in Russia (371st, 328th, 137th, 306th, and 389th Infantry Divisions) and Italy (334th Infantry). These vets acted as mentors for the new, green troops who had never seen combat before, who were used to fill the rest of the unit's ranks. The division included more than 1,700 Ost troops (Russian volunteers) who served under German commanders. The division also had a sizable number of Carpathian Volksdeutsche (ethnic Germans who lived in the Carpathian region of Hungary and Romania.) We outfit ourselves in a late war manner with a mix of uniforms and equipment.

Joining the Unit

People interested in joining the unit should reach out to the new member coordinator (*Doug Strong*) and let them know of their intent to join the unit. At that point, they will be entered onto the unit roster as a recruit (**Rekrut**). Most new members are expected to develop and acquire a kit for a basic infantry impression. This is especially true for younger, physically-fit, members of military service age. Members below the age of 18 will typically develop a temporary, non-combat infantry impression as a medic (Sanitater), stretcher-bearer (Krankentraeger), ammunition carrier, etc until they turn 18. Older members, members not in good health, or those with particular interests may join the unit in a non-combat capacity in the headquarters, feldgendarme, medical, or support services sections. They should notify the new unit coordinator of this intent when they join. Members wishing to join one of the non-combat sections of the unit should acquire a uniform and kit appropriate to that impression and are not required to obtain an infantry uniform and kit. Everyone starts off as a Private. Regardless of rank achieved in other units or real-life military service. (Special dispensation for rank is at the discretion of the Unit Commander and Unit Command staff.) There is a 353rd Infanterie Division Members Group on Facebook where we discuss a lot of things. Ask to join. It is critical to participate in this group if you wish to participate as a member of the unit. Membership in the 353.ID is open to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, etc...

Costs, Dues, and Fees

In order to reenact with the 353rd you will need to be a member of the WWII Historical Re-enactment Society (HRS) Membership presently costs \$20 per year and lasts through December 31st each year. It is not prorated so you might as well join early. Most members renew in January and it lasts throughout the whole year. You will need to ask one of the unit members to share the link and password for joining the HRS since the online registration link changes every two months. You will also need to pay our unit dues of \$20 per year. We pay annually at the Rockford event. Though there is a link on the unit website to pay via PayPal. This fee covers things such as food, awards and other things the unit needs to support its members. If you are not present at Rockford please contact one of our leaders to figure out where to mail your dues.

Types of members in the 353.Infanterie Division

Probationary Members (Rekrut): defined as persons who pay dues and who wish to fall in with the unit at events and who have made a formal application to the unit. These members are not eligible to earn awards, rank, and commendations through any events they attend or work they do during their probationary period will count once membership within the unit has been achieved. Persons desiring membership must fill out a probationary membership application and attend at least three events within the first year to be considered for a new or transfer membership. Membership will be

determined by the Command Group. If they are unable to attend three events within the first year their probationary status may be extended for as long as necessary.

Minor Members (Rekrut): defined as persons under the age of 18, who pay dues and who attend at least three events per year. These members are eligible to earn awards, rank, and commendations. These members are ineligible to hold positions of command within the unit until they become legal adults. Minor members must comply with all event and HRS age restrictions, rules and regulations. Minors who reach the age of majority are eligible to be full members of the unit on their 18th birthday so long as they have met other membership requirements.

Full Members (Soldaten): defined as persons who pay dues and who attend at least three events per year. These members are eligible to earn awards, rank, and commendations. These members are eligible to hold positions of command within the unit.

Associate Members: defined as persons who were full members of the unit but became inactive either due to a change in life circumstances or through a geographic move. These people are welcome to participate with the unit at events when they are present or at unit functions. These members may retain any rank or awards they possess but are ineligible to receive new awards or hold positions of command within the unit.

Former Members: defined as persons who were once members of the unit but were removed from the roster or who requested to be removed from the roster. These people must apply to the Command Group to be able to participate in any manner within the unit.

Banned Members: defined as persons who were once members of the unit but were removed from the roster due to previous behavior. These persons may not participate in any manner within the unit.

Positions within the unit

Command Group: defined as full members who hold the rank of Obergefreiter or above and who are selected by the unit commander and other members of the Command Group to function as the decision making body for the unit. Possessing the rank of Obergefreiter or above does not automatically make one a member of the Command Group. (*Dave, George, Bill, Tom N., Brian, Doug, Tom G., Jenna, Shannon*)

Authenticity Committee: defined as the command group as a whole. This group may elect at a future to date to form a separate committee and appoint additional non-command members to it. (***Dave, George, Bill, Tom N., Brian, Doug, Tom G., Shannon***)

Award Committee: defined as a subgroup of the Command group who will be reviewing the award structure, maintaining records of who has what award and securing the necessary badges and medals. The actual presentation of the awards will be done at an event such as Rockford with a high turnout and by the highest-ranking member of the unit unless other arrangements are made. (***Tom G., Doug***)

New Member Coordinators: defined as one or more members of the command group who specifically respond to information requests generated through personal contact, emails, social media or the website. These people will help the new members acquire appropriate uniforms, understand the workings and culture of the unit, and support their attendance at events. This person will also help the new member find a battle-buddy or mentor as needed. (***Doug***)

Sections within the unit

Infantry: This is the largest section within the unit. Most of our members participate as combat infantrymen at most events. Many members of the unit also belong to one of the other sections as well. (Unit Commander: **Dave Fornell**)

Cavalry: This is a section that ebbs and flows in terms of participation due to the requirements. Obviously members of this section need a horse and equestrian skills which limits the numbers of members qualified to participate as cavalrymen. An appropriate kit for riders is similar to the infantry section, however additional tack and kit are required for the horse. (Section Leader: **Open**)

Pionier: This section is the unit's newest formal section. Members of this section are those who are interested in demolitions and defensive fortifications. At tactical events, this section is often the difference between winning and losing. (Section Leader: **Tom Novosel**)

Feldgendarme: This section is for the military police. This section is responsible for crowd control, security, weapon safety checks, and more. Members of this section may either be full-time members who only have a Feldgendarme impression or part-time members who have FG as a secondary impression. (Section Leader: **Dan Bauer**)

Medical: This section is for medical services. Members of this section may either be full-time members who only have a medical impression or part-time members who have medical as a secondary impression. Members of this section could include, Doctors

(Arzt), nurses (Schwester & Helferin), combat medics (Sanitater), stretcher-bearers (Krankentraeger) and more. (Section Leader: **Shannon Yaw**)

Headquarters: this section is often used as an alternative to infantry participation. Not everyone is interested in being a combat soldier. Within this section, we have company clerks (Schreiber), Female support workers (Helferin), Communications (Nachrichten) and Officers. (Section Leader: **Bill Larsen**)

Support: In addition to participation in the Infantry section, many of our members have alternative roles within the support services. We have cobblers (Schuster), tailors (Scheider), armorers (Waffenmeister), blacksmiths (Schmeid), cooks (Koch), photographers (Kriegsberichter), and more. If you wish to develop a support services skill or role you are encouraged to do so. (Section Leader: **Doug Strong**)

Procedures

Procedure for purchasing and reimbursement: If you are asked by the command group to make a purchase for the unit you should feel confident that you will be reimbursed by the unit. In order to secure this reimbursement, you will need to present a receipt for the purchase to the unit treasurer (**Jenna Cook**) with an explanation of what was purchased and who authorized it. Be sure to obtain prior permission to make any purchases from one or more members of the command group.

Procedure for Minor Member participation: The HRS rules clearly state the following about participation in battles, *“Any person under the age of 16 may NOT carry any type of weapon or participate in public or tactical battles in any capacity.”* and *“Members 16-17 may participate in public or tactical battles but must sign any waivers and must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian or their designee.”* It goes on to state *“Minor aged family members, below the age of 18, will be the sole responsibility of said parent(s) or guardian(s) who will sign a separate membership application naming the minor and sign all appropriate waivers and/or other documents required for the minor attending each event. Minors, under the age of 16, will have no voting rights nor may they participate in tactical or public battles in any capacity. They may, however, participate at Living History and Static Displays providing the portrayal is age-correct and non-political in nature. Minors, under the age of 16 shall not be allowed to handle any weapons, including edged weapons, ammunition, non-functioning reproduction armaments or ordinance of any kind or nature.”* The 353 further requires that participants under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian with them on-site for all public events where weapons may be discharged. The parent or legal guardian is not required to be in uniform or participate in the activities but they must be present and available in case of emergency. The presence of parent/guardians for training events, living history displays, unit parties, and other functions will be at the discretion of the host and the members of the command group present.

Procedure for Earning Awards: Awards are based on a number of criteria. One of the main criteria has to do with attending events. When crediting unit members for events attended in their records, we include all events they attend, HRS or non-HRS. However, the member needs to attend the event as a member of the unit as their primary German impression, UNLESS they were asked to attend or given the OK to wear other impressions. Some events we have attended are German heavy and for a couple of 353 members that attended, the event organizer asked if we could do US to help balance the dance card. This might also include parades where we ask members to wear allied impressions rather than German if they have the uniforms. Or, as at Rockford, we create a divisional HQ display, so we allow guys to wear high ranking officer impressions. When the unit attends an event as a group, they should be supporting the unit with their impression, not going out with another unit and claiming credit for the 353. An example to note is when we attend the Ohio D-Day event, where all our guys fall in with the OKW, that is OK because we are attaching ourselves as a group to another unit to make a larger group. But if they attend a tactical with an SS or Soviet group while the rest of our guys are doing 353, they don't get credit.

Procedure for dealing with disciplinary actions against members: When issues related to gross misconduct (i.e. safety violations, legal issues, sexual misconduct, racist behavior, etc...) by a member of the unit come to the attention of the Command Group they will conduct a formal investigation of the incident. This investigation will include interviews with relevant persons and with the member in question. The Command Group will formally meet to consider the allegations and make a decision regarding appropriate action to take. Examples of the actions taken when the allegations are found to be valid could include a formal warning, reduction to probationary status, expulsion from the unit, or other actions deemed appropriate by the Command Group. Should the allegations be made against one or more members of the Command Group the remainder of the members of the Command Group will meet and conduct the investigation and take appropriate action as outlined above.

Military Behavior and Courtesy

Procedure for Saluting: The Wehrmacht used two types of salutes. The first is the standard hand salute: right hand, palm down, fingers extended, tips of the index finger and middle finger touching the bottom edge of the headgear just above and to the right of the right eyebrow, upper arm held parallel to the ground. This is the only salute authorized for troops wearing headgear. This was the standard military salute of the German armed forces. The second type of salute was the "Deutsche Gruss", otherwise known as the "Nazi" salute. This was supposed to be the official salute for all personnel without headgear on. This was largely ignored by the bulk of the regular armed forces. After the attempt on Hitler's life in the summer of 1944, he made this salute the official salute for all the armed forces to show their loyalty to the fuhrer. This order was also largely ignored by the regular military branches. ***The Deutsche Gruss is prohibited by HRS rules**, and besides, we are a regular army unit which would have likely ignored

this decree.

Procedure for who salutes whom: You must first understand the German rank structure. The Wehrmacht's ranking system is broken into four classes: enlisted personnel, junior NCOs, NCOs, and officers. Junior NCOs, called Unteroffizier without Portepee, consist of the ranks Unteroffizier, Unterfeldwebel and Fahrich (officer candidates). Senior NCOs, called Unteroffizier mit Portepee, include all NCOs of Feldwebel and higher in rank and are easily identified by one or more pips on their shoulder boards.

It is the tradition of the German Army that enlisted personnel and junior NCOs are required to salute all officers and all senior NCOs. All NCOs of feldwebel rank and above are to be treated with the same respect and officers. All ranks of NCOs and officers are to salute officers or NCOs who are higher in rank than they are. As in the U.S. Army, the subordinate is required to salute first and hold the salute until the superior drops his salute. A subordinate dropping his salute before a superior drops his is in violation of military etiquette and is liable to be reprimanded. Soldiers are required to salute flags and standards, memorials to fallen heroes, veterans, holders of the highest awards of bravery (regardless of their rank), and, of course, the fuhrer. Gloves must be removed before saluting, and nothing is to be held in either hand nor dangling from the mouth (i.e. cigarettes).

When you pass an officer or NCO the proper procedure is as follows: at six paces from the officer you straighten up and walk at attention, keeping your left hand motionless at your side and saluting with your right. You hold your salute until two paces passed the officer.

In an open group of soldiers, the first soldier to notice the oncoming officer should snap to with his attention stance without saluting and warn the others behind him with an "Achtung!" The most senior officer in the group is the one who is to execute the actual salute, and the whole group is to hold their attention stance until two paces passed the officer.

In cases where soldiers are carrying something that would prevent them from properly saluting, only the walking at attention is required.

In a closed formation, such as on parade, the group's leader will bring the group to the "goose step" upon the command "Achtung!" At approximately six paces before reaching the officer (which according to regulation would be to the right of the column) the group leader will give the order "Augen recht!", upon which everyone except those forming the right side of the formation execute an eyes right, Those forming the right side maintain the eyes front (this to watch where the formation is going). Once the last man is at least two paces passed the officer, the command "Augen gerade aus!" (eyes front) followed by "Im Gleichschritt -Marsch!" will bring the formation back to a regular march. In a combat situation, only the highest-ranking enlisted man is responsible for saluting an officer, thus allowing others to attend to their duties.

When passing an officer in a closed formation with rifles, the group leader will say, "Das Gewehr über!" then, "Achtung - präsentiert das Gewehr!" then "Augen recht!"

As the individual soldier passes the officer they follow him with their eyes until two steps past him, then snap their heads back forward. When an officer enters enlisted men's barracks etc or approaches a group of soldiers at rest the soldier who notices him first brings the group to attention with "Achtung!" The highest-ranking soldier carries out the salute and replies to any inquiry the superior may ask. The officer may give the command "Weitermachen!" (as you were) allowing everyone to go back to what they were doing.

Procedure for Reporting to a Superior: When reporting to an officer seated behind a desk or in a stationary position, approach to about three paces before the officer, stop, come to attention and salute. The salute is held until either acknowledged, returned or until the officer leaves the room. You do not speak until the officer speaks to you first, and when you do speak, you always address superiors by their rank preceded by the title "Herr." When an officer calls your name you are to answer with "Hier, Herr ...", raising your right hand. You should then proceed with haste following the shortest route to the officer, come to attention three paces in front of them, salute, and state "Zur Stelle, Herr ...". Whatever orders he gives you you must repeat back to him, and upon being dismissed state "Jawohl, Herr ...", or — more formally "Zum befehl, Herr..." After making your statement, salute, about-face and proceed to execute your orders. When the orders have been completed you are to report back to the officer or NCO no matter how trivial the task they ordered you to do.

Procedure for marching and movement: All marching begins on the left foot. If you are unsure of the pacing for the march or how to keep in step, watch the man in front of you and do what they do. When no interval is specified, assume five (5) steps between each man when marching. In general, there will be no talking on the march or in the field except to communicate information about the enemy, the terrain, or to pass related information on to one's neighbors. The squad leader has no specific place in the open order: normally, he is at the head of his men but may be farther removed to scout or liason. On the march, he will typically be at the head of the column. The assistant squad leader remains at the end of the line to make sure no one is left behind. During combat, The squad leader is at the center of the squad.

Speaking German: The more effort you put into learning these and other German phrases and words, the more authentic your impression will be, and the greater our unit will become. Remember, you joined the 353 Infanterie Division to be a German soldier, so whenever possible-- *Spreche Deutsch!*

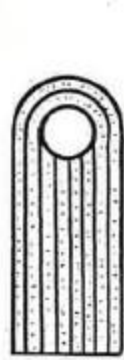
Useful Phrases in German

Fall In!	<i>Antreten!</i>
Attention!	<i>Stillgestanden!</i>
Fall Back!	<i>Zurucktreten!</i>
Forward!	<i>Vorwärts!</i>
March	<i>Marsch</i>
Get Up!	<i>Aufstehen!</i>
Lay down!	<i>Hinlegen!</i>
Get up!	<i>Steh auf!</i>
Dig in!	<i>Eingraben!</i>
Disperse!	<i>Auseinander!</i>
Come back right away!	<i>Kommen sie sofort zurück!</i>
Outposts out!	<i>Vorposten raus!</i>
Get out!	<i>Aussteigen!</i>
Get in!	<i>Insteigen!</i>
Attack!	<i>Angriffen!</i>
Fire!	<i>Feuer!</i>
Fire at will!	<i>Feuer Frei!</i>
Follow me!	<i>Folgen sie mir!</i>
Come here!	<i>Kommen sie hier!</i>
Help! (Help Me!)	<i>Hilfe! (Hilfe Mir!)</i>
Who goes there?	<i>Wer da?</i>
Stop firing/Don't Shoot	<i>Nicht Schiessen!</i>
Hands up!	<i>Hande hoch!</i>
I surrender!	<i>Ich gebe auf!</i>
Stop!	<i>Halt!</i>
Medic!	<i>Sanitater! or Sani!</i>
Fast(er)	<i>Schnell(er)</i>
Slow(er)	<i>Langsam(er)</i>
No smoking!	<i>Nichts rauchen!</i>
Yes	<i>Ja</i>
Yes (to a superior)	<i>Jawohl</i>

No	<i>Nein</i>
Please	<i>Bitte</i>
Thank you	<i>Danke</i>
You are welcome	<i>Bitte</i>
Division	<i>Division</i>
Regiment	<i>Regiment</i>
Company	<i>Kompanie</i>
Platoon	<i>Zug</i>
Squad	<i>Gruppe</i>
Commander	<i>Kommandeur</i>
Officer	<i>Offizier</i>
Cap	<i>Feldmütze</i>
Tunic	<i>Bluse</i>
Trousers	<i>Hosen</i>
Shirt	<i>Hemd</i>
Great Coat	<i>Mantel</i>
Helmet	<i>Stahlhelm</i>
Belt and Buckle	<i>Gürtel und Schnalle</i>
Jackboots	<i>Marschstiefel</i>
Ankle boots	<i>Schnürschuhe</i>
Canteen	<i>Feldflasche</i>
Bread Bag	<i>Brotbeutel</i>
Mess kit	<i>Kochgeschirr</i>
Gas Mask Can	<i>Tragbüchse (Sometimes Tragebüchse)</i>
Ammunition pouches	<i>Patronentasche</i>
Backpack	<i>Tornister</i>
Tent Quarter	<i>Zeltbahn</i>
Rifle	<i>Gewehr</i>
Bayonet	<i>Bajonett or Seitengewehr</i>
Ammunition	<i>Munition</i>
Round of ammunition	<i>Patrone</i>
Ammunition box	<i>Patronenkasten</i>
Rifle cleaning kit	<i>Reinigungsgerät</i>
All Military branches (<i>excludes SS</i>)	<i>Wehrmacht</i>
Army	<i>Heer</i>
Navy	<i>Kriegsmarine</i>
Air Force	<i>Luftwaffe</i>

German Army Officers	
Generalfeldmarshall	General of the army (5 Star)
Generaloberst	General (4 Star)
Generalleutnant	Lieutenant General (3 Star)
Generalmajor	Major General (2 star)
Oberst	Colonel
Oberstleutnant	Lieutenant colonel
Major	Major
Hauptmann	Captain
Oberleutnant	First lieutenant
Leutnant	Second lieutenant
German Army Enlisted Men	
Stabsfeldwebel	Sergeant Major
Oberfeldwebel	Master Sergeant
Feldwebel	Sergeant First Class
Unterfeldwebel	Staff Sergeant
Unteroffizier	Sergeant
Obergefreiter	Corporal
Gefreiter	Lance Corporal
Oberschütze	Private 1st Class
Schütze	Private

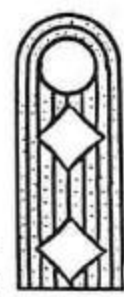
VORGESETZTE · OFFIZIERE



LEUTNANT
Leutnant



OBERLEUTNANT
Oberleutnant



HAUPTMANN
Hauptmann



MAJOR
Major



OBERSTLEUTNANT
Oberstleutnant



OBERST
Oberst



GENERAL
General



ZÄHLMESTER
Zahlmeister



KOMMANDEUR ADJUTANT
Kommandeur Adjutant

VORGESETZTE



GRENADIER
Grenadier

BERGRENADIER
Obergrenadier

GEFREITER
Gefreiter

BERGEFREITER
Obergefreiter



UNTEROFFIZIER
Unteroffizier

FELDWEBEL
Feldwebel

BERGFELDWEBEL
Oberfeldwebel



NACHRICHTENPERSONAL
Nachrichtenpersonal

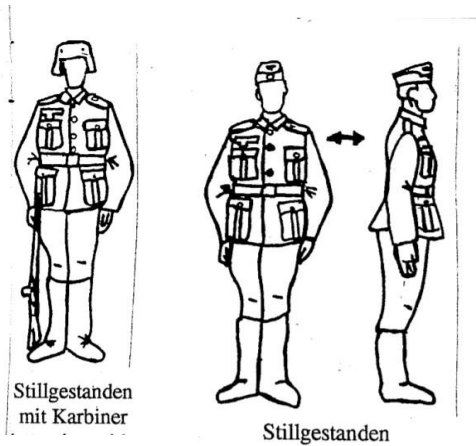


STABSFELDWEBEL
Stabsfeldwebel

SANIT TER
Sanit ter

WAFFENUNTEROFFIZIER
Waffenunteroffizier

German Drill Commands

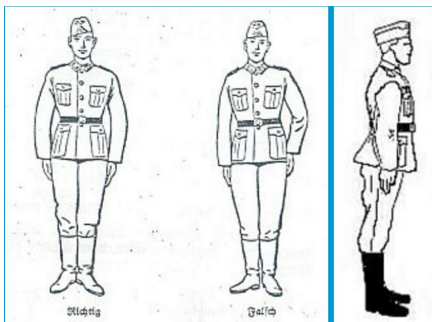


Angetreten: *Fall in at attention.* Run to the formation and join the end away from the NCOs. Stand at attention.

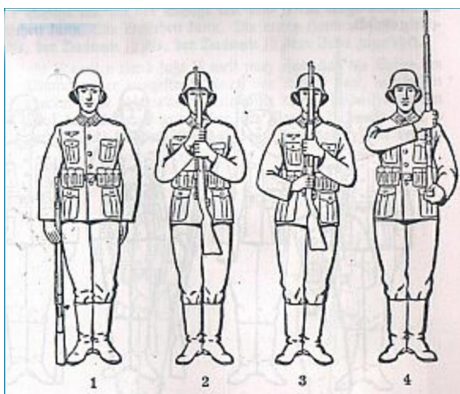


Antreten: *Fall in at ease.* Run to the formation and join the end away from the NCOs. Stand at ease.

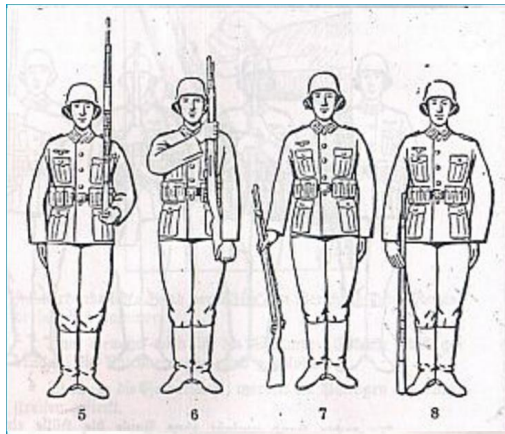
Rührt Euch



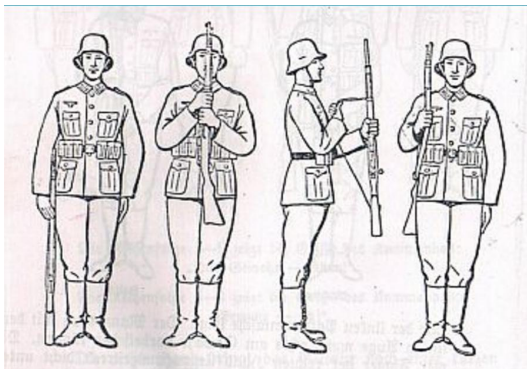
Stillgestanden: *Attention.* Stand at attention. Feet forming a 45 degree "V". If you have your rifle it should be on the ground with the muzzle in your right hand.



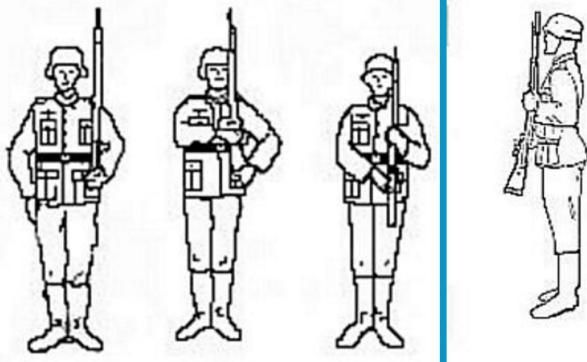
Das Gewehr über: *Shoulder Arms.* Rifle is taken from the right foot and placed over the left shoulder and locked in place.



Das Gewehr ab: *Order Arms.* Rifle is brought down to the side of the right foot. The rifle swings outward slightly before coming to rest (see 7).



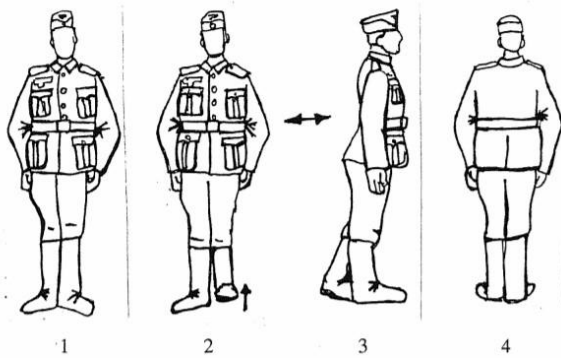
Das Gewehr Umhängen. *Sling Arms.* Sling is loosened and rifle slung over the right shoulder. Alternately **Das Gewehr auf den Rücken**



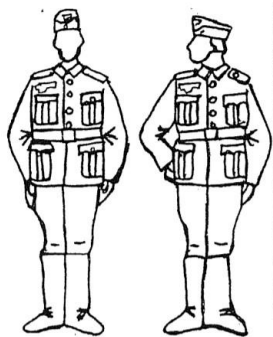
Präsentiert das Gewehr: *Present Arms.* Move your rifle sharply from your left shoulder to in front of your body with the trigger guard facing outward. The bolt should remain closed unless you are otherwise ordered.



Rührt Euch: *At Ease.* The Soldier stands at ease by hanging their arms hanging easily at their sides and moving their right foot approximately 20 cm—30 cm to the right. If armed, the individual's left hand is kept at the thigh, the rifle remains being strapped on the right shoulder unless ordered otherwise beforehand.



Wegtreten: *Dismissed*. Leave formation. Move your left foot backward, pivot on it, and march 3 steps away.



Richt Euch: *Dress Right*. Turn your head to the right and extend your right elbow and ensure you have space between you and the next soldier.



Gruß: *Salute*. right hand, palm down, fingers extended, tips of the index finger and middle finger touching the bottom edge of the headgear just above and to the right of the right eyebrow, upper arm held parallel to the ground.

Im Gleichschritt Marsch: The soldiers march in step, beginning with the left foot at approx. 114–116 steps a minute. Fingers are outstretched, thumb pressed flat against the hand. As the arms swing, hands are brought up to a point just below the navel, about a hand's width away from the stomach

Ohne Tritt Marsch: Marching without being in step, suitable for long marches and bridges etc.

Rechts/Links um: Right/Left Face, 90°, left heel serves as the pivot.

Procedure for Earning Awards

Awards are based on a number of criteria. One of the main criteria has to do with attending events. When crediting unit members for events attended in their records, we include all events they attend, HRS or non-HRS. However, the member needs to attend the event as a member of the unit as their primary German impression, UNLESS they were asked to attend or given the OK to wear other impressions. Some events we have attended are German heavy and for a couple of 353 members that attended, the event organizer asked if we could do US to help balance the dance card. This might also include parades where we ask members to wear allied impressions rather than German if they have the uniforms. Or, as at Rockford, we create a divisional HQ display, so we allow guys to wear high ranking officer impressions. When the unit attends an event as a group, they should be supporting the unit with their impression, not going out with another unit and claiming credit for the 353. An example to note that is when members attend the Ohio D-Day event, where all the unit members fall in with the OKW group, that is acceptable because we are attaching ourselves as a group to another unit to make a larger group. However, if they attend a tactical with an SS or Soviet group while the rest of our guys are doing 353, they don't get credit.

- Infantry Assault Badge (Infanterie Sturmabzeichen). Awarded in Silver to infantry units who participated in three different infantry assaults on three different days.

**Awarded to members of the 353rd who:*

1. *Participate in 12 public events.*
2. *Have all items required for basic infantry impression as listed in Member Guidelines.*

-General Assault Badge (Allgemeines Sturmabzeichen). Awarded to Pioneers, Artillerymen, Anti-Tank Units, and those not eligible for the Infantry Assault badge) for participating in three different assaults on three different days. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who:*

1. *Participate in 12 public, immersion, training, or tactical events.*
2. *Have all items required for basic impression as listed in Member Guidelines.*

-Iron Cross Second Class (Eisernes Kreuz 2. Klasse). The original criteria necessary to receive this award was to have performed a single act of bravery above and beyond the call of duty. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who:*

1. *Participate in 15 public events.*
2. *Participate in 3 tactical events.*
3. *Are able to properly execute drill and weapon inspection.*

4. *Are able to disassemble k98 (including bolt) and re-assemble.*

- Iron Cross First Class (Eisernes Kreuz 1. Klasse). The original criteria necessary to receive this coveted award was to have performed 6 to 7 acts of outstanding bravery in battle above and beyond the call of duty. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who:*

- 1. Participate in 30 public events.*
- 2. Participate in 6 tactical events.*
- 3. Understand proper squad formations and deployment.*
- 4. Understand basic German hand commands.*

-Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross (Ritterkreuz des Eisernes Kreuzes). Awarded for continuous bravery and outstanding service, or a single incredible act of bravery. **This, the highest award obtainable by a German Soldier is only awarded by the 353rd Inf Division For the actual saving of a life during a unit event.*

-Honor Roll Clasp (Ehrenblatt des Deutschen Heeres). Awarded for continuous bravery after winning the Iron Cross first and second class. The original criteria necessary to receive this coveted award was to have performed 6 to 7 acts of outstanding bravery in battle above and beyond the call of duty. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who have attended 100 battles, Eastern and Western Front.*

-Close Combat Clasp (Nahkampfspange). Originally awarded in Gold for 50 days of hand to hand fighting, Silver for 30 days, and Bronze for 15 days of hand to hand fighting. **Awarded to members of the 353rd in Bronze for participating in 10 tacticals, in Silver for participating in 20 tacticals, in Gold for participating in 30 tacticals.*

-Wound Badge (Verwundeten-Abzeichen). Awarded in Black for up to two wounds requiring medical attention, in Silver for 3 to 4 wounds, and Gold for 5 or more. **Awarded to members of the 353rd for wounds received at an event requiring professional medical attention within 24 hours of receiving the wound, using the original criteria. Alternately may be awarded at the discretion of the command staff to members who have earned the Purple Heart in US military service or the equivalent in the military of another country.*

-Wehrmacht Long Service Awards (Wehrmacht Dienstauszeichnungen). Originally awarded as follows: 1st Class - 25 years of service, 2nd Class - 18 years of service, 3rd Class - 12 years of service, and 4th Class - 4 years of service. **Awarded to members of the 353rd as follows: 1st Class - 20 years reenacting in the unit, 2nd Class - 15 years reenacting in the unit, 3rd Class - 8 years reenacting in the unit, and 4th Class - 4 years reenacting in the unit.*

-Medal For the Winter Campaign in Russia (Winterschlacht im Osten 1941-42).

Awarded to those German Soldiers who served for at least sixty days in the Russian theatre of war or two weeks in combat, or were wounded while fighting there. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who:*

- 1. have attended at least three (3) Eastern Front only events.*
- 2. have attended at least one winter eastern front tactical*
- 3. have slept out at least one of these events in weather below freezing.*

-War Merit Cross Second Class with Swords (Kriegsverdienstkreuz mit Schwertern 2. Klasse).

The same basic criteria of the First Class award applies, but it was easier to qualify for this, the junior grade of the medal. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who participate as a noncombatant in 15 public events in direct support of combat troops. Alternately may be awarded at the discretion of the command staff for non-combat work above and beyond the call of duty.*

-War Merit Cross With Swords First Class (Kriegsverdienstkreuz mit Schwertern 1. Klasse).

Awarded to those members of the Armed forces who furthered the war effort, or showed bravery outside of direct combat in such a way that fell short of the Iron Cross 2nd Class after winning the War Merit medal 2nd Class. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who participate as a noncombatant in 30 public events in direct support of combat troops. Alternately may be awarded at the discretion of the command staff for non-combat work above and beyond the call of duty.*

-War Merit Cross 2nd Class without Swords (Kriegsverdienstkreuz 2. Klasse).

The same basic criteria of the First Class award applies, but it was easier to qualify for this, the junior grade of the medal. **Awarded to members of the 353rd who participate as a noncombatant in 15 public events. Alternately may be awarded at the discretion of the command staff for non-combat work above and beyond the call of duty.*

-War Merit Cross First Class without Swords (Kriegsverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse).

Awarded to those individuals who furthered the war effort outside of the combat zone to recognize their service after receiving the War Merit medal 2nd Class without swords.

**Awarded to members of the 353rd who participate as a noncombatant in 30 public events. Alternately may be awarded at the discretion of the command staff for non-combat work above and beyond the call of duty.*

-The Honor Cross of the World War 1914/1918 (Das Ehrenkreuz des Weltkriegs 1914/1918).

Awarded to those individuals who served as soldiers in the Great War.

**Awarded to members of the 353rd who have been active for Four Years, (the time length of WWI) who are a minimum of 40 years of age, and who have participated in a minimum of five WWI events as a member of the 353rd.*

Basic Uniform

This is the uniform kit for all members of the 353. Infanterie. All unit members are expected to have their uniform complete by their first year anniversary with the unit.

Before you purchase anything, check the unit standards or check with an Authenticity Committee member. Too many times a new member has purchased something, later to find out they cannot use it.

Tunic: Reproduction M40, M42, M43 Feldgrau (Field Gray) wool tunic with correct Heer insignia are all acceptable. M36 uniforms (w/bottle green collars) may be worn by Officers and NCOs of the rank of Unteroffizier and above. All unit members must obtain a proper tunic as described above.

Trousers: M37, M40, M42 & M43 Feldgrau (Field Gray) wool trousers (Langhosen Keilhosen or Rundbundhosen) are acceptable. All unit members must obtain proper trousers as described above.

Service Shirt: Reproduction mouse gray or West German olive drab service shirt (cotton) with collar and proper buttons. White collarless shirts are acceptable for early war impressions or Officers.

Suspenders: Preferred suspenders are Czech military surplus or appropriate civilian-style suspenders.

Boots: Reproduction Marschstiefel (jackboots) dyed black or Schnürschuhe (ankle boots) dyed black or very dark brown which must be worn with Gamaschen (Gaiters).

Gamaschen (Gators): Original or reproduction German in green, khaki or olive. West German with the buckle replaced with a leather loop or the metal loop removed.

Helmet or Stahlhelm (Steel Helmet): Original, post-war, or reproduction M35, M40 or M42 Stahlhelm with correct liner and suspension pins are required for all members. The preferred paint scheme is Feldgrau without decals. A single Heer decal on the left side is allowed with permission. Other helmets such as unconverted West German or

Spanish helmets are unacceptable. Converted helmets must be submitted to the authenticity committee for approval before use.

Field Cap: Feldgrau (Field Gray) wool Feldmütze, M34, M38, M40, M42 (side caps) or, M43 (billed caps) are acceptable. Special permission is required to utilize any other style of field cap. Caps should have all correct insignia and buttons where appropriate. (See cap insignia below.)

Heer Insignia

Breast Eagle: Late war "Subdued" gray bevo on field gray or green.

Collar Tabs (Litzen): Infantry, late war, generic gray slashes on gray. Or, approved, appropriate waffenfarbe (branch of service color). Example: Artillery; red, Medical; cornflower blue, Pioneer; black, Recon; golden yellow, etc.

Shoulder Boards: Infantry, field gray, with white piping. Or, approved, appropriate waffenfarbe (branch of service color).

Cap Insignia: All insignia are to be appropriate to the style of cap. Trapezoid Style, Subdued gray eagle with red, white & black cockade, on field gray or green, Bevo or embroidered for M42 or M43 style. Individual eagle & cockade (National colors) for M38 or M40 side caps. For splinter camouflage & HBT reed green Feldmütze (billed cap), insignia is optional.

Basic Field Kit

This is the basic kit of field equipment for all members of the 353. Infanterie. All unit members are expected to have their equipment (with the exception of the gas sheet bag and equipment straps) by their first year anniversary with the unit.

Ammunition Pouches: Original or reproductions 3-cell black leather for the K98 rifle

Bayonet and Sheath: Original or reproduction standard German military S. 84/98 bayonet adopted in 1934 for the Karabiner 98k rifle.

Bayonet Frog: Black Leather preferred or Late war web style with permission.

Belt: Adjustable type with correct WWII style keeper. Black leather preferred or late war web with permission.

Belt Buckle: Original or reproduction standard "Heer" style. Steel or aluminum, preferably painted subdued Feldgrau.

Bread Bag: Original, reproduction, or identical post-war type (Properly converted) M31, M44 bread bag with correct three-hole buttons. Feldgrau, green, gray, khaki, olive or natural in color.

Canteen: Original, post-war, or reproduction canteen w/wool cover, with or without the correct cup. Aluminum preferred. "No blue covers allowed."

Entrenching Tool: Straight or folding type. Original, reproduction, or properly converted "foreign" (Swiss) tools.

Entrenching Tool Holder: Original or reproduction black leather or web appropriate to the style of entrenching tool.

Equipment Straps: Original or reproduction black leather or web.

Gas Mask Canister: Original or reproduction war era canister preferred. Pre/early war acceptable but not recommended. (Gas mask optional)

Gas Sheet Bag: Original or reproduction "Heer" type.

Identification Disc: Reproduction with identification number and Kompanie. (See Unit Commander)

Soldbuch: Reproduction with photograph and information filled in. (See Unit Commander)

Mess Tin: Original or reproduction. You may find certain foreign wartime and postwar elements which can be combined to achieve the proper impression. Simply getting a Soviet, Austrian, West German, or East German one will not be acceptable. One viable option is an East German bottom and a Cold War Soviet top but there may be others as well. Get help with this. You don't want to get a bad post-war one.

Eating Utensil: Commonly called a Spork. Original (aluminum), postwar (Aluminum), or reproduction (Stainless).

Shelter Quarter/Zeltbahn: Reproduction standard "splinter pattern" Zeltbahn. One required, two "strongly" recommended. The recommendation of two zelts per member, allows two unit members to erect one, four-man zelt tent for sleeping/camping/public display purposes.) You will also need one pole section and two stakes for each zelt quarter you have.

Y-Straps: Original, reproduction, or "properly" converted Czech, Austrian, or West German with D-rings and correct WWII hardware.

Weapons

Please note that these are actual firearms and we deal with the operation and safety of these devices with strict rules and regulations. You must be of proper age and show proper handling and safety techniques. You must also have all proper legal documentation to handle a firearm as required by the laws of our state of residence. Failure to do so may result in loss of group membership and or legal action.

Rifle: Karbiner 98k WWII German Kar98k (Mauser Rifle) with metal butt plate, bent bolt and no wood behind the rear sight. This is the standard five-round, bolt action weapon of the German soldier. Either early war (with flat butt plate and no sight hood) or later war (with cupped butt plate and sight hood) styles are allowed

Other Weapons: Including, but not limited to: Original or reproduction German Stick Grenade, Egg Grenade, Panzerfaust, Panzerschrek, Trench/Boot Knife, Magnetic Mines, Flair pistol and cartridge carrier, etc, as common to the WWII German Wehrmacht. All other weapons, equipment, uniforms, and insignia need to be appropriate to the role of the particular soldier and requires the permission of the unit commander and the authenticity committee.

Grooming Standards

Hair: You will need to have an appropriate haircut for a German soldier of WWII. This means, among other things, no hair should be touching your ears, the back of your neck, and no sideburns. Generally it is longer on the top and closely cut/shaved on the back and sides.

Facial Hair: You will need to be clean-shaven. German infantry soldiers did not wear beards or mustaches except in the rarest of circumstances. If you have a beard or mustache you are particularly attached to consider how much you want to re-enact WWII. You will need to shave.



Eyewear: Glasses were comparatively rare in the German army. If you can see without your glasses please put them away. If you cannot see without correction then consider contact lenses. If this is not an option, then get some appropriate eyewear. For military eyewear look for Dienst-brille (German service glasses) glasses. There are reproduction ones made and can be had for under \$30 with clear plastic lenses. Your local eye shop can put your prescription in them. Most photos of German soldiers wearing glasses show them wearing civilian frames. For this, an option is to get modern glasses that pass for period-correct civilian frames. Another is to buy original WWII period vintage frames at an antique store or flea market and have the lenses replaced.

Types of Reenactments

(Adapted from <https://exarc.net/issue-2019-1/mm/how-run-reenactment-part-1>)

Using our definition, there are many events that qualify as reenactments. Thus, there are many options from which a site can choose. Here is a brief description of some of the most common.

Military Encampment (most Public events)

Probably the most common type of reenactment is the military encampment, where one or more military units interpret military history at a site. Many times, these reenactments involve a battle or skirmish and weapons demonstrations. There might be a civilian contingent within the camps representing the proverbial “camp-followers” and/or a separate civilian camp portraying local townspeople, residents of the site, or just representing civilian life of the time.

Battle Reenactment

Battle reenactments involve a military encampment but are focused on recreating a specific battle such as Gettysburg, Hastings, Waterloo, or Kalkriese. Battle reenactments can be some of the largest reenactments, involving up to tens of thousands of reenactors over many hectares of land. There is usually a lot of coordination between the units ahead of time so that everyone knows their role in the battle, all the maneuvers planned for the battle, and most importantly, who “wins” the battle. These reenactments can require a lot of oversight, insurance, logistics and planning, for obvious reasons. They are not recommended as a first-time reenactment for sites.

Timeline

Timeline events host units from various eras in a contiguous timeline on the site. These units can be all military, all civilian, or a mix of both. Some timeline events are limited to an era such as 20th century or focused on a theme such as maritime or medical units throughout history. In addition to unit displays, there are often other activities such as field demos from each of the units, period dancing, fashion shows, and the purely for fun but always popular, “battle through the ages” where the units from different times mock-battle each other until the last man standing.

Hands-on-History

Hands-on-history days are popular with a lot of sites. They are included in the reenactment category because they often include reenactors who explain their camp and/or provide hands-on demos for the public. These events can be themed, like a harvest festival, focused on a specific time period like Victorian, or interpret a variety of historical skills and crafts that are fun and appealing to family visitors.

Immersion Events

Immersion events aim to present a “slice-of-life” type of experience for the public. While generally not as formal as true museum theater, these reenactments are like impromptu street theater or visiting a full-time living history site. Some of these events attempt to recreate a specific historical event like a funeral, wedding, trial, or public spectacle that happened at the site. Other events attempt to recreate an ordinary “day in the life” at a historic site. Many immersion events use planned “skits” or interactions with other reenactors during the event, such as a confrontation between two gossips or a press gang searching for an escaped sailor. Often reenactors at these events are focused on their interpretation rather than on educating the public, and will not engage with the public unless they are addressed directly.

Tacticals/Private Events

Reenactors will host private events that are closed to the public. Usually these are done off-site but sometimes they are hosted on historic sites. Often these are called “tacticals”, as they center around a military scenario with mock battles or skirmishes. Other events are hosted in period barracks, cabins, or other historic structures and can be military, civilian, or a mix of both. Reenactors spend a weekend living and working in period clothing and doing chores and other daily tasks in as period a way as possible. Private events allow reenactors to hone their skills by “living in the moment” in a historical setting without having the responsibility of interacting with visitors. Some sites allow reenactors to host their own private event as a thank you for doing public events at the site throughout the year. Other sites allow reenactors to rent the site for this purpose.

Contact information

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Unit Treasurer:

Jenna Cook cook.jl84@yahoo.com (630) 742-3169

Command Group Members:

Dave Fornell, Oberleutnant, Unit Commander

George Reinke, Oberleutnant, Former Unit Commander

Bill Larsen, Feldwebel

Doug Strong, Feldwebel

Tom Guillou, Feldwebel

Tom Novosel Junior, Unteroffizier

Brian Goodman, Gefreiter

Shannon Yaw, Oberhelferin