



The Commando Pocket Manual: 1940-45

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The idea of the Commandos the elite special forces that would give birth to the SAS and all others came to Winston Churchill at the outbreak of war... and they were lethal.

In 1942, a unit of British Special Forces successfully attacked and destroyed a battery 6 German artillery pieces. The German defenders held numerical parity with their attackers, were well dug in, and far better armed; yet they were soundly beaten, with the guns being destroyed and around 60% of their forces being killed on the field. The difference was in the training, details of which are included here.

From assaulting a cliff face, to unarmed combat, to hunting in the wild to making explosives from household items everything one might want to know about the training and methods of a WW2 special forces soldier is here. Whilst the first 7 chapters discuss all this and more, the latter section examines (formerly) top secret documents recounting some of the successful operations undertaken by the Commando force, who of course used the information in this book as their modus operandi. As a martial artist, I must say that I found chapter 4, 'All-In Fighting' as my favourite. It contains many practical moves and techniques designed to 'deal' with one or several assailants, both armed and unarmed, many of which can be found in modern martial arts manuals; after all, there are only so many ways to skin a cat. Other high points are how to load and fire a gun with only one hand and details on how to correctly use plastic explosives.

Now, it's highly unlikely that the vast, vast majority of the people who will read this will ever need to put into even a tiny fraction of the stuff contained within this book, into action, if any, so really it falls into that category of things that are cool yet pointless at the same time, and that's why it's so darned fun! Any historian or just somebody with a boyish heart deep down will enjoy this; I did on both counts. Just a word of warning, though... keep it out of the reach of kids!

8 sausages out of 10

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