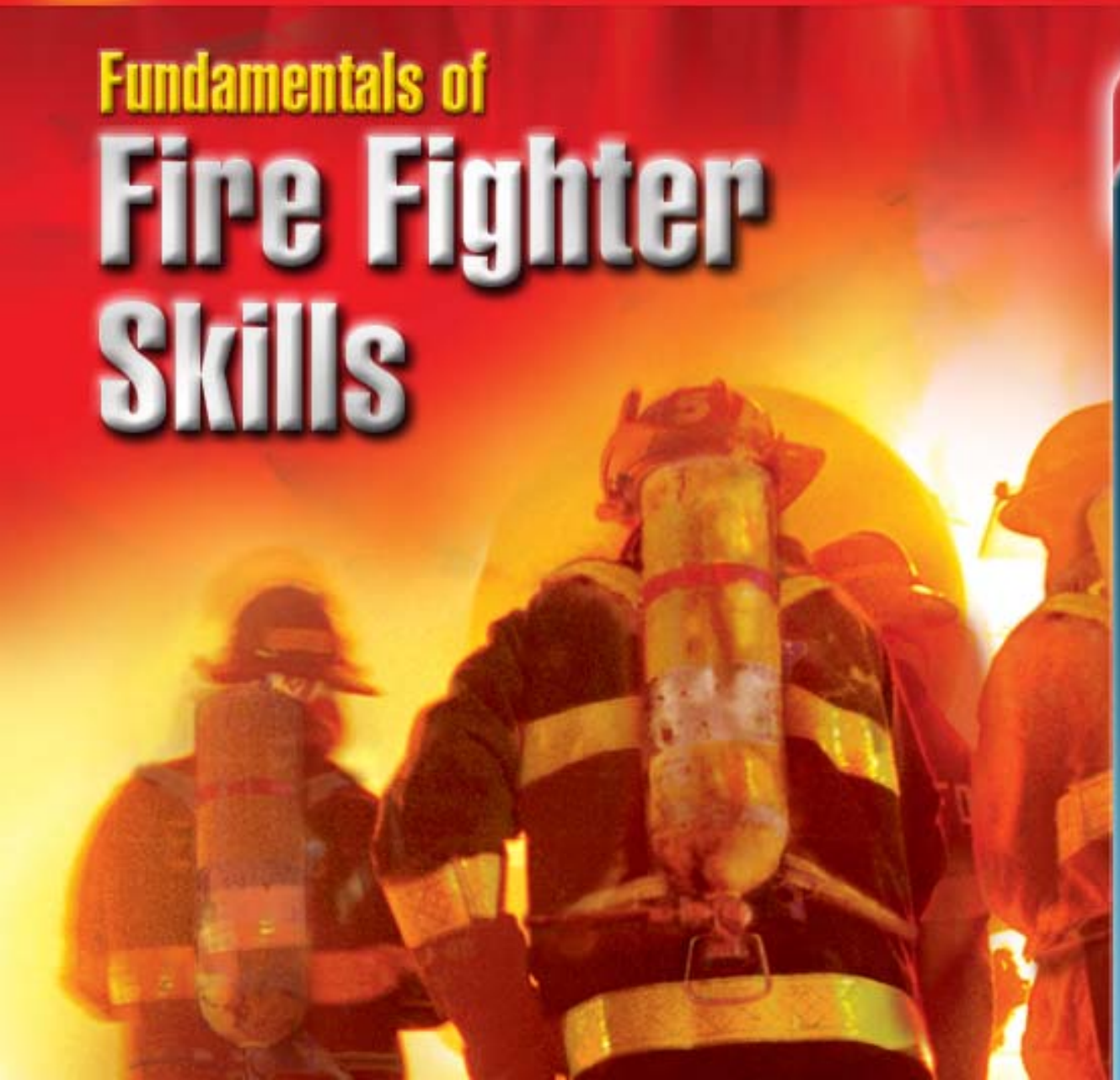
International Association of Fire Chiefs

National Fire Protection Association

Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills



Chapter 11

Forcible Entry

Skill Drills

Objectives (1 of 3)

- Force entry through an inward-opening door.
- Force entry through an outward-opening door.
- Use the triangle method to open an overhead garage door.
- Force entry through a double-hung window.

Objectives (2 of 3)

- Force entry through a casement window.
- Force entry through a projected window.
- Force entry using a K tool.
- Force entry using an A tool.

Objectives (3 of 3)

- Force entry by unscrewing the lock.
- Breach a wall frame.
- Breach a masonry wall.
- Breach a metal wall.
- Breach a wood floor.

Skill Drill 11-1

Forcing Entry into an Inward-Opening Door

Step 1: Size up the door looking for any safety hazards. Inspect the door for the location and number of locks and mechanisms.

Skill Drill 11-1

Forcing Entry into an Inward-Opening Door

Step 2: Place the forked end of the Halligan tool into the door frame between the door jamb and the door stop. Insert the tool near the lock, with the beveled end of the tool against the door.

Skill Drill 11-1

Forcing Entry into an Inward-Opening Door

Step 3: Once the Halligan tool is in position. have your partner, on your command, drive the tool further into the gap between the rabbeted jamb or stop and the door. Make sure that the tool is not driven into the door jamb itself.

Skill Drill 11-1

Forcing Entry into an Inward-Opening Door

Step 4: Once the tool is past the stop, and between the door and the jamb, push the Halligan toward the door to force it open. If more leverage is needed, your partner can slide the axe head between the bevel of the Halligan bar and the door. It may be necessary to push in on the door. Secure the door to prevent it from closing behind you.

Skill Drill 11-2

Forcing Entry into an Outward-Opening Door

Step 1: Size up the door looking for any safety hazards. Place the adz end of the Halligan tool into the area between the door and the frame either near the mechanism, or in between the mechanism and a secondary lock.

Skill Drill 11-2

Forcing Entry into an Outward-Opening Door

Step 2: Once the Halligan tool is in position have your partner strike the Halligan on your command and drive the adz end further into the gap.

Skill Drill 11-2

Forcing Entry into an Outward-Opening Door

Step 3: Pry in a downward direction with the fork end of the tool and then force the door outward. Always secure the door to prevent it from closing behind you.

Skill Drill 11-3

Opening an Overhead Garage Door Using the Triangle Method

1. Before cutting, check for any safety hazards during the size-up of the garage door.
2. Select the appropriate tool to make the cut. The best choice will probably be a power saw with a metal-cutting blade.
3. Wearing full turnout gear and eye protection, start the saw and ensure it is in proper working order.

Skill Drill 11-3

Opening an Overhead Garage Door Using the Triangle Method

4. Be aware of the environment behind the door. If necessary, cut a small inspection hole, large enough to insert a hose nozzle.
5. Starting at a center high point in the door, make a diagonal cut to the right, down to the bottom of the door.

Skill Drill 11-3

Opening an Overhead Garage Door Using the Triangle Method

6. From the same starting point, make a second diagonal cut to the left, down to the bottom of the door, forming a large triangle.
7. Pad or protect the cut edges of the triangle and the bottom panel to prevent injuries as fire fighters enter or leave.

Skill Drill 11-4

Forcing Entry Through a Wooden Double-Hung Window

Step 1: Size-up the window for any safety hazards, and find the locking mechanism(s).

Step 2: Place the pry end of the Halligan tool under the bottom sash in line with the locking mechanism.

Skill Drill 11-4

Forcing Entry Through a Wooden Double-Hung Window

Step 3: Pry the bottom sash upward to displace the locking mechanism. Secure the window so that it does not close.

Skill Drill 11-5

Forcing Entry Through a Casement Window

1. Size-up the window to check for any safety hazards and locate the locking mechanism.
2. Select an appropriate tool to break out a windowpane.
3. Stand to the windward side of the window and break out the pane closest to the locking mechanism, keeping the tool lower than your hands.

Skill Drill 11-5

Forcing Entry Through a Casement Window

4. Remove all of the broken glass in the pane to prevent injuries.
5. Reach in and manually operate the window crank to open the window.

Skill Drill 11-6

Forcing Entry Through a Protected or Factory Window

1. Size-up the window to check for any safety hazards and locate the locking mechanism.
2. Select an appropriate tool, such as a pike pole, to break a pane.
3. Stand to the windward side of the window and break the pane closest to the locking mechanism, keeping the tool head lower than your hands.

Skill Drill 11-6

Forcing Entry Through a Protected or Factory Window

4. Remove all of the broken glass in the frame to prevent injuries.
5. Reach in and manually open the locking mechanism and the window.
6. A cutting tool, such as a torch, can be used to remove the window frame and enlarge the hole.

Skill Drill 11-7

Forcing Entry Using a Through-the-Lock Technique (K Tool)

Step 1: Place the K tool over the face of the cylinder, noting the location of the keyway.

Step 2: Using a Halligan or similar pry tool, tap the K tool down into the cylinder.

Skill Drill 11-7

Forcing Entry Using a Through-the-Lock Technique (K Tool)

Step 3: Place the adz end of the Halligan tool into the slot on the K tool, and strike the end of the Halligan tool with a flat-head axe to drive the K tool further into the lock cylinder.

Skill Drill 11-7

Forcing Entry Using a Through-the-Lock Technique (K Tool)

Step 4: Pry up on the Halligan tool to pull out the lock and expose the locking mechanism. Using the small tools that come with the K tool, turn the mechanism to open the lock.

Skill Drill 11-8

Forcing Entry Using an A Tool

Step 1: Place the cutting edges of the A tool at the top of the cylinder, between the cylinder and the door frame.

Skill Drill 11-8

Forcing Entry Using an A Tool

Step 2: Using a flat-head axe or similar tool, drive the A tool into the cylinder. Pry up on the A tool to remove the cylinder from the door. Insert a key tool into the hole to manipulate the locking mechanism and open the door.

Skill Drill 11-9

Forcing Entry Using a Through-the-Lock Technique (Unscrewing the Lock)

Step 1: Using a set of vise grips, lock the pliers onto the outer housing of the lock with a good grip.

Step 2: Unscrew the housing until it can be removed. Manipulate the locking mechanism with lock tools to disengage the arm, then open the door.

Skill Drill 11-10

Breaching a Wall Frame

1. Size-up the wall looking for safety hazards such as electrical outlets, wall switches, or any signs of plumbing. Inspect the overall scene to ensure that the wall is not load-bearing.

Skill Drill 11-10

Breaching a Wall Frame

2. Using a striking or cutting tool, sound the wall to locate any studs, and make a hole between the studs.
3. Cut as close to the studs as possible.
4. Enlarge the hole by extending it from stud to stud and as high as necessary.

Skill Drill 11-11

Breaching a Masonry Wall

1. Size-up the wall for any safety hazards such as electrical outlets, wall switches, and plumbing. Inspect the overall area to ensure that the wall is not load-bearing.
2. Select a row of masonry blocks that is at or near floor level.

Skill Drill 11-11

Breaching a Masonry Wall

3. Using a sledgehammer, knock two holes each in five masonry blocks along the selected row. Each hole should pierce into the hollow core of the masonry blocks.
4. Repeat the process on four masonry blocks above the first row.
5. Repeat the process on three masonry blocks above the second row.

Skill Drill 11-11

Breaching a Masonry Wall

6. Repeat the process on two masonry blocks above the third row.
7. Repeat the process on one masonry block above the fourth row. An upside down V has now been created.
8. Begin knocking out the remaining portion of the masonry blocks by hitting the masonry blocks parallel to the wall rather than perpendicular to it.

Skill Drill 11-11

Breaching a Masonry Wall

9. Clear any reinforcing wire using bolt cutters.
10. Enlarge the hole as needed.

Skill Drill 11-12

Breaching a Metal Wall

1. Size-up the wall for any safety hazards such as electrical outlets, wall switches, or plumbing. Inspect the overall area to ensure that the wall is not load-bearing.
2. Select an appropriate tool such as a rotary saw with a metal-cutting blade or an oxyacetylene torch.

Skill Drill 11-12

Breaching a Metal Wall

3. Open the wall using a diamond-shaped or V-cut.
4. Protect or pad the metal edges of the cut to ensure that no one who goes through the opening is cut.

Skill Drill 11-13

Breaching a Floor

1. Size-up the floor area to ensure there are no hazards in the area to be cut.
2. Sound the floor with an axe or similar tool to locate the floor joists.
3. Use an appropriate cutting tool to cut one side of the hole first, then cut the opposite side.

Skill Drill 11-13

Breaching a Floor

4. Remove any flooring such as carpet, tile, or floorboards, that loosens.
5. Cut a similar opening into the subfloor, until the proper size hole is achieved.
6. Secure the area around the hole to prevent others working in the area from falling through the hole.