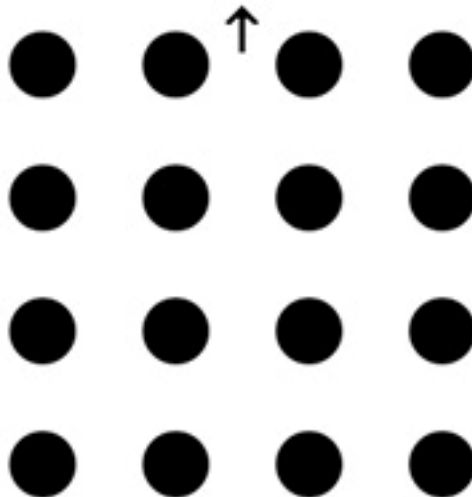


This is intended to assist with understanding the definitions of drill terms for the Drilling and Marching honor. In quotes is the definition verbatim as stated in the Pathfinder Club Drill Manual, copyright 1989. Afterwards are my explanations and illustrations.

Formation

“Formation is the arrangement of the elements of a Pathfinder drill formation in any prescribed manner.”

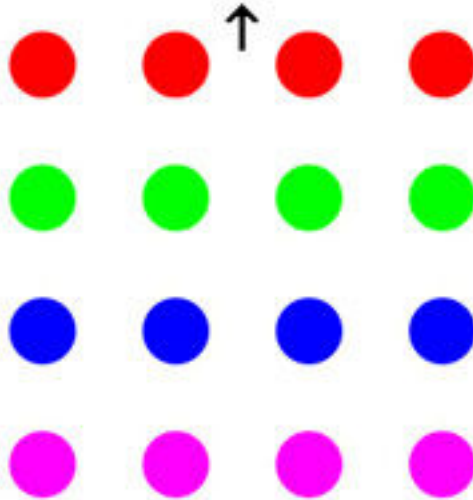
While the above definition is accurate, it sounds like an attorney wrote it and really doesn't explain to someone Pathfinder age what a formation really is. In simple terms, a formation is however the Pathfinders are laid out when they are in a drill scenario. When you fall in, you fall in to a formation, whatever it may be. Below is an example of a formation of 16 Pathfinders.



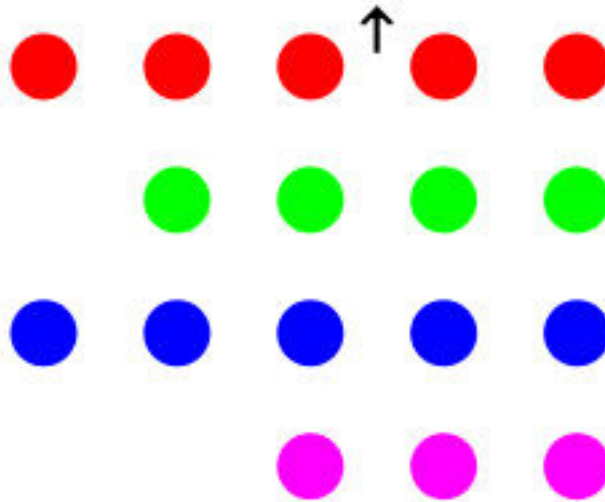
Line

“Line is a formation in which the elements are side by side or abreast of each other. In a club line the Pathfinders in each unit are abreast of each other with the units one behind the other.”

Below is an example of the club line as referenced in the Drill Manual with each color representing a unit.



Another example of a line formation where the units have different number of members:

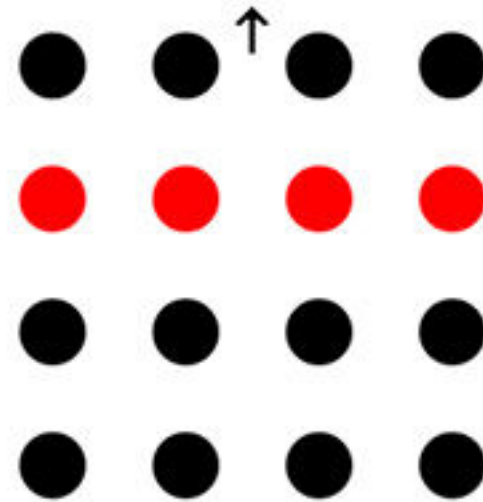


A line can also exist where all the Pathfinders are all side by side no matter how many there are.



Rank

“Rank is a line that is only one element in depth.”



A question now may have come up in your mind: what is the difference between a rank and a line? Simply put, line is a type of formation while rank is a component of a formation. In the line formation, each unit is a rank. In the column formation, a rank is still the side by side Pathfinders even though the units are one behind the other. The front rank in a column formation consists of the unit captains.

Interval

“Interval is the lateral space between elements. Normal interval between Pathfinders is measured from right to left by the Pathfinder on the right holding his left arm and hand shoulder high, fully extended, palm down, with the tip of his middle finger touched by the right shoulder of the Pathfinder on his left. Close interval between Pathfinders is measured from right to left by the Pathfinder on the right placing the heel of his left hand on his left hip even with the top of the belt line, fingers and thumb joined and extending downward, and his elbow in line with his body and touched by the arm of the Pathfinder of his left.”

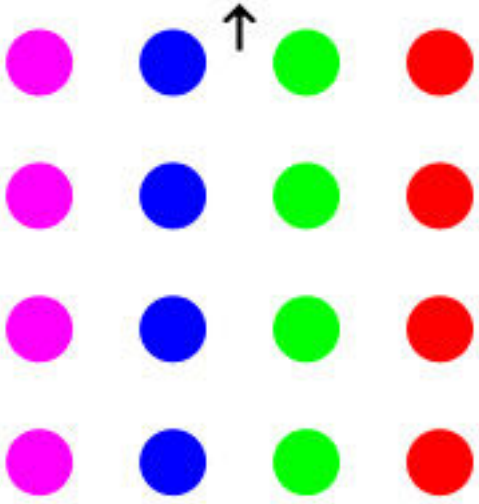
Interval is just the side by side space between two Pathfinders. It is what is adjusted with the command Dress Right Dress.



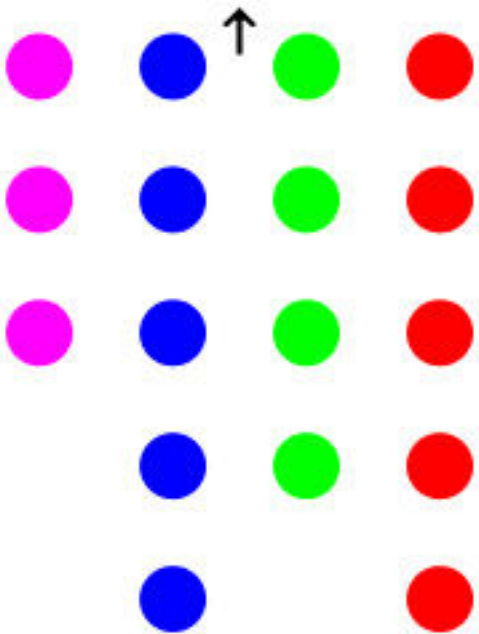
Column

“Column is a formation in which the elements of the formation are one behind the other. In a club column, the Pathfinders in each unit are one behind the other, with the units abreast of each other.”

Like line, a column is a formation but just based on those in front and/or back of you.



And with unequal number of members in each unit:



File

“File is a column that has a front of only one element.”

File is a column that's only one person wide, hence the phrase 'single file'. File is to the column formation just as the rank is to the line formation in that both are the individual version of the basis of the formation. File applies to both line and column formations.



Distance

“Distance is the space between elements when the elements are one behind the other. Distance between Pathfinders is an arm’s length to the front plus 6 inches, or approximately 30 inches, measured from the chest of one Pathfinder to the back of the Pathfinder immediately to his front.”

Distance is the gap between Pathfinders to the immediate front or rear.



Cover

“Cover is aligning yourself directly behind the Pathfinder to your immediate front while maintaining correct distance.”

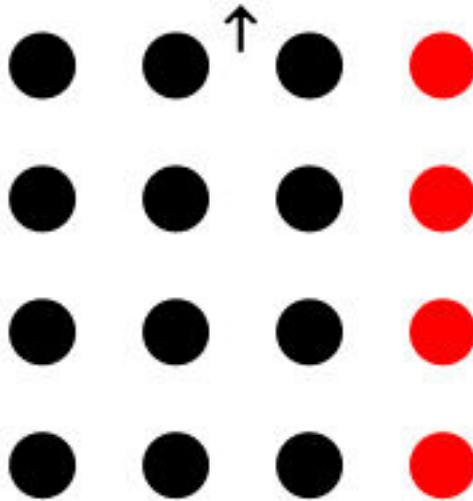
Cover is command valid in any formation but only pertains to the Pathfinder in front of you. When the command is given, all Pathfinders except the front rank raise their left arm to adjust for the proper distance. Of course, not everyone will not have a 30 inch reach with their arm so they must learn how much extra to allow for in order to compensate.

Flank

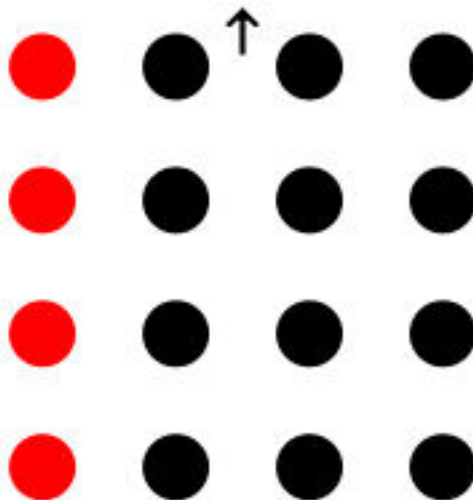
“Flank is the right or left side of any formation as sensed by an element within that formation.”

The flank is the far left or right file of a formation. In a column formation, the right flank is the further right unit. In a line formation, the right flank consists of the unit captains.

Here’s an example of the right flank of a formation:



Here’s the left flank:



Cadence

“Cadence is the uniform rhythm in which a movement is executed, or the number of steps or counts per minute at which the movement is executed.”

Cadence is the speed of movement not only when marching but also when drilling. The same gap in time from when one foot hits the ground until the next when marching should be the same gap in time from when the command of execution is given in drill until the command is completed.