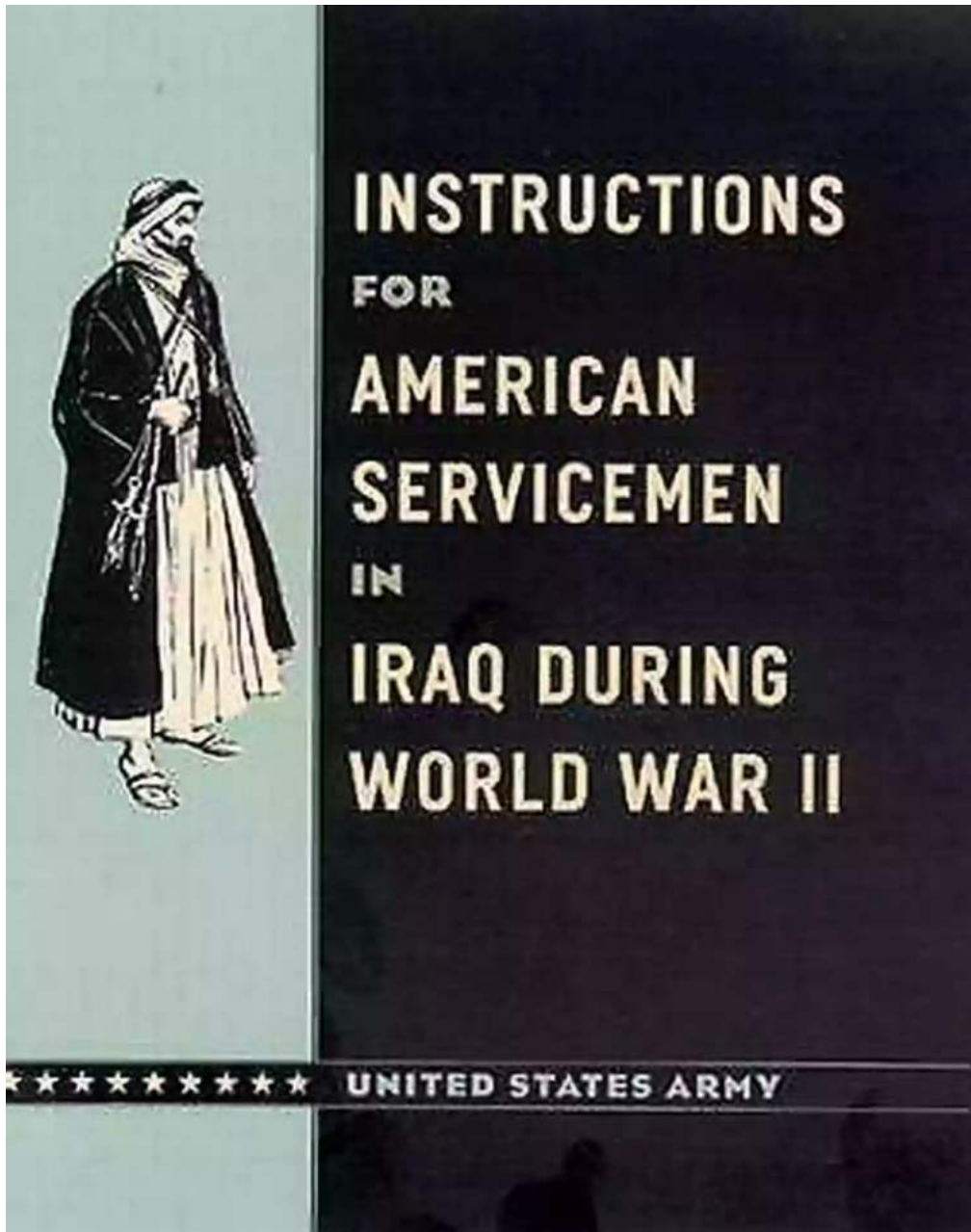


# Instructions For American Servicemen In Iraq During World War II



In the midst of the global turmoil faced during World War II, American servicemen were deployed to various parts of the world, including Iraq. Serving in unfamiliar territories with unique cultures and customs, these soldiers required guidance to integrate smoothly and effectively in their surroundings. This article delves into

the essential instructions provided to American servicemen who found themselves stationed in Iraq during this historic period.

## Understanding Iraqi Culture

Before embarking on their mission, American servicemen were informed about the rich and diverse culture of Iraq. Iraq, once known as Mesopotamia, is a land with a profound historical background. From Babylon to the Ottoman Empire, the region has witnessed the rise and fall of civilizations.



### Instructions for American Servicemen in Iraq during World War II

by John A. Nagl (Facsimile Ed Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1420 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 64 pages

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The local Iraqi population is predominantly composed of Arabs, but different ethnic and religious groups coexist within the country as well. Knowledge of these various groups and their customs was essential to foster mutual understanding and build strong relationships.

American servicemen were encouraged to demonstrate respect for the local customs, traditions, and religious practices. Understanding basic Arabic

greetings, such as "Salaam Alaykum" (peace be upon you), was highly recommended, as it often helped to establish rapport with the Iraqi people.

## **Adapting to the Desert Climate**

The scorching deserts of Iraq presented a significant challenge for American servicemen. The climate was vastly different from what they were accustomed to in the United States. Servicemen were advised to dress appropriately in light, loose-fitting clothing to combat the intense heat.

Hydration was emphasized as a critical factor in maintaining good health. Soldiers were encouraged to drink water regularly and carry water canteens at all times. The importance of applying sunscreen and wearing headgear to protect against the harsh rays of the sun was also stressed.

Furthermore, Iraq presented unique geographical challenges with its expansive desert terrain. Servicemen were provided with navigation instructions and informed about the perils of sandstorms, urging caution and preparedness.

## **Building Relationships with the Local Population**

Understanding the culture and geography was only part of the equation for American servicemen in Iraq. The ability to build positive relationships with the local population was crucial for successful missions and overall morale.

Servicemen were highly encouraged to participate in local events, engage in community activities, and interact with the Iraqi people. These interactions played a vital role in fostering trust and strengthening political ties.

The instructions emphasized the importance of respectful and considerate behavior, reflecting positively on America's image. American servicemen were

urged to be sensitive to Iraqi customs and traditions and to avoid engaging in activities that could be perceived as disrespectful or offensive.

## **Communicating Effectively**

In a foreign land with a different language, communication was a crucial aspect of the servicemen's responsibilities. To facilitate effective communication, servicemen were provided with basic language guides containing commonly used Arabic phrases.

Furthermore, considering the diversity within Iraq, servicemen were encouraged to learn about the specific dialects spoken in the region where they were stationed. Being able to communicate even in basic terms created a sense of camaraderie and facilitated cooperative efforts.

Serving in Iraq during World War II required American servicemen to adapt to an unfamiliar environment, understand the local culture, and build relationships with the Iraqi population. These instructions were designed to ensure that servicemen navigated the challenges successfully while also promoting goodwill and cooperation.

By following these guidelines, American servicemen in Iraq during World War II were able to not only fulfill their mission objectives but also leave a positive impact on the local communities they engaged with.

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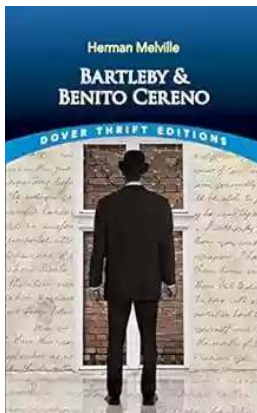
“American success or failure in Iraq may well depend on whether the Iraqis like American soldiers or not.”

The U.S. military could certainly have used that bit of wisdom in 2003, as violence began to eclipse the Iraq War’s early successes. Ironically, had the Army only looked in its own archives, they would have found it—that piece of advice is from a manual the U.S. War Department handed out to American servicemen posted in Iraq back in 1943.

The advice in *Instructions for American Servicemen in Iraq during World War II*, presented here in a new facsimile edition, retains a surprising, even haunting, relevance in light of today’s muddled efforts to win Iraqi hearts and minds. Designed to help American soldiers understand and cope with what was at the time an utterly unfamiliar culture—the manual explains how to pronounce the word Iraq, for instance—this brief, accessible handbook mixes do-and-don’t-style tips (“Always respect the Moslem women.” “Talk Arabic if you can to the people. No matter how badly you do it, they will like it.”) with general observations on Iraqi history and society. The book’s overall message still rings true—dramatically so—

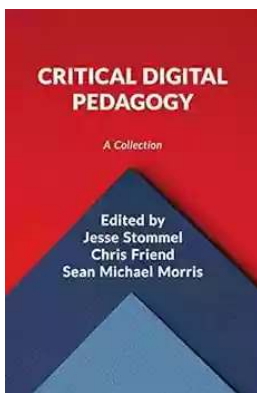
more than sixty years later: treat an Iraqi and his family with honor and respect, and you will have a strong ally; treat him with disrespect and you will create an unyielding enemy.

With a foreword by Lieutenant Colonel John A. Nagl reflecting on the manual's continuing applicability—and lamenting that it was unknown at the start of the invasion—this new edition of Instructions for American Servicemen in Iraq will be essential reading for anyone who cares about the future of Iraq and the fate of the American soldiers serving there.



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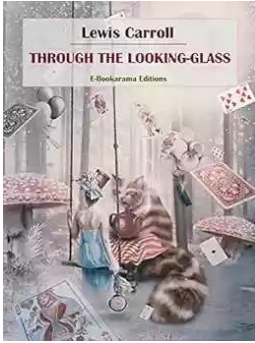
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