

BAE PAVN

Department of Broken Arrow Events Impression Guides

Handbook for People's Army of North Vietnam Impression Kits



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Introduction

The People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), also known as the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), had fought for liberation from the French for many years prior to their invasion of the south. Their skills transferred well into combating American and South Vietnamese forces, often utilizing overwhelming numbers and the Ho Chi Minh trail to support their efforts.

At Broken Arrow Events, this aspect of reenacting is as seriously taken as the GIs. While this can be a cheaper yet more challenging kit to acquire, uniformity and a sincere representation of PAVN forces throughout the Vietnam conflict is of utmost importance.

“From the data, the PAVN soldiers emerge, almost without exception, as remarkably intelligent and articulate.”

~ A Profile of the PAVN Soldier in South Vietnam

Konrad Kellen, 1966





1-1. Uniform, Primary

Beginning in the VietMinh era, khaki PAVN uniforms found themselves in use throughout the 60's and occasionally into the early 1970s. For current BAE events, attendees are required to use khaki PAVN uniforms. This is to maintain uniformity for now.

Some have opted to make their own clothing, closely replicating original uniforms from photos.

However, it is highly recommend to use Squadron Sew Shop for reproduction uniforms. Other reproduction uniforms may be found on ebay.com or other marketplaces for relatively inexpensive. Be cautious of these and inspect the quality and cut closely.

If an attendee finds another, well-made PAVN uniform reproduction, that is acceptable, as long as it follows the standard cut found on NVA soldiers.



1-2. Uniform, Alternative

If looking for a cheaper alternative to a reproduction PAVN uniform, Dickies work-cut uniforms are highly recommended. Pay attention to pockets, sleeves, and buttons, as there are slight variations in materials and styles from this brand. However, all external tags **MUST** be removed and it is highly recommending to dye these to a more appropriate shade of khaki.

Even if an attendee already has a proper reproduction uniform, having this as a spare set for emergencies is recommended.

Black pajamas and VietCong-type uniforms are NOT ALLOWED

Preferred: Reproduction PAVN Uniform in Khaki

Acceptable: Sterile Dickies' work clothing in Khaki

Not Acceptable : VC Pajamas, non-standard cut uniforms, USGI clothing



1-3. Uniform, Headwear

The standard Sedge hat (Pith Helmet) is the primary headwear. If not using an original, covering your modern, green reproduction, with a khaki helmet cover, US parachute material, and/or camouflage netting / scrap is required. Please avoid any cloth-type nets seen on ebay. These are fictional items.



The acceptable soft cover can be a PAVN style boonie hat. This can be in khaki or green, but please ensure it is the correct style and not a GI type. These typically had 2-3 drainage holes on the side and used a wider brim.

Required: Pith Helmet / Sedge Hat w/ appropriate covers

Approved (Soft Cover): PAVN style boonie hat

Not Acceptable: Rice hats, GI Headwear, Cloth netting

****All items worn should be period-correct originals or accurate reproductions****



1-4. Uniform, Accessories

Undergarments

No undershirt is preferred and acceptable. However, if one must be used, use a neutral tone such as khaki, white, or green and preferably low-cut. Rarely were undershirts used, so as hidden as they can be, the better.

Trouser Belt

No belt is necessary, though a standard khaki brown with silver roller buckle is acceptable. There are also leather versions and web-style belts that can be used.

Footwear

PLA Type 65 Liberation boots are preferred. These high-top Palladium style boots are still easily attainable. The deep, black sole is preferred, but the standard sole is acceptable. These can be had for ~\$20, so we highly recommend them. However, you can also use USGI Jungle Boots.

Undershirt: OD Green T-Shirt

Belt: None, Issued Black web belt w/ Gold buckle

Boots: Standard Jungle Boots, CIDG boots, Black Palladium Style High-Top



2-1. Equipment, Chest Rigs

Issued Load Carrying Equipment is the cotton Type 56 AK pattern chest rig. This three cell, four pocket rig can be in any color, though tan/brown is highly preferred to a greenish type color.

Depending on weapon selection, one may opt to use a type 56 SKS chest rig in the same color options. Attendees may also find Chicom SMG and stick grenade pouches particularly useful. These are accepted at our events.



Required: Type 56 Chicom Chest rig, AK (Preferred) or SKS version.

Not Acceptable: Type 81 Chest Rigs, modern chest rigs.

Please avoid the Type 81 chest rig or any new-production versions.



2-2. Equipment, Rucksack

The preferred rucksack is the NVA type rucksack. This can be in either the early war-time khaki, or later / post war green. The three or two outer pocket versions are acceptable. please ensure it is a high-quality replica or an original.

Broken Arrow Events **STRONGLY** advises against the commonly available ebay replicas, as these are made of paper-thin material. Usually, these are found painted or marked with North Vietnam flags.

Other options for your rucksack include the Czech M60 rucksack, Soviet Veshmeshok, or a homemade rucksack.

Preferred: NVA Rucksack in Tan or Green

Acceptable: Czech M60 Rucksack, Soviet Veshmeshok Homemade Bag

Not Acceptable: USGI Rucksacks, Modern bags, "Close-Enoughs"



2-3. Equipment, Survival

BAE requires a minimum of two period-correct ponchos per attendee. USGI versions and other Combloc versions are okay, although PAVN-style rain ponchos are preferred. Originals are very rare, but opaque plastic ponchos are readily available. This is non-negotiable for the safety of participants.

For sleep, using a basic hammock, either “jungle-made,” USGI, or PAVN issued style is recommended. Otherwise, a USGI-style tarp/sleep system is acceptable. Regardless, bringing a soviet-era plash palatka rain cape / shelter half is recommended.

A cold weather vest is available and can be used when temperatures drop. For emergencies, USGI style cold weather gear is accepted.

Required: Two ponchos (USGI or PAVN style), Hammock or Ground-based sleep system

Accepted: Soviet Plash Palatka, USGI sleep and cold-weather equipment, cold weather quilted vest



2-4. Equipment, Weapons

The primary weapon is the Type 56 AK; however due to the rarity, participants may use other variants such as the AKM or AKMS. Alongside these, standard metal 7.62 magazines and tan / green chicom slings must be used.

PAVN forces may use also accept rifles/SMGs/MGs such as the SKS, Romanian PM MD65, Mosin Nagant, RPDs, PPS-43, PPSH-41, M1918 BAR, and the RPG-2 and RPG-7.

For other weapon types, please check first with BAE PAVN Cadre. There are many other options used by PAVN, but these rules are put in place to avoid cells full of unicorn weapons.

Preferred: Type 56 AK or AKM / AKMS

Accepted: SKS, Mosin, RPD, etc. (see above)

Not Acceptable: USGI type weapons, modern rifles

Note: we no longer accept “captured” USGI weapons such as M16a1s and CAR-15s for PAVN attendees.



2-5. Equipment, Sustenance

Water and food is non-negotiable. Participants are expected to bring enough sustenance for themselves for the duration of the event. Broken Arrow Events will heavily stress hydration, so attendees must ensure they have at minimum a 1~2 gallons of water per day.

For carrying water, PAVN participants are required to have at least one canteen on them at all times. Minimum 3 additional canteens are required to be in the ruck and/or at camp. The PLA Type 65 canteen is your primary one. This can be carried in either an NVA pouch, NVA shoulder sling, or USGI canteen pouch. However, please avoid the type 87 canteen.

For food, a Vietnamese rice bowl is preferred. However, period style Soviet, German, and French mess tins are approved for use as well. At worst, a USGI mess tin can be used.

Required: 4x 1Q Canteens, Type 56 or USGI, Rice bowl

Accepted: Period mess tins, USGI canteens

Not Acceptable: Modern dishware



2-6. Uniform, Captured Items

As is very clear in this guide, there are many points where you'll see USGI equipment being allowed. Factually, a number of captured items can be seen in use with PAVN forces.

Some of the more popular of these items include angle head flashlights, boots, M56 web belts w/ some pouches, mess equipment and canteens, as well as rain and sleep gear. Many attendees like to wear the captured parachute scarves as well, which are accepted at Broken Arrow Events.

Researching captured items is necessary prior to using them. While they can be cool, there is some nuance and glorification of these pieces.

When in doubt, ask a BAE staff member.