



United States Space Force Doctrine Fact Sheet

Types of Doctrine



Doctrine is defined as the fundamental principles that guide the employment of United States military forces in coordinated action toward a common objective and may include terms, tactics, techniques, and procedures. (CJCSI 5120.02) Doctrine is authoritative, but not directive. Use of doctrine requires judgment in its application.

Doctrine exists for a variety of audiences and addresses principles applicable to that intended audience. Joint doctrine is intended for all services and combatant commanders, with the understanding that it is also read by our allies, partners, and adversaries. Multi-service and multi-nation doctrine (e.g., NATO doctrine) guides the employment of forces of two or more services or nations in coordinated action toward a common objective. Service doctrine is the most tailored of all doctrine, speaking specifically about the forces and resources an individual military service brings to bear on behalf of the joint force.

Within each type of doctrine (joint, multi-service, multi-national, and service), there may be publications covering different levels (basic, operational, and tactical). There may be multiple levels of doctrine within each type of publication, further defining the information an organization wishes to capture and project.

Basic or Capstone Doctrine—This highest level of doctrine states the most fundamental and enduring beliefs that describe and guide the proper use, presentation, and organization of forces in military action. Because of its fundamental and enduring character, basic doctrine provides broad and continuing guidance on how military forces are organized, employed, equipped, and sustained.

Operational and Keystone Doctrine—Operational doctrine, guides the proper organization and employment of military forces in the context of distinct objectives, force capabilities, broad functional areas, and operational environments. Operational doctrine provides the focus for developing the missions and tasks executed through tactical doctrine. Operational doctrine may include publications at multiple levels including keystone doctrine (Space Doctrine Publication (SDP) 1-0, SDP 2-0, SDP 3-0, etc.) at the top, followed by operational publications (SDP 1-1XX, SDP 2-1XX, SDP 3-1XX, etc.) that provide additional detail in specific areas.

Tactical Doctrine – Tactical doctrine describes the proper employment of specific military capabilities and their inherent assets, individually or in concert with other capabilities and assets, to achieve desired effects and objectives. Tactical doctrine considers particular objectives and conditions and describes how employment of assets to accomplish the tactical objective. Tactical doctrine, in the form of techniques and procedures, also gives detailed guidance on how to develop functional capabilities and accomplish combat support tasks. Because tactical doctrine is closely associated with employment of technology, change may occur more rapidly than to the other levels of doctrine and the publications are also likely to be classified

For more information contact Delta 10 – your [USSF doctrine team](#)