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Contact: Emily Keller

keller4@clemson.edu

864-656-2063

[Clemson University](#)

Clemson helps soldiers in Iraq dress for survival

CLEMSON -- U.S. soldiers in Iraq will be better dressed for battle, thanks to Clemson Apparel Research center.

The center's workers are helping reduce the normal three years needed to move redesigned Army uniforms from concept to platoons by more than 18 months -- getting them to soldiers going to Iraq, beginning next month.

Combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan designed the new uniforms, with 19 improvements over the 1970s-era, green-and-black camouflage uniform.

"The body armor soldiers use today covers the pockets on the old uniform," said Bill Kernodle, site director at Clemson Apparel Research. "Contents in pockets, now set at angles and added to the sleeves and lower leg, are more accessible to soldiers standing, sitting, crouching or wearing bulky protective gear."



Full size image available [here](#)

Other improvements include Velcro-type mountings for accessories, making the uniforms quickly conformable to mission-specific requirements; a Nehru collar, which prevents sand and shells from entering the shirt; pockets for elbow and knee pads, preventing scrapes and bruises from the ground, asphalt and concrete surfaces; and a small square of glint tape, which when viewed through night-vision goggles, helps U.S. soldiers identify their own.

The new uniforms are made of the same heat-resistant fabric as the old ones, but the pattern is different. The colors are tan and gray and more pixilated to blend in better with the sandy terrain and built-up areas common in the Middle East.

"The best thing about this project is that we are using Clemson's manufacturing and supply chain expertise to give the soldiers a uniform that is more comfortable and, most importantly, that will reduce injuries and save lives," Kernodle said.

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