

Old Dessauer: Mid-18th Century Wargame Rules by Wes Rogers

Introduction: This is a game of warfare in mid-18th Century Europe using 15mm size model soldiers. Each model = 50 infantry, 40 cavalry, 5 artillerists, or 2 cannon. 1" = 40 paces (100'). Dice: 6-sided (D6). Measurements are in inches. Pre-measuring distances is Ok. **Troops:** Infantry, heavy cavalry (HC), medium cavalry (MC), light cavalry (LC), and light, medium, or heavy artillery. **Typical Units:** 12 infantry or cavalry models or 2-6 cannon (gun) models, each with 4 crew models. Morale grades are Grade A (best), B, C, or D (worst). The rules measure damage by removing models (hits). Units remain in play until down to 25% original strength (shattered). **Formations:** Column (1-4 infantry or 1-3 cavalry models wide); line (wider); or square (infantry only). Artillery formations: Either limbered or manhandled.

Turn Sequence and Movement: Decide who goes first, then alternate active/passive sides each turn: Active side rallies shaken units, then moves, then fires. Passive makes retreats and removes shattered units. Fight one round of combat (simultaneous hits). Make retreats and remove shattered units (passive side first).						
Move by Troop Type	Column, Limbered	In Line, Skirmish, Manhandled	Move by Troop Type	Column, Limbered	In Line, Skirmish, Manhandled	Squares: Move 2" (Grade D cannot move). Generals move 24" per turn. Artillery notation is light / medium / heavy. Retreat Moves are 4-24".
Infantry	6"	4"	LC	16"	12"	
HC, MC	12"	8"	Artillery	4 / 4 / 3"	4 / 2 / 1"	

Firing: The fire chart shows the chance to hit with various weapons at close and far range. To fire, roll one die per 4 infantry or 4 crew models, rounding up a remainder of 3 models. Shaken units may not fire. Units may move half and fire. This includes artillery. There is no pass-through fire. The **arc of fire** is 22.5° to either side of each firing infantry or gun model. One rank may shoot (2 ranks for skirmishers). Ballshot may shoot over obstacles on lower contours if the target is 2X as far as the obstacle and at least 2" behind it. **Dense targets:** Squares, lines enfiladed at 22.5° or less, and units 2+ ranks deep. No shooting into a combat. **Splitting fire** is Ok if not all models can hit the initial target. Hits on artillery remove gunner models. **Firing through a Gap:** One die of fire is allowed per 2" of gap. This is total fire, not per unit. **Fire test:** If a unit suffers any firing hits it must take a fire test. If it fails it must retreat, suffering 1 rout hit, or 2 rout hits if already shaken.

Attack (Charge) Moves: To attack with a unit, move as much of its front into contact with the target as movement and spacing will allow. **Attack moves are at 1.5X normal speed once the target is visible.** Artillery, shaken units and squares may not make attack moves. Cavalry may not attack a steady square. If the final contact angle is $\geq 45^\circ$ the attacker counts as under flank/rear attack. A unit may wheel or oblique but not change formation/facing into contact. The target need not be visible at the start of the turn. **Flank/rear attacks** must begin the turn at least partly behind the target's frontage and end contacting the target's flank or rear. Once in contact units stand for the duration of the combat. There are no countercharge moves.

Approaching the enemy: You may not move a unit within 1/2" of the enemy unless it is making an attack move or forcing back skirmishers. Opposing units may however occupy adjacent town blocks. If a unit ends an attack move with its front overlapping but not touching an enemy unit within 1/2" of it, it must also attack that unit.

Combat: To strike in combat, add up a unit's combat points (CP) vs. each unit it is fighting. More CP = advantage, same = even, fewer = disadvantage. To hit, roll 1D6 per 4 infantry or crew or per 3 cavalry models in the unit's front rank (front 2 ranks for cavalry) regardless of actual models in contact. Round up a remainder of 3 infantry or crew, or 2 cavalry. Units under flank/rear attack still use their normal front rank. Units in square use all their figures. If fighting several targets, divide the unit's dice as evenly as possible between all targets; the unit's player allocates any remainders. **Losing:** If a unit suffers more hits than it inflicts it loses and must retreat, suffering 2 rout hits; 4 rout hits if under flank/rear attack. If already shaken, the loser is shattered. Infantry losing to cavalry also suffers 1 "pursuit hit" per 3 cavalry models that struck at it. If gunners lose or tie a round of combat, or are under flank/rear attack, they are shattered. **Defensive Fire Bonus:** Unlimbered medium and heavy artillery and steady passive infantry in line gets the defensive fire bonus on the 1st round of a combat unless rifles or under flank/rear attack. **Base Combat Points:** HC = 5, MC = 4, LC or infantry = 3, gunners/skirmishers = 0.

Shooting	Close	Far	Shooting Modifiers		Combat Point Modifiers		
Muskets	3": 3-6	6": 5-6	Grade A/B/C/D:	+2/+1/+0/-1	Defensive fire bonus:	+2	
Rifles	6": 4-6	12": 5-6	Firer moved or is in square:	-1	Per morale grade higher:	+1	
Canister	6 / 8 / 10": 3-6		Ballshot vs. dense target:	+1	Under fl/rear attack, or shaken:	-2	
Ballshot	10/12/16": 5-6	16/20/24": 6	Vs. artillery or skirmishers:	-1	Attacking soft/hard cover:	-1/-2	
			Vs. soft / hard cover:	-1/-2	Vs. obstacle, 1 st round only:	-1	
			Unit is disordered:	-1	Disordered (infantry/cav.):	-1/-2	
			Need 7+ to hit? Roll a 6 then 4-6		Infantry vs. square:	+1	
					General with unit:	+1	
					Skirm in or attacking woods:	+2	
Rally from Shaken			Fire Test		Combat: Scores to hit per die		
Score to pass, A/B/C/D:	1/2/3/5		Score to pass, A/B/C/D:	0/1/2/3		Advantage by 2 or more CP:	3-6
Visible enemies able to charge you?:	-2		Each hit this turn:	-1		Advantage by 1 CP or even:	4-6
Irreg. skirmishers in the open:	-1		Shaken:	-2		Disadvantage by 1-2 CP:	5-6
General with unit:	+1		Irreg. skirm. in the open:	-1		Disadvantage by 3+ CP:	6
			General with unit:	+1			

Cavalry reinforcing a combat: You may attack with a second cavalry unit behind the first, if the first is in one rank. Treat this as an attack by two units. Only two total ranks may attack. To be in one rank there must be no models in the second rank.

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Cavalry Breakthrough: If all of a steady cavalry unit's combat opponents retreat, it may make an attack move to contact the nearest eligible, visible enemy unit in reach. This triggers an immediate combat round with all the units involved. If no enemy unit is in reach, it does not move. A breakthrough move may not be used to reform or change formation/facing.

Retreat Moves: A retreating unit must move 4-24" away from the direction of the attack or fire within a 22.5° arc to either side of that line. It may face the enemy or about face. It enters shaken morale status. A unit under attack from opposite sides ("bookended") cannot retreat and is eliminated, as is a unit that cannot retreat without breaking the approaching the enemy rule. Units retreating off-table are shattered. Retreating artillery abandons its guns, and its civilian limbers vanish. Squares form column when they retreat. Active units may make **voluntary retreats** if not in combat, suffering 1 rout hit and becoming shaken. Active-side cavalry may do a voluntary retreat out of combat with infantry.

Skirmishers: Light infantry and light cavalry units may spread out into skirmish order. Skirmishers move free-form, but must stay within 4" of their unit command model. Space them at 2X frontage. If attacked. Skirmishers (and gunners) may evade enemy charges: Roll 1D6 for infantry or 2D6 for cavalry; they may evade up to that many inches. If the enemy contacts an evading unit the evaders are shattered and the attacker may continue his charge. Skirmishers may not attack steady close-order troops frontally and must evade close-order attacks unless in woods. Skirmishers never count as disordered. Treat skirmishers in buildings or fieldworks as normal close-order troops. Forming and reforming from skirmish order is a type of formation change. Irregular skirmishers such as Pandours may not form close order and suffer penalties in the open. Skirmishers form up with their command model in the front center; it may not move when reforming except to change facing.

Generals and Command: If a unit starts a turn with no general in 6" you must roll a 4-6 on one die to move the unit (it may still evade). Measure the distance from the general's head to the head of the nearest model in the unit, by any path that does not go through impassable terrain or within 1" of an enemy unit unless a friendly unit is closer to the path you are tracing.

Danger to Generals: If a general is with a unit that suffers 2 or more fire or combat hits, he is killed on a 1. If a general is attached to a shattered unit he must make a retreat move. If this is impossible he is captured and removed from play.

Changing formation and/or facing: It takes a full move for a steady Grade C-D unit to change formation and/or facing. If the unit is Grade A-B it costs half a move. If the unit is Grade D it becomes disordered. If the unit is already disordered, it becomes shaken. A column may form line back on its center or out to either flank. A line or square must reform back around its front center. Bending or straightening a line is allowed but is a type of formation change. A bent line may not move. A unit may change both facing and formation at the same time, at no extra cost. **Limbering and unlimbering** costs a full move. Guns with civilian limbers cannot limber again once unlimbered. **Wheeling:** Units wheel about one front corner like opening a door. Unsteady units wheel at half speed. A line may wheel about its center at half speed. **Sidestep backstep, or oblique forward at more than 22.5°:** Half speed, quarter speed if unsteady or Grade D.

Disorder: A unit is disordered upon crossing, entering, or attacking disordering terrain; due to maneuver penalties; or after suffering any combat hits. A disordered unit must stand for a full active turn to reform (no firing).

Steady Units: A unit is steady if in close order, not disordered, and not shaken.

Pass through a friend: Half speed or both units become disordered; already-disordered units become shaken. The unit being moved through must remain stationary that turn. Example: To pass safely through a friend 1" deep your unit must subtract 2" from its move. However skirmishers and retreating units may move freely through friends.

Rallying and Reforming: Shaken units must pass a rally test at the start of their turn to recover morale. They may still reform from disorder if they fail. Units that rally may act normally that turn but still need to reform if also disordered.

Visibility: Unlimited across open ground. Some terrain and other units (including artillery and skirmishers) blocks sighting.

Woods: Units within or attacking into woods become disordered. Skirmishers move normally in woods. Other troops move at half speed. Woods are impassable to cavalry and artillery except along roads. Woods give soft cover vs. shooting but no cover in combat. Units within 1" of the edge of a wood are visible from outside at 3" range, but at any distance if they fire. Visibility inside woods is also 3". Each 1" of woods = 1" for rifles, 2" for musket fire, 4" for canister fire, and 6" for ballshot fire.

Hills: Each contour = 50 feet of elevation. Gentle hill slopes have no effect on movement. Steep slopes cut movement by half (skirmishers move normally) and disorder cavalry. A steep uphill slope counts as vs. obstacle on the first round of combat. Crestlines block line of sight unless the sighting unit is on a higher level or touching a crestline on the same level.

Obstacles: These are low walls, fences, streams, hedgerows, etc. Their effects vary greatly, so define them carefully. They usually cost 1" to cross. Some give soft cover vs. shooting (usually no cover vs. ballshot). Streams usually cost 2X width to cross and may be disordering terrain. Units may only cross rivers at bridges or fords. Units must cross bridges in column and become disordered. **Roads:** A column or limbered gun on a road may move at 1.5X speed but may not attack if it does so.

Town Blocks: Blocks usually hold 12-24 figures and are 1-2 contours high. It costs nothing to enter a block but half a move to emerge. Units in or attacking blocks become disordered. Cover for troops in town blocks can vary so define it carefully at the start of the game. Troops inside may fire out with one figure per 1/2" of block frontage. In combat the entire garrison fights, dividing its dice among all attacking units. The attacker may attack each side of the block with figures = 2X the garrison size, in any number of ranks. Units retreat out of town blocks in column. You may not split units among blocks. The attacker may occupy the block if all the defenders are forced out. Cavalry may not attack town blocks. Six hits from medium or heavy ballshot ruins a typical town block, reducing its cover value one level (soft cover becomes obstacle).

Fieldworks: Typical works cost 1" to cross, and are passable only to infantry. Their cover effects can vary as with town blocks. Define a "disorder zone" behind or inside the works. Troops in this zone move like skirmishers, but at half speed, and are disordered. Troops attacking fieldworks become disordered. A 3" section of works may be ruined the same as a town block.

Basing: Base infantry models 3/8" wide X 1/2" deep. Base cavalry models 1/2" wide X 1" deep. A gun base should be 1" wide X 1.5" deep. Leave the gun model loose so the gunners can evade. Other systems will also work.

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Optional Rules

Howitzers: Howitzers move like medium guns. Howitzers fire canister out to 6". They fire high-arching shell at a range of 10-24". They may fire shell freely over obstacles as long as the target is visible to the crew and not within 2" of a friendly unit. Shell reduces cover one level. Each shell hit on a town block or fieldwork section counts at 1.5 hits from heavy ballshot.

Ballshot Carrythrough: This rule allows ballshot to bounce through the first target, hitting any rearward units in the line of the shot. Take a line from the front center of the firing guns to the nearest point of the target, and then extend it for the listed number of inches. Any new units the extended line crosses are also targets. Rivers, woods, town blocks, high obstacles, fieldworks, crestlines, and fire plunging down two or more contours stops carrythrough. Carrythrough distances are: Light guns: 2"; medium guns: 4"; heavy guns: 6".

Priority of Fire: In the basic rules units may fire at any eligible target as desired by their player. To restrict this use this priority: If a general is attached to the unit it may fire at any eligible target. Otherwise it must fire at the nearest eligible target or a target within 4" of the nearest.

Pinning: Use this rule to reflect the danger involved when trying to maneuver when close to the enemy. A unit has a frontal zone extending out 3" from its front corners at a 22.5° angle, and running across its front at 3" distance. If a unit is within an enemy's unit's frontal zone, it becomes shaken if it performs a formation/facing change, backsteps, or sidesteps. It may move forward, wheel forward, or echelon forward at 22.5° or less safely. Skirmishers are immune unless they reform into close order. Units in fieldworks or town blocks are immune unless they come into the open. Shaken units, units in town blocks, units in square and limbered guns have no pinning effect on the enemy. Skirmishers and unlimbered guns do exert a pinning effect.

Command Points (CP): At the start of the game roll a die for each general: 1 = 1CP, 2-4 = 2 CP, 5 = 3 CP, 6 = 4 CP. The general gets this many CP per turn. CP may not be transferred, pooled, or saved up. It costs 1 CP to cause an in-command unit to perform any of the following actions: Make an attack move (normal-speed or charge-speed), change formation/facing, go into or reform from skirmish order, or limber or unlimber a battery. If the target unit is out of the general's CR it costs 2CP. Out-of-command units that fail their command roll are immobile in any case.

Alternate Hit Recording: Instead of removing figures when a unit suffers hits, you may prefer to keep a roster of some sort and keep all the unit's figures on the table. In this case reduce the total dice available to the unit for fire and combat as it suffers losses. For example, a 12-figure infantry unit with 5 hits would have 2 dice maximum for shooting and combat.

Infantry and Cavalry Generals: You may wish to rule that a general may command only infantry and artillery, or only cavalry. This will tend to make players group units into like brigades.

Irregulars: These are Pandours, Croats, Cossacks, Turks, etc. Irregulars must be either skirmishers or close-order massed troops. Irregular skirmishers may not form into close order. When in fieldworks or town blocks however they are treated as if in close order. Irregulars maneuver as if Grade D and are never considered to be steady. Command distance to irregular units is two inches. Irregulars may not be placed into a formation more than eight models wide unless occupying fieldworks or town blocks; this includes skirmishers. Irregular massed cavalry in one rank of models may evade charges as if skirmishing.

Fanatics: Massed irregular units may be fanatics. Fanatics get +1 combat point and a +1 bonus to pass fire tests until they lose a round of combat or fail a fire test. They then fight at their normal value.

Heavy Weapons: Massed irregular infantry units may be armed with heavy weapons. These units may not shoot, but get +1 combat point.

Headlong Charge: Once per game you may give massed irregular unit a headlong charge order, provided it has at least one visible enemy unit. The unit advances every active turn at attack move rate toward the nearest visible enemy, making contact if possible. The unit suffers one rout hit per turn due to straggling and confusion. The headlong charge order may not be stopped except by a morale failure.

Cost Chart: Use this chart to build armies by point value. Values are per model.

Infantry		Cavalry		Artillery and Command	
Basic cost, grade A/B/C/D:	8/6/4/3	Light, grade A/B/C/D:	15/12/9/8	Gunner, grade A/B/C/D: :	16/12/8/6
Regular light infantry:	+4	Medium, grade A/B/C/D:	20/15/12/9	Light gun:	25
Irregular:	-1	Heavy, grade A/B/C/D:	25/20/15/12	Medium gun:	40
Irregular fanatics:	+2	Irregular (must be light):	-2	Heavy gun:	50
Irregulars with heavy weapons:	+1	Irregular fanatics:	+4	Civilian limber:	5
Rifle-armed (must be light infantry):	+2	Irregulars if grade B:	+4	Military limber:	10
Irregulars if grade B:	+2	Irregulars may not be grade A		General:	50
Irregulars may not be grade A					