

Fast Play Napoleonic Wargame Rules ^{1.1}

by Jon Linney

These rules provide a fast paced game with simple rule mechanisms that allow players to concentrate on their tactics and enjoy the 'look' of their tabletop battle, rather than have their heads buried in rule tables.

Elements shoot and fight individually but move and test morale within their unit.

One or two rule mechanisms have been 'adapted' from other rule systems (as I liked them); as they say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!

Players will need a table approximately 6' by 4' laid-out with suitable terrain. At least one D6 die and a measuring device each (measuring stick or rule), and of course two opposing armies. The measurements are for 15mm figures.

1. Troops

Figures should ideally be based on elements with the same frontage measurements. Troops are formed into separate units of the same troop type, consisting of four elements if representing a battalion of Foot or regiment of Cavalry, and two elements if Artillery representing a battery.

Foot units for these rules can be: Heavy Foot, Light Foot (with or without rifles).

Cavalry units for these rules can be Heavy Cavalry, Light Cavalry, Lancers (sub category of Light Cavalry).

Artillery units for these rules can be Foot Artillery or Horse Artillery.

Each unit of Foot or Cavalry must be assigned to a brigade under the command of one General figure.

Only Artillery and Skirmishers can manoeuvre outside of command range without making a command test.

Troops are one of three classes, Elite, Trained, or Raw.

For 'fun' non-historical battles it is suggested that for each Elite unit in an army there should be a unit that is Raw (e.g. 20 unit army; 4 Elite, 4 Raw and the remaining 12 units Trained, commanded by 4 or 5 average Generals). Note artillery cannot be counted as Raw units in this type of battle.

Initial Deployment

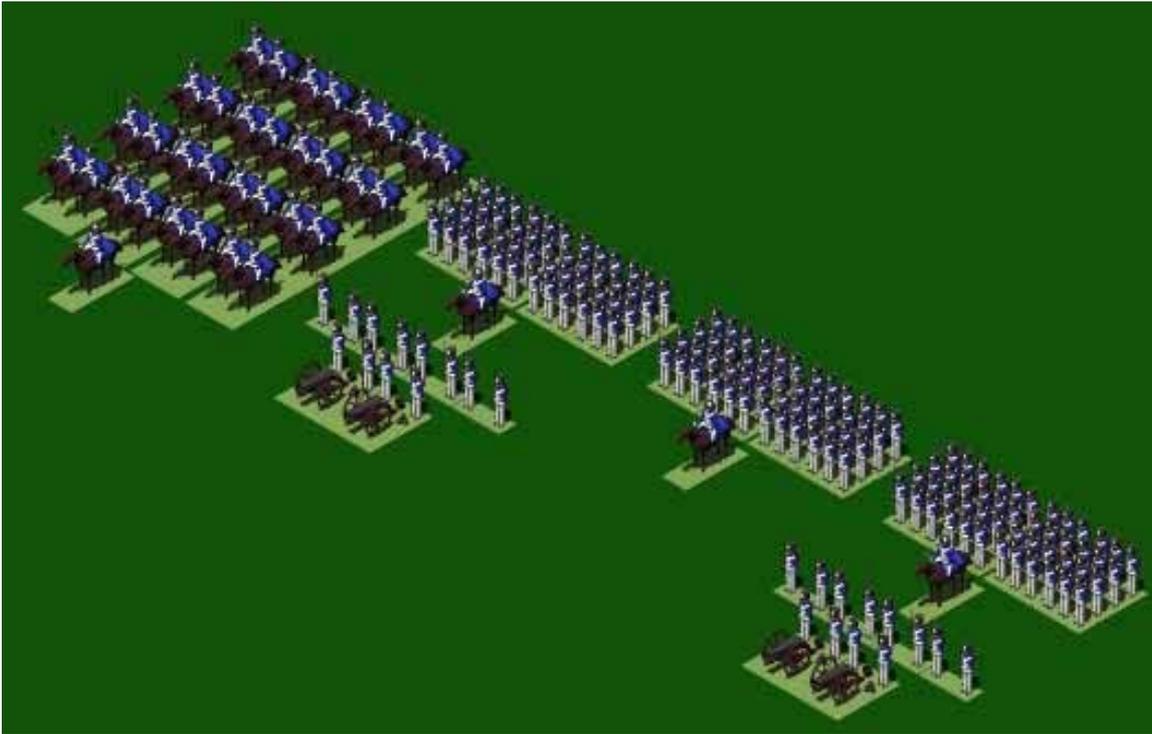
Units may be deployed anywhere within 8 inches of their player's base edge before the battle begins. If players feel an unfair advantage would be gained from seeing their opponent's deployment, then it is suggested that each player takes it in turn to deploy only all of a single General's units at a time. Dice to see who deploys the first General's command.

If a player wants a command to come onto the table in a continuous column longer than 8 inches (on a road for instance) then set the remaining units aside (but visible to the opponent) in the order in which they will enter, and add them to the column as it moves onto the table.



2. Winning a battle

Unless playing a scenario a battle is won when you have removed over half of your opponents elements i.e. an army with 20 units (not including Generals) would lose when it lost 11 elements.



Above is shown an example 20 unit army controlled by 4 Generals, each allocated specific units to command for the entire battle.

3. Terrain

Woods, built-up areas (BUA), rough ground, rivers and steep hills are bad going.

Gentle hills and all other flat terrain are good going.

Bad going halves movement to all troops but Light Foot.

Woods, hills and BUA cannot be shot over by any troops and obscure visibility.

Obstacles are walls and hedges etc.

4. Formation

Units must be in one of three formations at all times, a one element deep line, a one element wide column, or in a square. All troops can form a line or column, Heavy Foot can also form square.

A unit's last surviving element is always in line.

A unit of Light Foot in line is always assumed to be skirmishing.

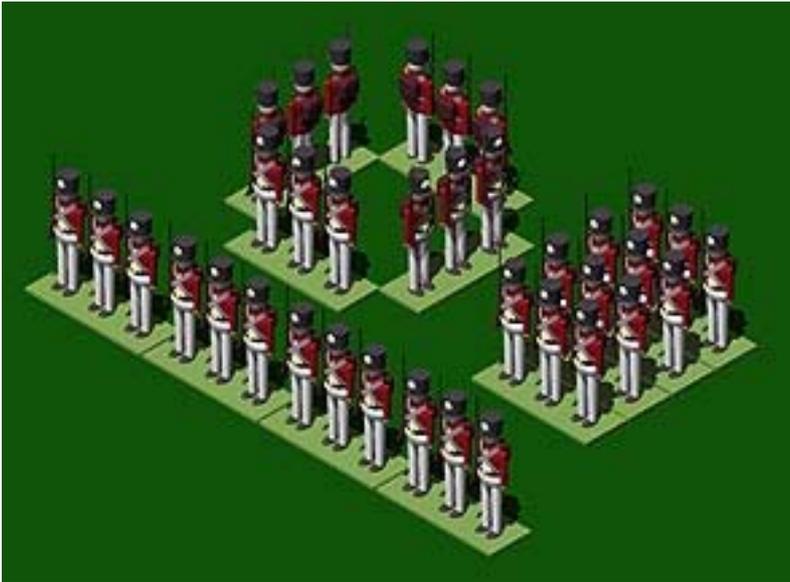
In some cases of formation changes or movement, a unit will have to test its willingness to comply with an order by passing a morale test by throwing a certain score on a D6 die (plus any modifiers if applicable). If it is out of command range it will have to test in most, if not all cases, depending on troop type.

Elements must remain in edge and corner contact with another of their unit and face in the same direction, or two corners if in square (back-to-back if only two elements of the unit remain). A unit that changes formation cannot also move in the same turn.

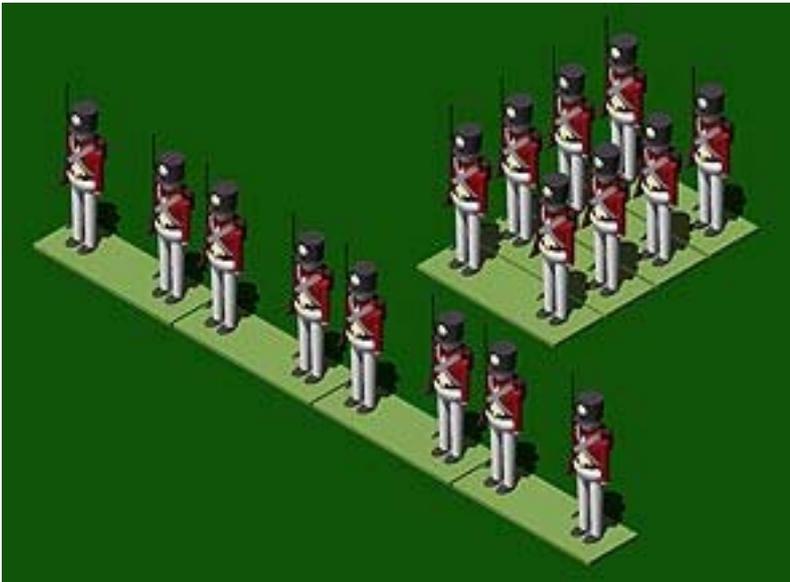
When changing from column to line, rear elements are placed alongside the leading element, which cannot be moved, or turned, therefore the new line will face in exactly the same direction the column originally faced. Elements in a column may also turn exactly 90 degrees to form a line.

When changing from line to column facing the same direction, one element is chosen to remain stationary, the others may only be moved directly in front of it to form the column. This formation change is not possible if the unit would end in HTH combat. A line may also turn exactly 90 degrees to

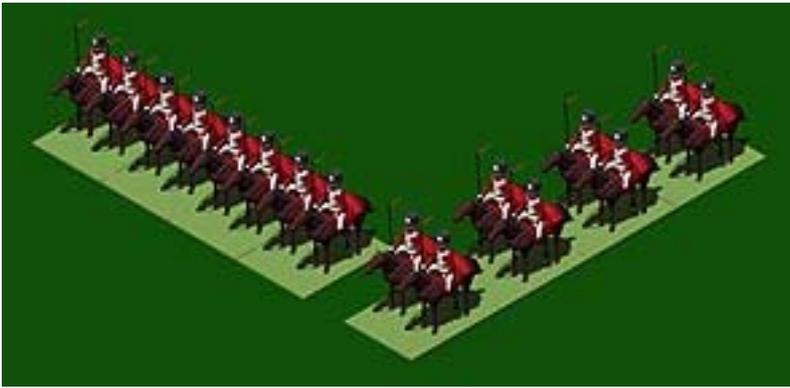
either side to form a column, i.e. an element at the end of the line is pivoted 90 degrees with the rear elements being moved up behind this 'leading' element to maintain contact.



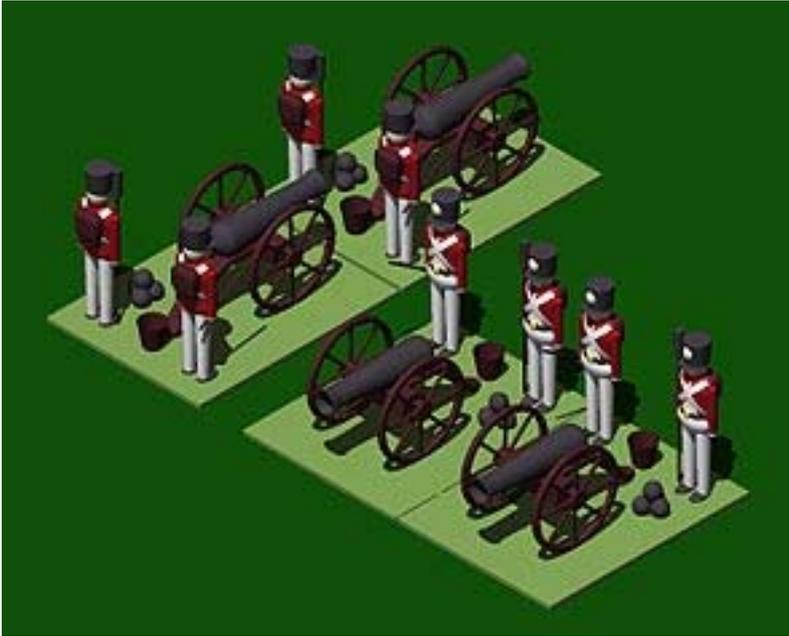
A column following a road or wheeling sharply may 'flex its tail' but must maintain unit contact.
Infantry in Line, Column and Square formation. Each unit is formed from four elements. They are 'Heavy Infantry' so each element has three figures on it.



Light Infantry in Column and Skirmishers in Line formation. Each unit is formed from four elements. They are 'Light Infantry' so each element has two figures on it. When you put a Light Infantry unit into Line formation they become Skirmishers.



Cavalry in Line and Column formation. Each unit is formed from four elements. Each element has two figures on it.



Artillery in Line and Column formation. Each unit is formed from two elements. Each element contains one gun and crew. Artillery in column are 'Limbered' (i.e. attached to a horse team for transport) to allow them to move faster on the battlefield. This is shown by turning the unit to face away from the enemy. Models could have their own horse teams if so desired.

If a unit tries to make a formation change or move type that is shown on the chart below, throw a D6 to test their willingness to comply with the order. If they fail they halt (except Cavalry minimum move).

Formation Changes and Special Command Tests

Troop Type	Score required to pass on a D6
Raw	6
Trained	5, 6
Elite	4, 5, 6

- All types to change formation when in HTH (if Heavy foot changing to Square only at first contact; if Skirmishers evading only at first contact).
- Turn 180 deg. (and also move up to half distance if not in HTH).
- To retire if Shaken (and have no General joined to the unit).
- To charge - Cavalry at steady square; All other legal charges get +1 to D6 if to enemies front; or, +2 if to enemies flank/rear, or a French column charging a line of foot.
- Cavalry making second and subsequent formation change without moving (*only if using rule option*).
- To halt Cavalry (*only if using rule option*).

Unless Skirmishers or Artillery, test if out of command range and try to:

- Make any formation change.
- Foot move towards enemy.
- Cavalry move towards enemy (unless using move option when they must move 4").
- Any to charge (without the additional plus modifier).

Note: If a unit fails it cannot move in the same turn (unless using the optional Cavalry 4" minimum move when the Cavalry unit will have to move at least 4", also when using the option Cavalry failing to charge a square must either move 4" ahead and around it and not charge others, or halt 4" away from it, depending on its initial position).

5. General figures

Generals can be one of three types, Exceptional, Average or Poor.

Units can only be commanded by their brigade General figure and only if he is in command range with any part of their unit.

General figures cannot be fired upon or fought and are ignored for all movement through them.

A General figure is at risk when joined to a unit (i.e. when rallying shaken). If the unit is destroyed or routed throw a D6, he is killed with a score of one.

Generals are out of sight of their units if no part of the unit is visible because a Woods, BUA, or Hills terrain feature intervenes and they are beyond their 'out of sight' command range depending on their quality (see table below). Generals use their 'in sight' command range if none of the previously mentioned terrain features fully intervene with their troops.



Generals move a maximum of 10".

General's Command ranges:

- Exceptional - 16" if in sight; 12" if out of sight.
- Average - 12" if in sight; 8" if out of sight.
- Poor - 10" if in sight; 6" if out of sight.

6. Movement

Units may only move and wheel up to their maximum distance allowed for the slowest type of terrain passed through. When wheeling the distance is measured from the leading element's front corner that has the furthest to travel around the arc.

Units may not move through other troops (see Skirmisher exceptions below) or impassable terrain, or pass within 2 inches across the front of enemy who are not at that time in hand-to-hand (HTH) combat (see Cavalry v Square exceptions).

Unless troops are Light Foot, halve all movement distances when in bad going.

Skirmishers (Light Foot in line) may move backwards up to their maximum distance without making a command test, turning 180 degrees if they wish (this is also an Evade move made if they pass a command test when they are first charged).

Unless either are in HTH Skirmishers may move through, or be moved through by, friendly troops.

A unit can only contact an enemy flank or rear, if it begins its charge move wholly beyond an imaginary line extending from the side its intends to contact the enemy unit.

Troops in column travelling entirely along a road may add 2 inches to their movement.

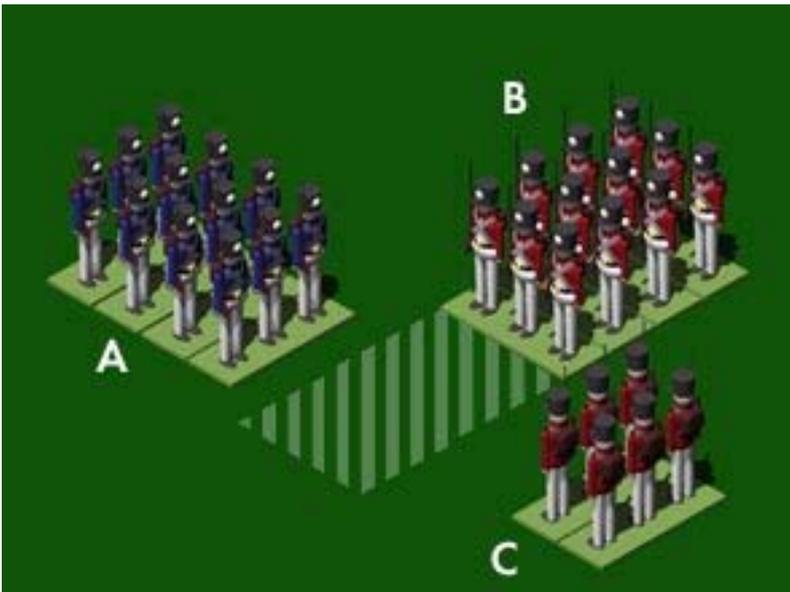
Artillery in column are assumed to be limbered and so cannot shoot.

Movement when crossing a river.

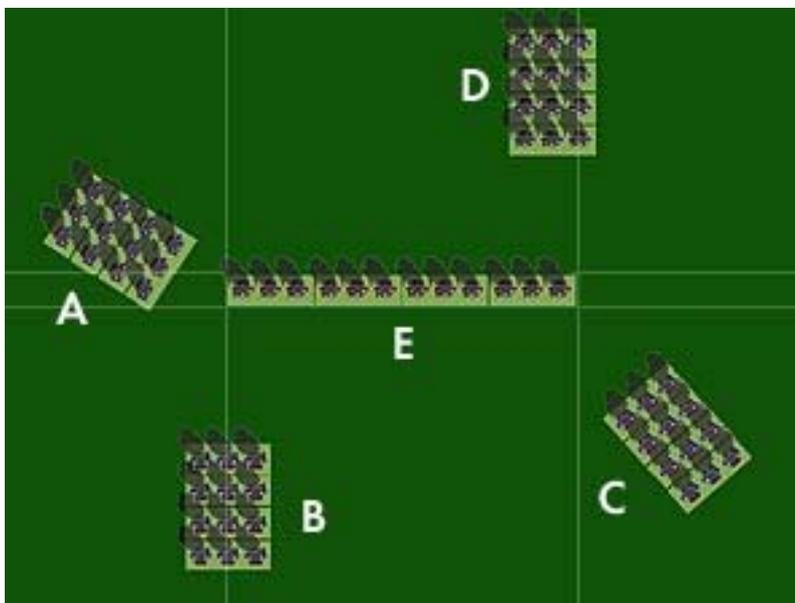
Halve all distances when crossing a river, but foot can never exceed 2 inches or cavalry 4 inches in a turn. Artillery cannot cross a river unless at a bridge or ford etc.

Rule variation: *Cavalry forced movement (Cavalry are harder to control and require more thought).*

Cavalry must move a minimum of 4 inches each turn once they have been moved, unless they change formation; or they could not avoid ending in bad going, or contacting friends, or if the whole unit could not pass through friendly skirmishers in that move.



Unit A could not charge C as it would enter unit B's zone of control. If B was in HTH combat A could charge C.



Because of their starting positions relative to E's flanks:

A could charge E's flank.

B could charge E's front.

C could charge E's front or flank.

D could charge E's rear

MOVEMENT

TROOP TYPE	Line	Column	Square
Heavy Cavalry	4"	8"	-
Light Cavalry	5"	10"	-
Heavy Foot	3"	6"	1"
Light Foot	4" (skirmishers)	6"	-
Artillery-Foot	2" (unlimbered)	4" (limbered)	-
Artillery-Horse	2" (unlimbered)	8" (limbered)	-

7. Shooting

One D6 is thrown for each element in range and able to fire. Such an element can fire once only at one target element in each turn.

There is no overhead fire allowed, unless it is Artillery firing from a hill (who can still only fire over *friendly* units) and never over woods, hills or buildings.

No shooting is allowed through a gap less than one element's base width wide, or from troops that are in HTH.

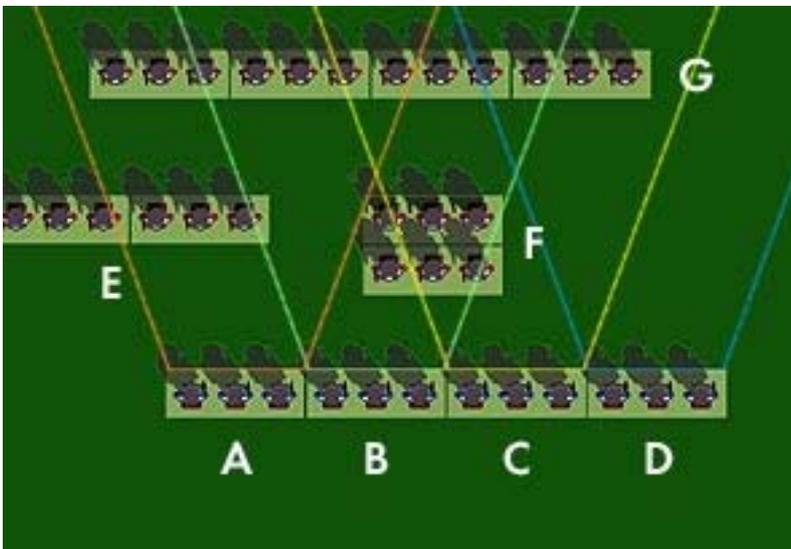
No shooting is allowed from troops within woods or a BUA if they are over 1 inch from the edge and are attempting to shoot at troops outside the terrain. All troops within such terrain firing at troops within the same terrain area have a range of only 2 inches.

No element can shoot while in a river.

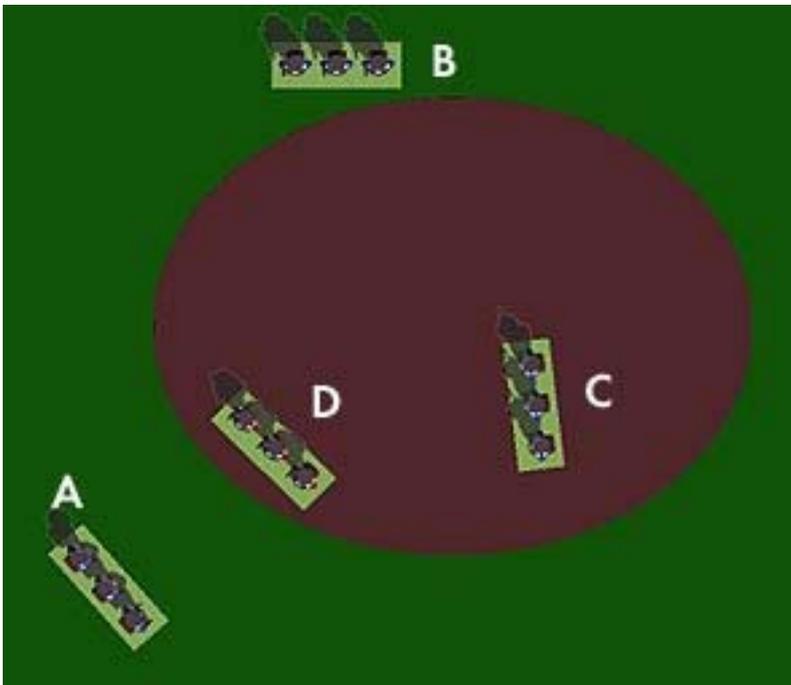
Artillery cannot shoot unless deployed, or at any enemy within 1 inch of a friendly unit.

The arc of fire for Foot is 20 degrees either side of an element's front edge, but 360 degrees for a unit in square with an individual element's arc measured from the centre of the square through its own rear corners.

Artillery's firing arc cannot exceed 3 inches from its own, or its battery's centre line.



*A could shoot at E.
 B could shoot at E or F.
 C could shoot at F or G.
 D could shoot at G.
 A and B cannot shoot through the gap between E and F.
 C can shoot at G because F is not 'blocking' over half of its sight of G.*



*A and D can fire at each other because D is within 1 inch of the edge of the BUA.
 C can fire at D as they are 2 inches apart and both within the BUA.
 B cannot fire at D as it is outside the terrain and also D is over 1 inch away from the BUA's edge relative to B.*

SHOOTING

TROOP TYPE	Range	To Hit
Heavy Cavalry	-	-
Light Cavalry	-	-
Heavy Foot	8"	6
Light Foot	8"	6
- (if have rifles)	10"	6
Artillery-Foot	Line of Sight	6
Artillery-Horse	24"	6
- both Artillery Types	within 8"	5, 6
	up to maximum	5, 6 v column
	up to maximum	4, 5, 6 v square

8. Hand to hand combat (HTH)

One D6 is thrown for each element in *frontal* contact with enemy, or each 'overlapping' element. Up to one overlap can be claimed either side of an enemy element, if the overlapping elements are exactly aligned and form a contiguous frontage with the element actually in contact.

An element cannot be 'overlapped' on first contact.

A square cannot be 'overlapped' by Cavalry.

A unit cannot break-off from HTH, once contact is made a combat is continued until one side has been destroyed or routed (exception see Skirmisher's evade rule).

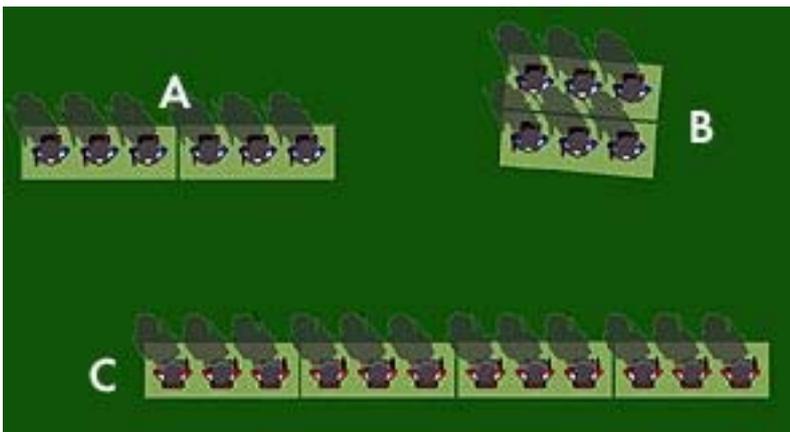
Units making contact should line up opposing elements, extra lateral movement being allowed for this so that one element is 'faced-off' against another.

Unless contacted themselves an attacking unit may complete a wheel without testing in the second round of a melee to bring the unit's elements back into contact with each other but may not also make a formation change.

Except as above when in contact with enemy, a unit cannot move and must test to make any required formation change, including turning to face the enemy if required. Enemy units are moved to maintain contact if an opponent's formation change separates them, unless it is a unit of Skirmishers evading when the chargers will remain at the point of contact.

If charged by Cavalry, Heavy Foot not already in square can only test to form square at first contact (i.e. if moving second that turn). They cannot test again during that particular combat.

If a unit of Skirmishers are charged they may, at first contact only, test to make an evade move.



1

Unit C is charging units A and B who happen to be exactly the same distance from it. If A was slightly nearer C would stop its charge before reaching B.

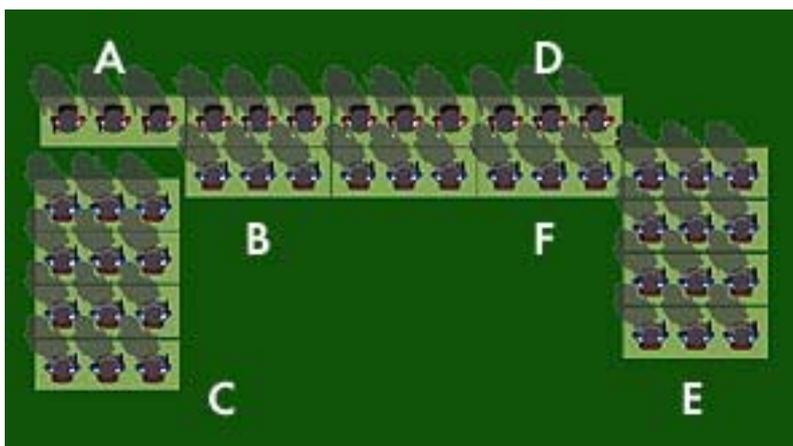


2
Full face contact is made with A and the corner of B.



3
C moves to the right to line up elements, B straightens up for face contact.

In the case of figure 3 above B moved to 'tidy the line' and make full contact because C gained no advantage. A defending unit does not have to move if the unit has been positioned in a good defensive position, just within a bad going feature for example, it is up to the attacker to manoeuvre to his own advantage. If B had refused to turn, contact was still made so the combat would still be fought.



Element A overlaps B as unit C is not in contact with A.
The first element of unit E can overlap element D as it is contiguous to element F.
Therefore the British line will have four dice rolled against it and will retaliate with the same amount.

The final combat score is the D6 die result modified as in the chart below for each element in contact.

HAND TO HAND FACTORS – modifiers are cumulative and for each die thrown

TYPE	MODIFIER
Skirmishers	+2 if even partly in bad going unless against other Skirmishers
Heavy Foot	+1 if French column charging foot line at 1st contact, in good going
Heavy Foot/Cav.	+1 if in contact with Skirmish line unless its in bad going or defending obstacle
Lancers	+1 at 1st contact but only if charging in good going
All	+1 if contact with a flank or rear; uphill; defending obstacle/river bank
All	+1 if against a SHAKEN enemy unit with no General rallying them
All	+2 if against Artillery

If the modified score is equal or higher to the factors shown below then a casualty has been achieved.

HAND TO HAND combat - basic combat factor to hit

TROOP TYPE	Basic Factor to hit
Heavy Cavalry	5, 6 (6 only if v Square.)
Light Cavalry	6
- (if Lancers)	6 (also 5 but only if just charged in good going)
Heavy Foot	5, 6
Light Foot	6
Artillery-Foot	6
Artillery-Horse	6

9. Casualties

One element is removed for each hit received by a unit, either from HTH or shooting. If a unit passes its subsequent morale test, the remaining elements must, if necessary, be moved to keep the unit together, and if in HTH the unit must also maintain contact with the enemy.

The player controlling the unit determines which elements are removed, they do not have to be the *actual* element 'hit'. A unit providing an overlapping element is eligible to take casualties.

It is usual to remove the rear rank of a column and the end of a line but units must maintain contact with any enemy, extra movement is allowed for this purpose. A unit cannot gain an advantage from taking a casualty.

10. Morale

A morale test is taken by units in a single combat area (two or more units joined in a single HTH combat) before moving to the next combat area, as designated by the combat direction that turn, in the following circumstances:

- To avoid ROUT from hand-to-hand combat.
- To avoid SHAKEN from shooting casualties.
- To avoid SHAKEN if in the rout path of friends.

If a unit fails a morale test from HTH casualties it routs straight back 6 inches before being removed from play as dispersed. Any friendly unit within its 'rout path' must immediately pass a moral test using its remaining element strength, or become shaken itself.

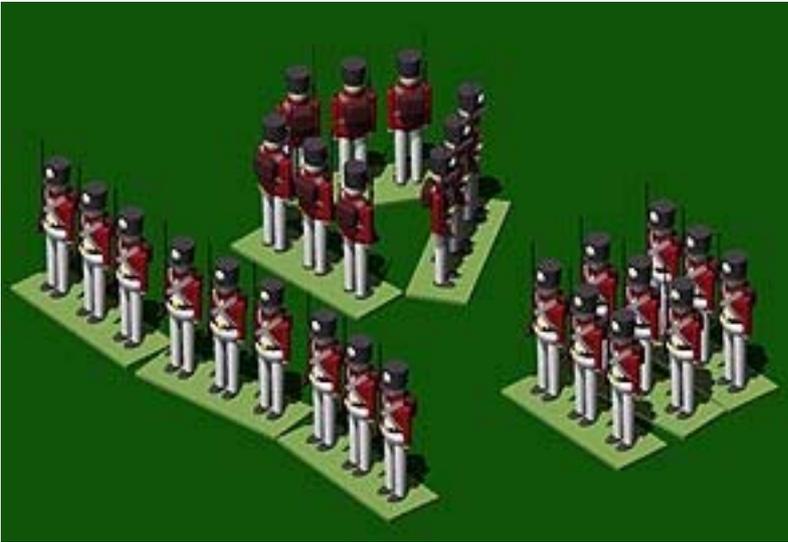
A shaken unit receiving a shaken result routs.

If all the units of both sides of a single HTH combat have rout results, only the unit that lost the greater number of elements that turn routs. If all the units lost an equal number of elements throw one D6 for each unit, the lowest scorer routs, modify the die roll thus:

+2 if Elite;

-1 if Raw, Artillery or Shaken without General.

If a unit takes any casualties in a turn throw one D6 die and use the modifiers in the chart below to test the unit's morale against the total number of elements it has lost from the start of the battle.



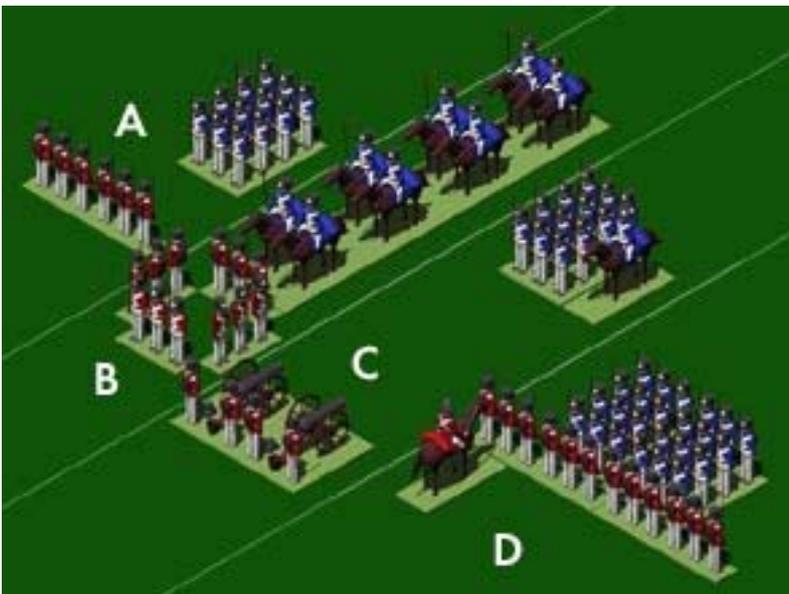
Examples of shaken troops in different formations. The elements are placed at a small angle to each other, or in the case of a square one element is turned inward.

12. Testing the 'move option' each turn

Players throw one D6 at the start of each turn to see who wins the 'move option' and so say who will move first or second that turn, the highest score winning the right to choose. The winner will also decide at the start of the combat phase, from which direction across the battlefield all combat that turn will take place (i.e. from left to right or right to left).

The winner of the previous turn's 'move option' must modify his die score by taking two from his 'move option' die score at the start of the next turn, or four if he won the 'option' two times in a row, or six if he won three times in a row (i.e. the deduction of 2 is cumulative until the option is lost).

As an example of combat direction if a unit routs from a combat that takes place near but before a separate combat and a friendly unit involved in the second combat is in its rout path, the second unit will have to test its morale from the first unit's rout path *before* play is moved on to its own combat. If it fails the morale test it will have to fight its own combat as Shaken.



In both the shooting phase and the melee phase combat is separated into 'zones'. It has been decided in this example the combat and morale will be resolved from left to right (A - D).

TURN SEQUENCE

1. Dice for move option and combat direction.
2. Simultaneous Firing/Morale tests.
3. Rally Shaken troops.
4. Movement (player A 4a-c, then player B 4a-c).
- 4a. Move generals.
- 4b. Test command ranges.
- 4c. Moves/Formation changes.
5. Simultaneous HTH/Morale tests.

13. Measurements

Base sizes I use for my 15mm figures:

Infantry = $15/16"$ x $9/16"$

Cavalry = $1\ 3/16"$ x $9/16"$

Artillery = $1\ 3/16"$ x $1\ 10/16"$

General = $15/16"$ x $15/16"$

I play on a table size of 4' x 6'

For those who like a more metric set of measurements use:

$9/16"$ = 15mm

$15/16"$ = 23mm

1" = 25mm

$1\ 3/16"$ = 30mm

$1\ 10/16"$ = 41mm

2" = 50mm

3" = 75mm

4" = 100mm

6" = 150mm

8" = 200mm

10" = 250mm

12" = 300mm

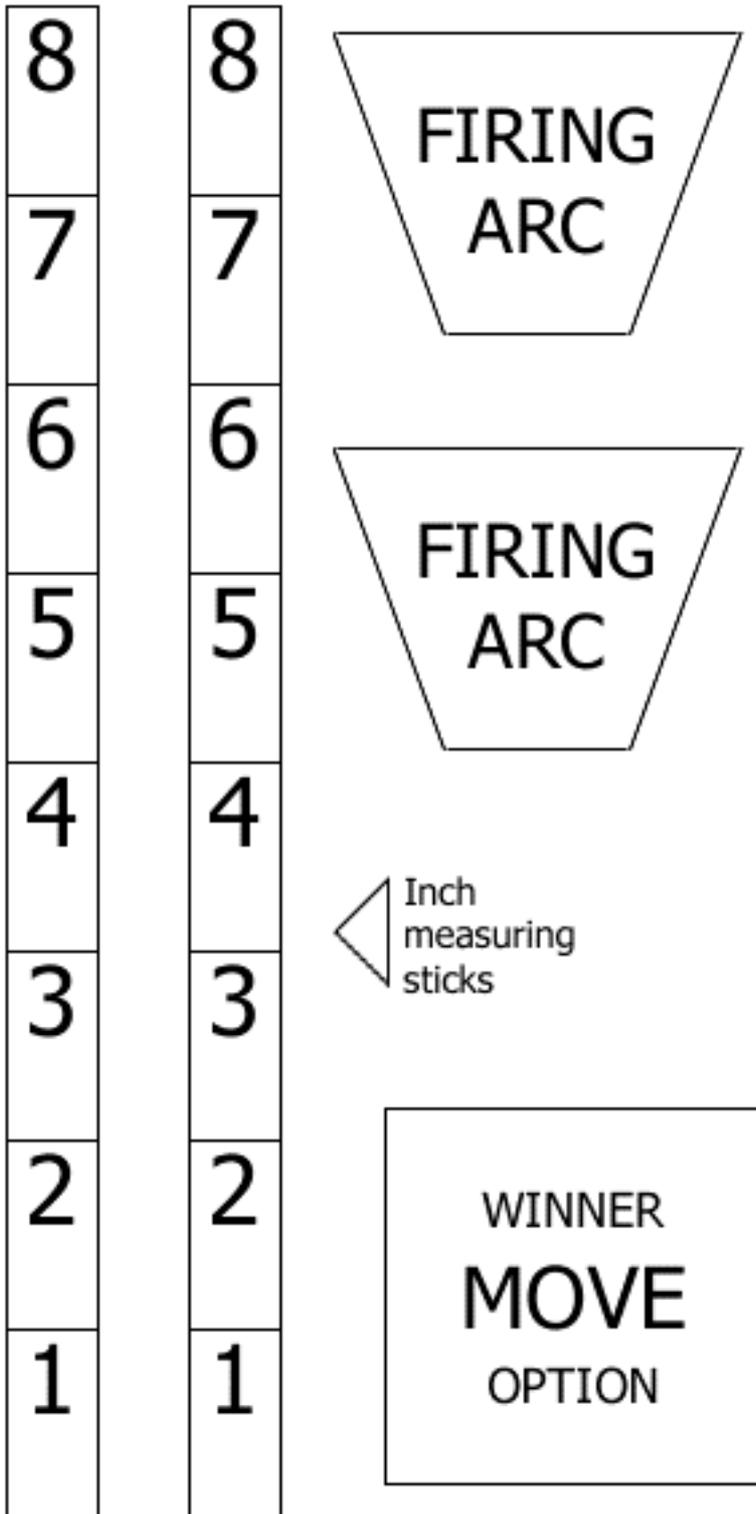
16" = 400mm

24" = 600mm

4' = 1200mm

6' = 1800mm

14. Templates



15. Reference Sheet

TURN SEQUENCE	
1. Dice for move option and combat direction.	4a. Move generals.
2. Simultaneous Firing/Morale tests.	4b. Test command ranges.
3. Rally Shaken troops.	4c. Moves/Formation changes.
4. Movement (player A 4a-e, then player B 4a-e).	5. Simultaneous HTH/Morale tests.

Troops	MOVEMENT			SHOOTING		HTH
TROOP TYPE	Line	Col.	Sqr.	Range	To Hit	Basic Factor
Heavy Cavalry	4"	8"	-	-	-	5, 6 (6 v Sqr.)
Light Cavalry (if Lancers)	5"	10"	-	-	-	6 6**
Heavy Foot	3"	6"	1"	8"	6	5, 6
Light Foot (if have rifles)	4"	6"	-	8" 10"	6	6
Artillery-Foot	2"	4"	-	Line of Sight	6	
Artillery-Horse	2"	8"	-	24" within 8" up to maximum up to maximum	6 5, 6 5, 6 v column 4, 5, 6 v square	6

HAND TO HAND FACTORS - modifiers are for each die thrown	
TYPE	MODIFIER
Skirmishers	+2 if even partly in bad going unless against other Skirmishers
Heavy Foot	+1 if French column charging foot line at 1st contact, in good going
Heavy Foot/Cav.	+1 if in contact with Skirmish line unless its in bad going or defending obstacle
Lancers**	+1 at 1st contact but only if charging in good going
All	+1 if contact with a flank or rear; uphill; defending obstacle/triver bank
All	+1 if against a SHAKEN enemy unit with no general rallying them
All	+2 if against Artillery

MORALE - Test to avoid ROUT from HTH; or SHAKEN from shooting, or a friendly rout path		
Total num. of ele. lost	Num. on D6 to succeed	To fail
None/One	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6
Two	0, 1, 2, 3	4, 5, 6
Three	0, 1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Formation Changes and Special Command Tests	
Troop Type	Score required to pass on a D6
Raw	6
Trained	5, 6
Elite	4, 5, 6

- All types to change formation when in HTH (if Heavy foot changing to Square only at 1st contact; if Skirmishers evading only at 1st contact).
- Turn 180 deg. (and also move up to half distance if not in HTH).
- To retire if Shaken (and have no general joined to the unit).
- Cavalry making second and subsequent formation change without moving.
- To halt Cavalry.
- To charge - Cavalry at steady square; All other legal charges get +1 to D6 if to front; or, +2 if to flank/rear, or a French column charging a line of foot.

Unless Skirmishers or Artillery, test if out of command range and try to:

- Make any formation change.
- Foot move towards enemy.
- Cavalry move towards enemy.
- Army to charge (with no additional plus modifier).

Note: If a unit fails it cannot move in the same turn (unless a Cavalry 4" minimum move). Cavalry *fezibing* to charge a square must either move 4" ahead and around it and not charge others, or halt 4" away from it, depending on its initial position.

GENERALS

Generals move a maximum of 10".

General's Command ranges:

- Exceptional - 16" if in sight; 12" if out of sight.
- Average - 12" if in sight; 8" if out of sight.
- Poor - 10" if in sight; 6" if out of sight.