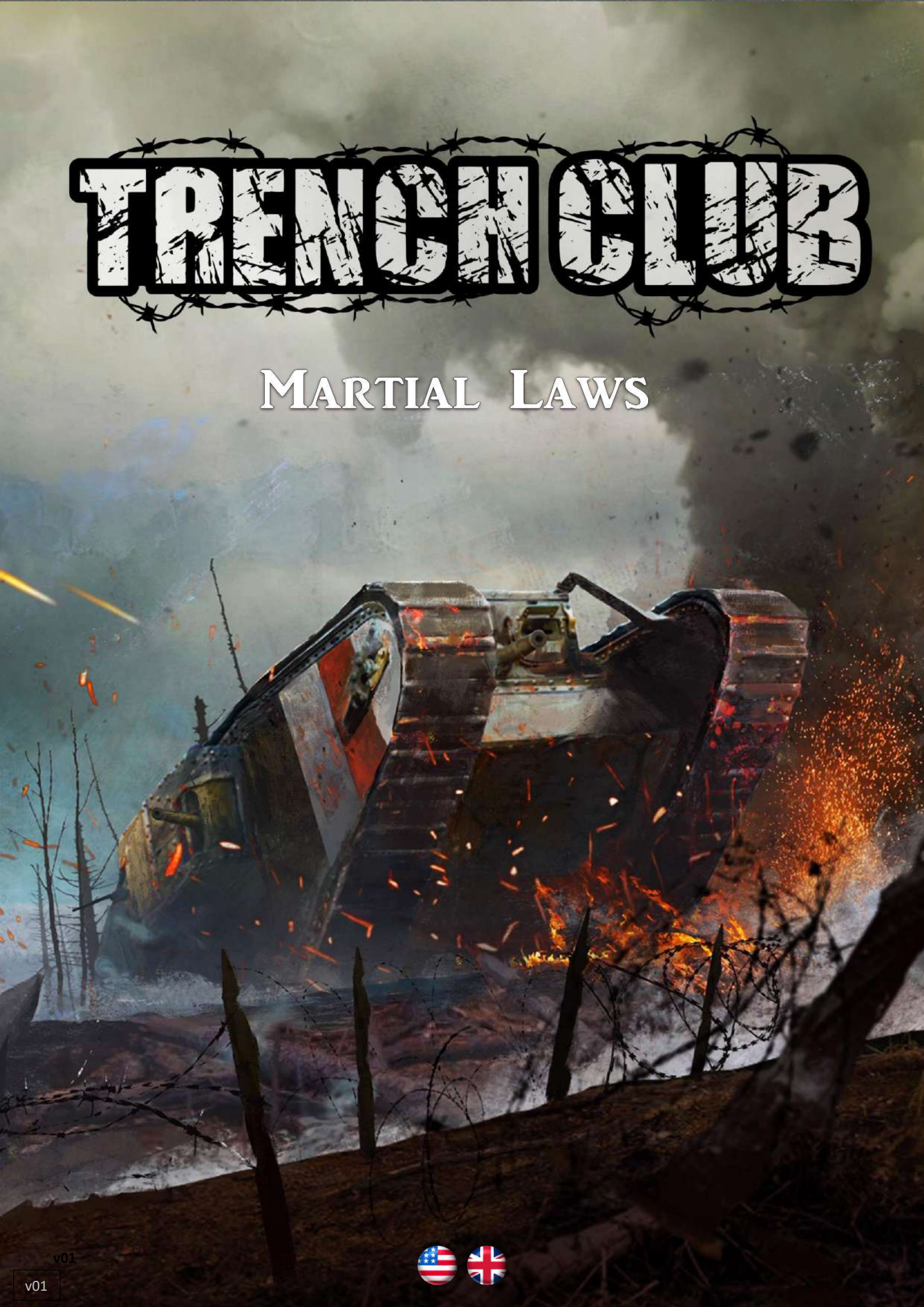
TRENCH CLUB

Martial Laws



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The Game

Trench Club makes you general of your army in a major battle in World War I to decide in favor of Germany/Austria-Hungary ("Central Powers") or France/Great Britain ("Entente"). To do this, you have to send your troops into battle and conquer war-critical Forts.

The players of Germany and Austria-Hungary play together against the players of France and Great Britain. If you are to play with only 2 players, one player plays Germany or Austria-Hungary and the other France or Great Britain and you only use half of the game board (recommended: take the half of the snow map showing start numbers 1-6).

Your team wins if one of the following 3 cases occurs:

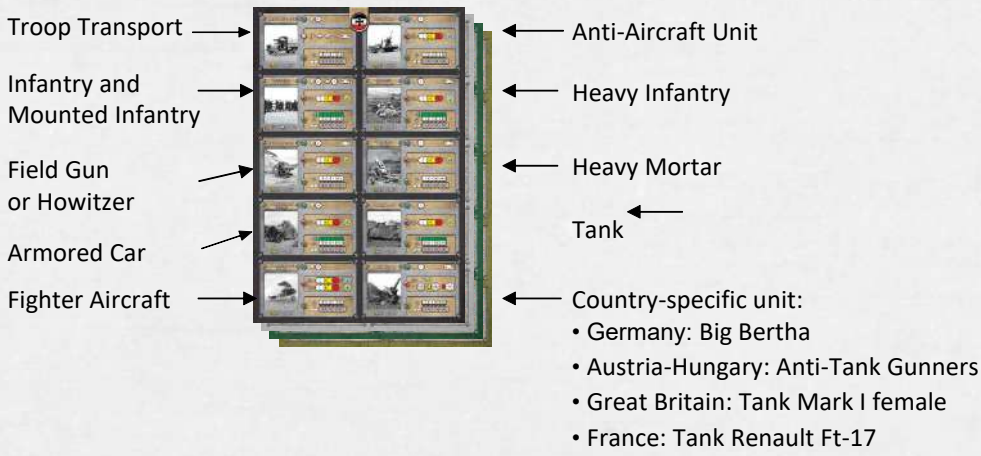
- All units of the opposing team are destroyed
- 9 out of the 14 Forts are occupied by your team (or 5 out of 7 for 2 players)
- The opposing team surrenders (most common case)

The Units

Each player has 11 different units. Most of the units of each nation have the same values, even if they look slightly different. When you play for the first time, we recommend you start by putting your miniatures on the unit mat so you learn which miniature corresponds to which unit box on the mat.
To be noted:

- *Infantry* and *Mounted Infantry* are basically the same, but *Mounted Infantry* is faster and more expensive
- Germany and Great Britain have an *Assault Gun*, while Austria-Hungary and France have a *Howitzer*. These units differ only in their range. (Note: Further artillery units are for game variation, you can ignore them for now)
- Each nation has a country-specific unit at the bottom right of the unit mat.

Unit Mat



The Rules

Below are two versions of the same rules:

1. **Summary of the Rules - start playing immediately:** If you are playing the game for the first time, you can begin immediately. The rules are structured in the same way as the game itself, i.e. read the first paragraph "Phase 1: Move troops" and then move your troops. Then read the next paragraph "Phase 2: Name Attacks" and name your attacks, etc. The short version of the rules is very simple and does not cover all eventualities. If something is unclear to you, please read the appropriate section in the detailed rules.

2. **Detailed Rules:** All the rules are described here in great detail. It is best to read them after your first game and use them as a reference book. The rules may sound a bit complicated when you read them for the first time, but you will see that they become intuitive very quickly.

There is also a helpful overview of the rules on a separate card (“Quick Reference”).

Summary of the rules: start playing immediately

Game Preparation

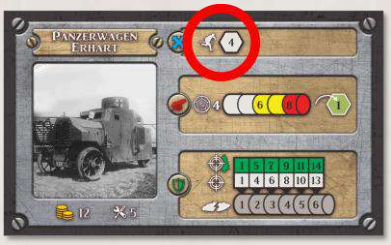
Sit around the table so that two allied players are not sitting next to each other and place your Unit Mat face up in front of you. The Austria-Hungary player takes 3 war bonds (money). Each player takes his 11 different units and divides them into 3 groups as he wishes (Recommendation for first time players: Group 1: Mounted Infantry, Armored Car, Fighter Aircraft; Group 2: Infantry, Tank, Howitzer/Field Gun, Anti-Aircraft Unit; Group 3: the rest). One player starts, draws one of the grey chips face down, turns it over and places his first group on the board on the corresponding number and around it. This continues with the next player in turn until all 4 players have placed their respective 3 groups on the game board.

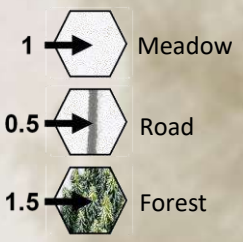
Start playing: Now put your units on the game board

Now roll the dice to see which player takes the first turn. Each turn is divided into 4 phases. The first player plays all 4 phases, then it is the next player's turn to play all 4 phases, and so on.

Turn Phase 1: Moving Troops

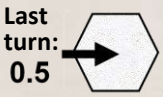
The player whose turn it is may now move all his units. How far a unit can move depends on its speed (indicated on the Unit Mat and on the miniature) and the terrain the unit is moving to. A meadow consumes 1 movement point, a road only 0.5 and a forest 1.5. Aircraft fly and hence ignore the terrain, so every hex (field) consumes 1 movement point.





Example: An Armored Car has a speed of 4 and can therefore move 4 hexes on meadows or 8 on a road or 2 on meadows and then another 4 on a road.

You can find more examples on page 7.



Exception: If a unit has only 0.5 Speed Points left at the end of its turn, the unit may still move to a meadow hex. (Rationale: Otherwise convoys would jam on roads).

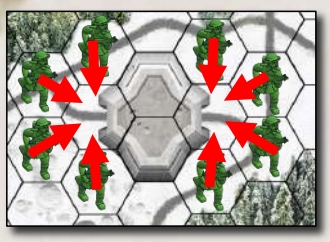


Enemy contact: Units surrounded by enemies must of course be extra careful: If a unit moves into two hexes in a row which are adjacent to an enemy unit (which theoretically could attack), it may not move any further.

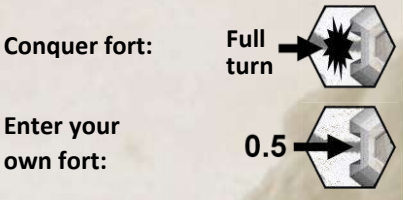
Forts: Foot soldiers (Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Anti-Tank Gunners) may capture neutral or enemy Forts. To do so, they only need to enter an entrance hex of the Fort. This will cost them their full movement, i.e. the unit must already be directly in front of it. When you conquer a Fort, all enemy units in it are immediately destroyed and you mark the Fort with one of your flag chips. It is now yours until it is captured by an enemy. Each of your units can now enter the Fort and it only costs 0.5 movement points to enter the entrance.



Entrances of the Fort



All possible hexes from which the Fort can be occupied (or entered if it is already your own)



Troop Transport: A Troop Transport Truck can transport up to 4 units of the following troop types: Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Assault Gun, Howitzer, Heavy Mortar, Anti-Tank Gunners, Big Bertha, or Gas Launcher. These units are marked with the symbol .

First, the units enter the Transport Wagon one after the other in their normal movement turn. Getting into a transport truck costs 0.5 speed points, regardless of the terrain (meadow, forest..) the transport truck is on.

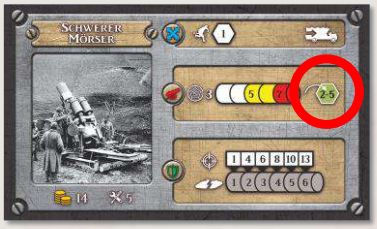


Then the transport carriage carries out its movement turn. Finally, it unloads all loaded units onto adjacent empty hexes. Just-unloaded units cannot move any further, but can attack.

Start playing: The first player now moves his units.

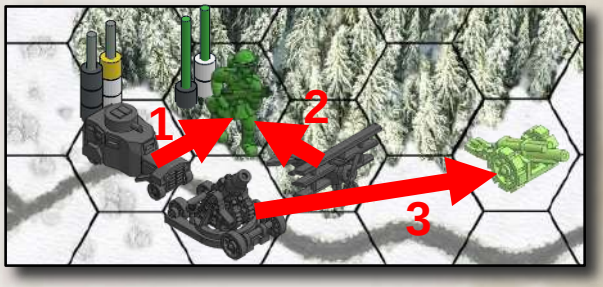
Turn Phase 2: Naming Attacks

Now you tell who's going to attack who. You must designate all attacks before you begin the first attank and you can neither change the order nor the targets of the attacks later. Who can attack whom depends on the attack range (indicated on the Unit Mat). (Note: For Anti-Tank Gunners and Big Bertha, there are the special symbols 1-2 and . If you play for the first time, just ignore them for now or look them up on p. 13).



Example: An Infantry (Range 1) can only attack enemies in adjacent hexes (close combat). A Heavy Mortar (range 2-5) can only attack enemies that are 2, 3, 4 or 5 hexes away.

Air units (airplane, airship) can attack all units, but can only be attacked by other air units, Anti-Aircraft, Heavy Infantry, and Gunboats. (This is also noted on the corresponding Unit Mats with the cloud symbol 1).



Example: The sequence and targets are named. First, the Armored Car attacks the Infantry, then the Fighter Aircraft. Finally, the Heavy Mortar attacks the Howitzer.

Start playing: The first player now names his attacks

Turn Phase 3: Battles

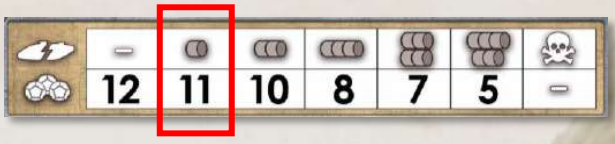
Now the named battles are rolled out one by one. Units that are attacked in close combat fire back at the same time - if they can attack at range 1 at all. During air strikes, only air units, Anti-Aircaft Units, Heavy Infantry and Gunboats can fire back (and only in close combat 1).

Example: The Infantry may fire back against the Armored Car, but not against the Aircraft, as it cannot attack air units. The Howitzer should not fire back against the Heavy Mortar, as this is only possible in close combat.

Each battle is conducted according to the following scheme, which both the attacker and the defender (if he is allowed to shoot back) do at the same time:

1. Determine the number of dice based on the damage of the unit as noted on the dice mat
   Example: The Armored Car with 3 damage may fight with 8 dice, the Infantry with 1 damage fights with 11 dice.



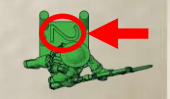


2. Only the attacker (not the defender) can get extra red dice when attacking in close combat:
   Flank Attack: 2 extra red dice if 1 other of your own units which theoretically could attack (but does not have to) is adjacent to the defender.
   Surround Attack: 3 extra red dice if at least 2 other of your own units that theoretically could attack (but do not have to) are adjacent to the defender *or* you have at least 1 of your units in the hex directly opposite the attacking unit.



Example: The Armored Car gets 2 extra red dice when attacking the Infantry, because it does a Flank Attack together with the Fighter Aircraft

3. Now roll the dice and determine which dice hit. This depends on the combat experience and can be read on the Unit Mat. (Note: For convenience, the attack value without combat experience is also imprinted on the miniature itself).

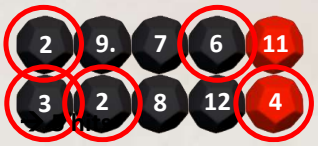


Example: For the Armored Car with 3 experience points, each die showing 6 or less lands a hit; for the Infantry with 2 experience points, each die showing 2 or less lands a hit.



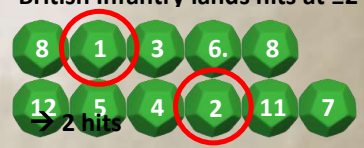


German Armored Car lands hits at ≤6



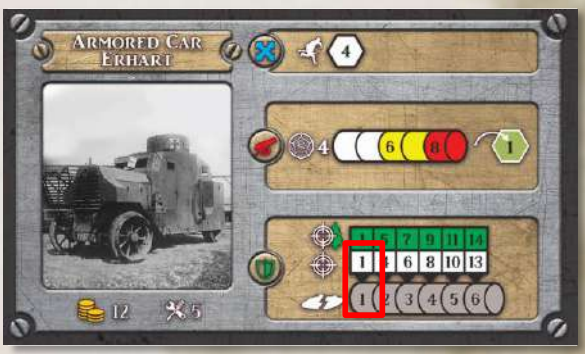


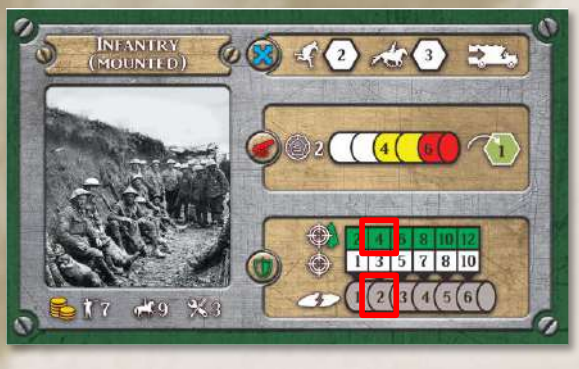
British Infantry lands hits at ≤2



4. Now determine the damage the opponent takes from the hits. This can be seen on the Unit Mat. If the defender is in a forest hex, he can entrench himself there and may use the table row showing . The attacker is not allowed to do that and must always use the table row showing .

Example: The Armored Car receives 1 damage from the 2 hits. 2 damage would have required at least 4 hits.
The Infantry receives 2 damage from the 5 hits. If it had not been in the forest, it would have received 3 damage.





5. Now damage and experience points are distributed. If a unit damages another unit in battle, it gains 1 experience point. If it destroys a unit, it gains 2 experience points.



Example: The Armored Car gets 1 damage and 1 experience.
The Infantry gets 2 damage and 1 experience.



Now this fight is over and it is the next fight's turn.

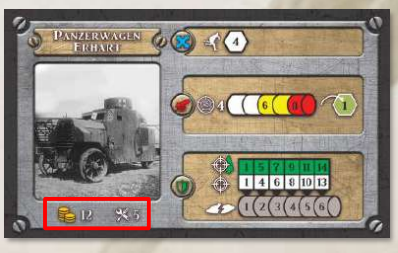
Start playing: Now carry out all your fights one by one

Turn phase 4: Money Transactions

For each occupied Fort, you get 3 war bonds (money) at the end of the turn.

After that, units can then be repaired. These units must have already been in the Fort at the beginning of the turn. The flat repair costs are paid (see Unit Mat for costs) and all damage markers are removed from the unit.

Finally, new units can be purchased. After the purchase price has been paid, the new units are placed in any of your own Forts.



End of the turn

Now the turn is over and it is the next player's turn.

Start playing: The second player now moves his units

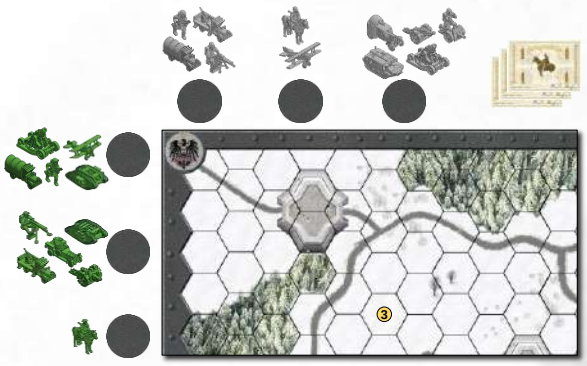
Now all players take their turns, one after another, in a clockwise direction. The team that first occupies 9 Forts, or destroys all combat units of the opposing team wins. However, usually one team surrenders before this happens.

Detailed Rules

Game Preparation

The players should be distributed around the table in such a way that two allied players do not sit next to each other (seating order e.g. Germany - Great Britain - Austria-Hungary - France). Each player takes his Unit Mat and places it in front of him.

Shuffle the 12 grey chips and distribute them face down to the players (3 per player). Then each player takes one unit from each troop type (11 units per player) and distributes to them 3 face-down chips. A player may distribute their units as they like, e.g., put all units on one chip and leave all others empty. Austria-Hungary is the only player to take 3 war bonds (money).



Great Britain and Austria-Hungary place their armies.

Now roll the dice for who will place their troops first. Each player rolls one die. The player with the highest number starts. they now turn over one of their grey chips and place the corresponding troops (one army) on the appropriate area on the game board. To do this, they first place one unit directly on the number on the board and the other units in a circle around it. If any of the hexes around the number are water, they *may* place units on them, but they do not have to.



Chips are flipped and armies are placed.



If all accessible hexes are full, a new "ring" is started.
Units may be placed in the river, but you do not have to.

Now it is the turn of the next player (clockwise). They also turn over one of their 3 chips and place the units on the board. This is how it goes round and round until each player has turned over their 3 chips and placed their units on the game board. Now the actual game begins.

Game Sequence

The dice are now rolled again to see who goes first. The player with the highest number starts their turn. Each turn is divided into 4 phases. The first player takes their turn with all 4 phases, then the other players take their turns one after the other (clockwise).

Phases of the turn:

1. Move Troops
2. Name Attacks
3. Combat
4. Money Transactions: collect money, repair units, purchase units

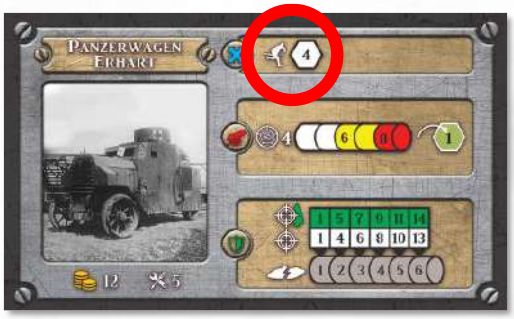
Special feature in the first round:

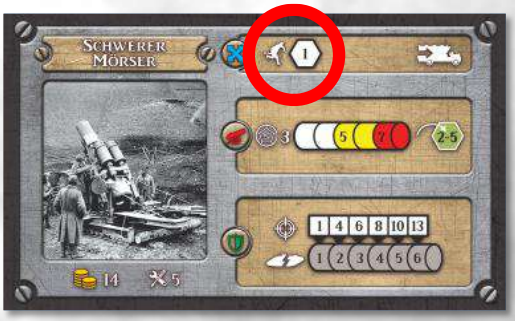
4 players: In order that the first player does not have too great an advantage, they take their first turn with only 1 (freely selectable) of their 3 armies. The second player also takes their first turn with only 1 army, the third player with 2 and the fourth player with all 3 armies. From the second round onwards, each player may use all of their units in each turn. **[1 – 1 – 2 – 3]**
2 players: If you play with 2 players, the first player takes their first turn with only 1 (freely selectable) of their 3 armies, and then the second player takes their first turn with only 2 of their armies. In the second round, the first player takes their turn with the remaining 2 of their armies and then the second player with all 3 of their armies. Starting in the third round, each player may take their turn with all of their units. **[1 – 2 , 2 – 3]**

Turn Phase 1: Move Troops

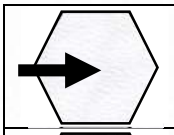
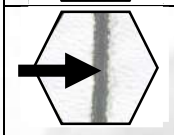
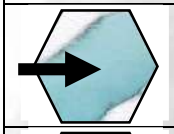
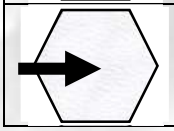
All units (one after the other) may (but do not have to) be moved.

Each troop type has an individual speed. This is indicated on the Unit Mat. For example, an Armored Car (speed 4) is faster than a Heavy Mortar (speed 1).





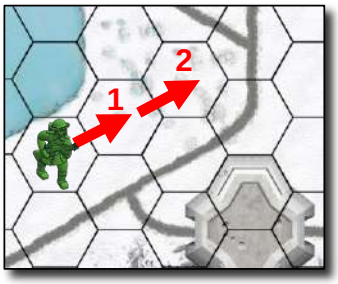
How far a unit can move depends not only on its speed but also on the terrain hex it is moving to. For example, moving to a meadow consumes 1 speed point, but moving to a road consumes only 0.5 speed points. An Armored Car with speed 4 could move 4 hexes on meadow, but 8 hexes on a road. It is only the target hex that counts, i.e. where you want to go, not where you are standing/where you come from.

	1	Moving to a meadow hex requires 1 speed point. Craters, single trees, stones, houses, trenches, etc. on the map are only for decoration and the terrain is still treated as meadow.
	1.5	Moving to a forest hex requires 1.5 speed points. Only dense coniferous forest counts as forest, not hexes with e.g. a single decorative tree.
	0.5	Moving to a hex with a road or bridge requires 0.5 speed points. You don't have to follow the course of the road, but can also move across a road or "cut corners". As long as a road is shown on the hex you are moving to, it costs only 0.5 points to move onto that hex (no matter where you come from).
	full turn	Foot soldiers (Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Anti-Tank Gunners) can cross rivers and lakes. Moving to a water hex costs a full turn, regardless of the speed of the unit. While the unit is on the water, it can neither attack nor defend itself.
	Last move: 0.5	Exception: If a unit has only 0.5 speed points left at the end of its turn, the unit may still move to a meadow hex. (Rationale: Otherwise convoys would be jammed on roads).

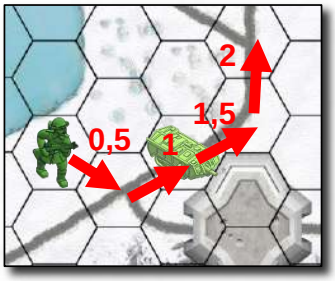
Comments:

- Air units, of course, move independently of the terrain as they fly. Each hex costs 1 speed point.
- One unit must make its move in one go (you may not move another unit in between).
- The possible movement points do not have to be fully used up (i.e. if a unit can move 3 hexes, it may only move 2 hexes if you wish).
- You can move over friendly or allied units, but not over enemy units (also applies to air units).
- You cannot go/fly over Forts (also not over the entry hexes).

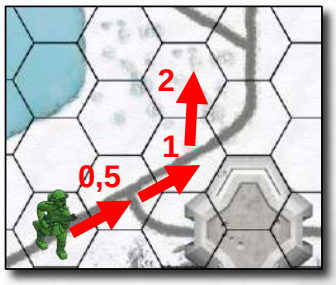
Examples of movement of an infantry (speed: 2):



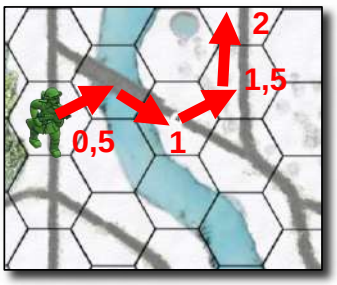
On meadow



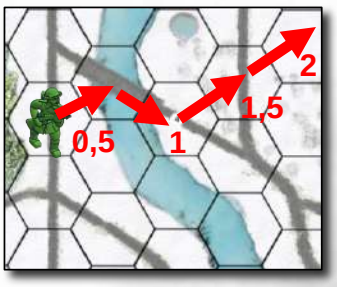
Via road over allied unit



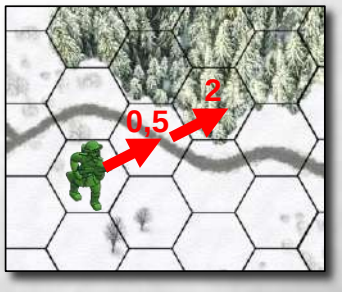
Via road and meadow



„Curve cutting" (only target hex counts)



Special rule: last move with 0.5 on meadow



Over road and forest

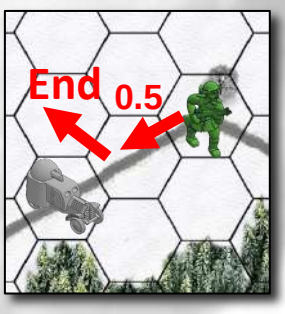
Enemy Contact

When a unit is threatened by enemy units, it has to move very carefully and is therefore slower. If a unit has enemy contact and then moves to a hex in which it has enemy contact again, the unit's turn is over. Only adjacent enemy units that can attack your own unit in close combat count as enemy contact.

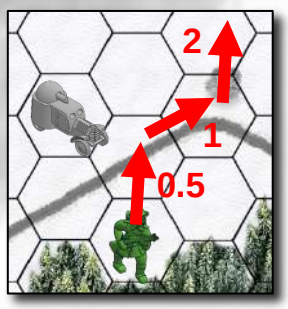
This rule is best illustrated by a few examples:



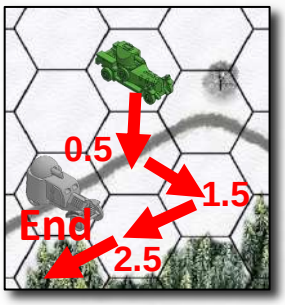
End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)



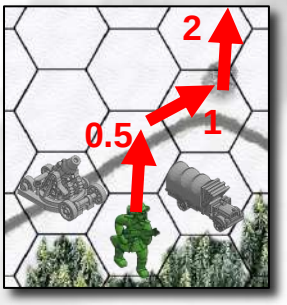
End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)



Turn not over (only one enemy contact)



End of turn (two successive enemy contacts in 3rd and 4th turn)



Turn not over (neither Mortar nor Transport can attack in close combat)



End of turn (Heavy Infantry can attack aircraft)



End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)



End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)

Troop Transport

A Troop Transport truck can carry up to 4 units of the following troop types: Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Field Gun, Howitzer, Heavy Mortar, Anti-Tank Gunner, Big Bertha, Gas Launcher. These units are marked with the symbol .

First, the units move into the truck one after the other in their normal movement turn. Moving into a truck costs 0.5 speed points, regardless of the terrain (meadow, forest ...) on which the truck is.



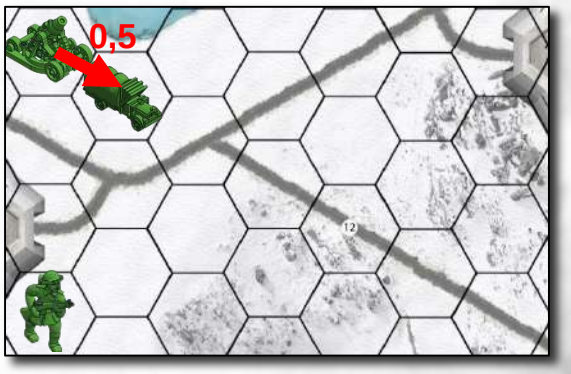
Then the truck makes its move. Finally, the truck unloads all loaded units onto adjacent empty hexes (not into another transporter or Fort). It may only do this in exactly this sequence. That means a unit must not hop on while the truck is moving; the truck must not continue to move after unloading; etc.

Unloaded units cannot move any further, but can attack.

A truck loaded with units can also move into an owned Fort. If it does so, all loaded units are automatically in the Fort (and no longer in the transport truck) and can no longer be moved.

Transport trucks are always empty when they leave Forts (i.e. without loaded units).

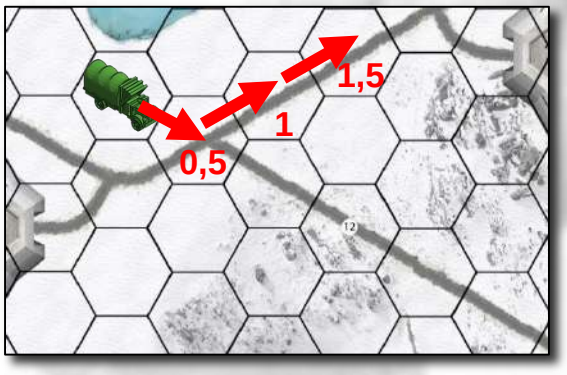
The transport truck must move in way that there are enough surrounding empty hexes to unload all units.



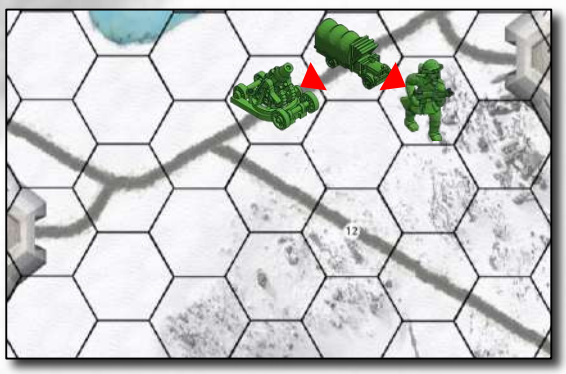
1. Heavy Mortar boards the truck



2. Infantry boards the truck



3. Transport Truck moves



4. Transport Truck unloads units to adjacent empty hexes

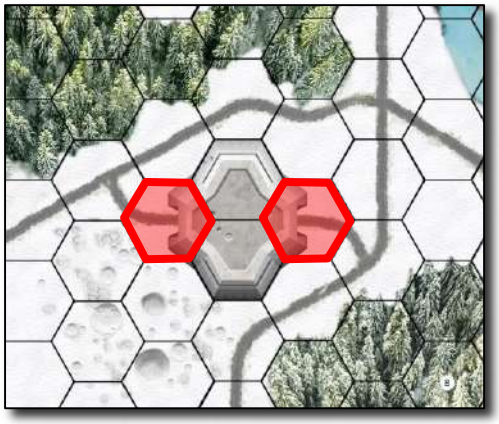
Conquer Forts

A Fort is conquered when a foot soldier (Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Anti-Tank Gunners) moves to one of its two entrance hexes. It does not matter from which hex the foot soldier enters the entrance hex. Moving on an entrance hex of a neutral or enemy Fort (i.e. conquering) requires the unit's full movement turn, regardless of the speed of the unit. That means you have to stand directly in front of the entrance to move in.

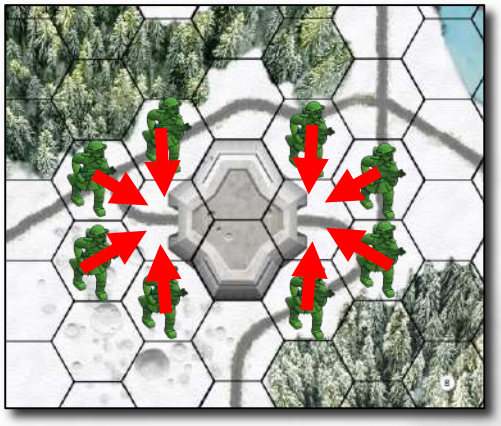


If you captured a Fort, all enemy units previously in it are immediately removed from the game. The Fort is marked with your own flag chip. It remains in your possession, even if there are no more troops in the Fort until it is conquered by an enemy.

You may not conquer your allied player's Forts.



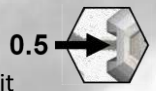
Entrances to the Fort



All possible hexes from which the Fort can be conquered
(or entered if it is already your own Fort marked with your flag chip)

Movement into Owned Forts

All of your units (not just foot soldiers) may be moved into owned Forts, but not allied units. Moving into the entry hex of your own Fort costs 0.5 movement points. Any number of units fit into a Fort. A unit in a Fort does not count as in play. It cannot be attacked and does not count as "enemy contact" for moving enemies. Units can exit a Fort through either of the two entrances. The first “enemy contact” is counted only from the first hex outside the Fort.



Turn Phase 2: Name Attacks

After the moves are completed (conquering Forts also counts as a move phase), all attacks are named. All units that want to attack are named in the order of the attacks and determine which enemy unit they should attack. In the next phase (“Combat”), all named units must attack the specified targets in exactly this order. (Don’t worry too much about this. Usually the order is only relevant if several units attack the same enemy unit. It's just about not being able to change your mind spontaneously if the fight turns out differently than expected.)
Example: If an attacking unit has already been destroyed, the next attack will go nowhere. The target may not be changed.

Who can attack whom is determined by the range. A range of 1 means the unit can only attack enemies in an adjacent hex (close combat). A mortar, for example, has range 

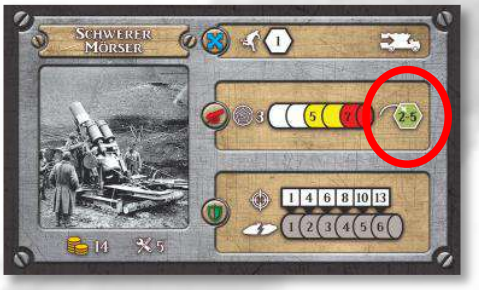
, i.e. it can attack enemy units that are 2, 3, 4 or 5 hexes away. It cannot attack in close combat.

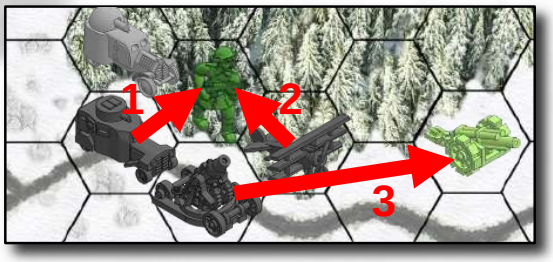
Only Anti-aircraft units 

, Heavy Infantry 

and other air units 

may attack air units (or shoot back against them in close combat). This is indicated by the cloud symbol behind the range.



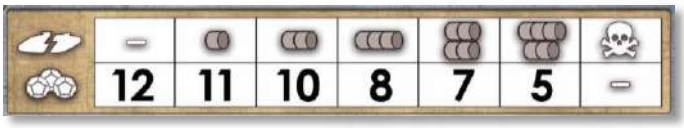


Turn Phase 3: Combat

After all attacks are named, the combat can begin. The combat always takes place as a 1 on 1 fight in the announced order. If several of your units attack an enemy unit, they do so one after the other, not simultaneously.

1. The fight is announced.
   In the example above, the first battle would be: "This German Armored car is attacking this British Infantry"
2. It is determined whether the defender can shoot back. Shooting back is only possible in close combat (i.e. at range 1) and only if the defending unit can fight the attacking unit in close combat.
   In the example: In the first battle the British Infantry can shoot back against the German Armored Car. In the second battle, the British Infantry cannot shoot back against the German fighter, because Infantry cannot fight air units. In the third battle, the French Howitzer cannot fire back against the German Heavy Mortar, because firing back is only possible in close combat.

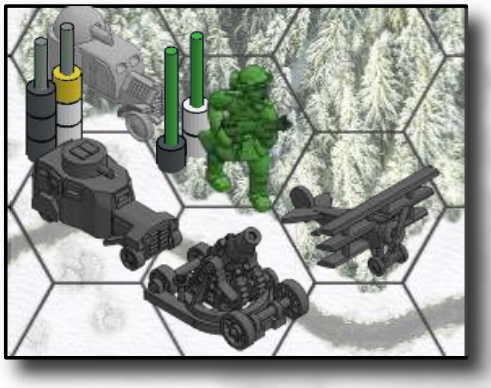
3. The attacker and defender (if he can shoot back) determine the number of combat dice. The number of dice depends on the firing unit's damage.



4. It is determined whether the attacker attacks in a “Flank Attack” or a "Surround Attack”.
   - Flank Attack: A unit attacks an enemy unit in close combat and that enemy unit is adjacent to another of your units that (theoretically) could attack it in close combat (but doesn’t have to).
   - Surround Attack: A unit attacks an enemy unit in close combat and that enemy unit is adjacent to two (or more) of your other units, or one of your units is in the enemy-adjacent hex on the directly opposite side of the enemy you are attacking. Again, only units that could (theoretically) attack it in close combat count here.

When attacking with a “Flank Attack”, the attacker may roll 2 extra (red) dice, and in a “Surround Attack” 3 extra (red) dice.





For example:
The German Armored Car has 3 damage and therefore attacks with 8 combat dice. Due to the adjacent German Fighter Aircraft, the British Infantry faces a “Flank Attack” and the German Armored Car gets 2 additional combat dice. This is not a “Surround Attack” because the German Heavy Mortar cannot attack the Infantry in close combat. The Austrian Armored Car does not count either, since the Flank and Surround Attacks only take into account your own, but not allied, units.

The British Infantry has 1 damage and therefore shoots back with 11 dice.

5. Now attackers and defenders roll the determined number of dice at the same time.



The number of hits is then determined based on the Unit Mat. First the experience of the units is determined. At the beginning of the game all units start without any experience. In the course of the game they can earn combat experience. At 0, 1 or 2 experience points, the unit is a "Rookie" (white), at 3 or 4 experience points, a "Veteran" (yellow), and from 5 experience points on, a "War Hero" (red) (see overview map). Based on the combat experience, the Unit Mat shows which die has landed a hit.
(Note: For convenience the attack value for rookie (non-experienced) units is also embossed in the stand of each miniature)



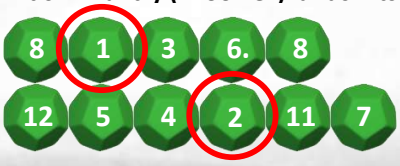
German Armored Car (“Veteran”) lands hits at ≤6



→ 5 hits

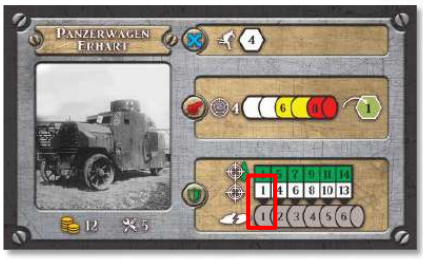


British Infantry (“Rookie”) lands hits at ≤2

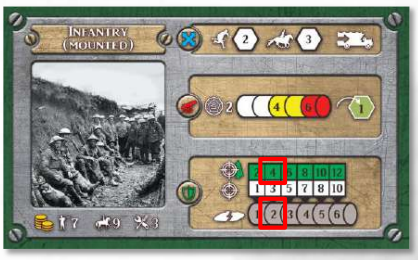


→ 2 hits

6. Now it is determined how many damage points the other unit suffers from the landed hits. Since the different units are armored to different degrees, they can take hits with different degrees of effectiveness.
Since the defender can use the terrain to entrench himself when attacked, the defender gets a defense bonus when standing in the forest. This bonus does not apply to the attacker, regardless of the terrain they are standing on.



The Armored Car receives 2 hits from the Infantry. It suffers 1 damage as a result (2 damage would have required 4 hits).

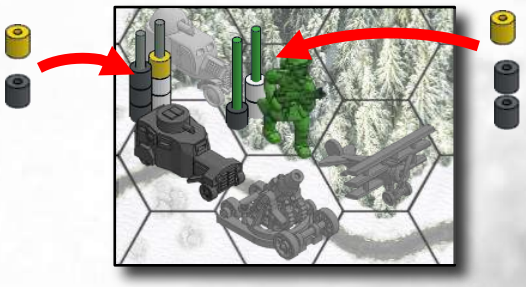


The Infantry receives 5 hits. Since it is standing as a defender in the forest, it suffers 2 damage (on a meadow or road it would have taken 3 damage).

7. Now the damage points are distributed. For each damage point suffered, the affected unit gets a grey marker. A unit is destroyed when it has 6 damage.

8. Then the experience points are awarded. If a unit has damaged an enemy unit, it receives 1 experience point. If a unit has destroyed an enemy unit, it receives 2 experience points (in total).





The Armored Car has taken damage and gets 1 additional gray damage marker. It has damaged an enemy unit in this battle and therefore gains 1 further combat experience (another yellow marker; the fifth marker would then be red).

The Infantry receives 2 gray damage markers and 1 combat experience. After the two white markers it is the first yellow marker for the Infantry.

This fight is now over and the next fight is on the line.
In the example, the German Fighter Aircraft would now attack the British Infantry. The Infantry now has already 3 damage markers. The Infantry cannot shoot back because it cannot fight air units. The Fighter Aircraft would attack in "Flank Attack" (+2 red dice), because another German unit which can theoretically attack (but does not have to) - namely the Armored Car - is adjacent to the defender. The Infantry would have better armor for defense because it is in the forest, just like in the last battle.

Recommendations to speed up the game:

- Attacker and defender should always roll at the same time, not one after the other.
- The allied player should take care to determine the damage/experience points and put them on the partner's unit. So the partner player can move on to the next battle right away.
  For this purpose the fighting player should just tell the partner of his opponent how many hit points he landed, e.g. "The Armored car has landed 7 hits". The partner can then take care of everything else.

Turn Phase 4: Monetary Transactions

With military successes, more war bonds are subscribed at home. For each occupied Fort, the player gets 3 war bonds (money) at the end of his turn. A player can transfer some of his money to his ally at any time, but for each donation, 1 war bond goes to the bank.

Units can then be repaired. The units to be repaired must have been in the Fort at the beginning of the turn already. The flat repair costs are paid and all damage markers are removed from the unit. The experience points stay as they are.
Note: Repairing takes quite a long time. In the first turn the damaged unit moves into the Fort, in the second it is repaired, in the third it can move out of the Fort again.



Finally, new units can be purchased. After the purchase price has been paid, the new units are placed in any of your own Forts.

End of the turn

Now the turn is over and it is the next player's turn.

The team wins which first occupies 9 Forts or destroys all combat units of the opposing team. However, usually the opponent team surrenders before that happens.

Miscellaneous

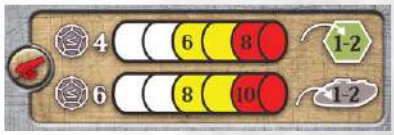
- **Stopwatch:** We recommend a stopwatch/mobile phone timer to limit the turns. In the first round, for example, each player has 5 minutes for his turn (i.e. for “Phase 1 – Move” and "Phase 2 - Name Attacks"). This makes the game faster and more exciting.
- **Reinforcements:** If there are no more pieces for a unit type, you can use the chips. To do this, attach the provided sticks to the chips.
- **Special Forces**: If you play with Special Forces (sold separately), you can purchase them during your regular purchase phase for 18 War Bonds (money). But the trick is, you don't know which one you'll get. You have to roll the dice and you get a random Special Forces unit. However, if one team has fewer units on the board and fewer Forts than the opposing team, the players of the inferior team do not have to roll the dice, but are free to choose the Special Forces unit. After purchase, the Special Forces unit is placed in any of your own Forts, or the gunboat on any water hex.

Card symbols for Big Bertha and Anti-Tank Gunners

- The Big Bertha only hits imprecisely. If you are unlucky, it can hit an empty hex or even your own units! Before you roll the combat dice, roll a separate die to determine which hex the Big Bertha hits. 1-6 hits a neighboring hex according to the table below and 7-12 hits the originally selected target hex. If Big Bertha has “Veteran” experience (yellow marker), it only hits an adjacent hex at 1-3 and otherwise in the middle. If Big Bertha is a “War Hero” (red marker), it always hits precisely.



- The Anti-Tank Gunners are particularly effective against enemy tanks (Mark IV male, Mark I female, St. Chammond, Renault Ft-17). This combat advantage does not apply when fighting with Armored Cars (because they are too fast).



- Regular Infantry costs 7 War Bonds (money) to buy and has 2 movement points, Mounted Infantry costs 9 War Bonds and has 3 movement points. Apart from that, the two units are the same**.**

Have fun playing! For questions about rules, tips & tricks, etc. please visit http://trench-club.com. I am also happy to receive any feedback about the game or suggestions for additional/alternative rules at info@trench-club.com.

Overview of the troops and trivia

Troop Transport: The Transport Truck is a fast unit that can transport troops but cannot attack.

Anti-Aircraft Unit: Their mobility, long range, and high attack power make them the best units for fighting enemy aircraft. However, they are defenseless against ground units and can neither attack nor defend themselves.

Infantry: Infantry units can be produced cheaply, but cannot keep up with modern warfare equipment in battle. Nevertheless, they are often decisive for the war, as they can conquer enemy Forts. In addition, small Infantry units placed in rough terrain can often stop entire enemy armies.

Mounted Infantry: The Mounted Infantry is characterized by its high speed and is especially suited to conquer remote Forts with a surprise attack.
At the beginning of the war, the cavalry still rode towards the enemy armed with lances and swords - which did not prove particularly effective against machine guns. Soon the horses were only used as a means of transport for regular infantry that fought dismounted.

Heavy Infantry: Heavy infantry is equipped with machine guns and grenades. They have a high combat strength, can storm Forts, and fight airplanes. Its versatility makes it the backbone of a modern army.
The German machine gun MG 08/15 (introduced in 1908, further developed in 1915) became such a standard that the term "0815" is still used today in German language as a synonym for “common”.

Assault Gun: The Assault Gun is a short range artillery unit. Due to the flexibly adjustable angle of inclination of the gun barrel and the protection of an armor plate shield, the Assault Gun is a feared opponent even in close combat.

Howitzer: Due to the ballistic trajectory of its projectiles, this artillery unit cannot be used in close combat and should be placed behind its own lines to provide combat support.
Three quarters of all injuries in the First World War were caused by the shrapnel of artillery shells.

Heavy Mortar: The Heavy Mortar is characterized by its long range. Because of this characteristic and the lack of close combat capability, the heavy mortar should be placed behind the front line and provide support and barrage fire.
The location of enemy artillery guns was only possible very roughly by sound measurement technology, i.e. the measurement of the transit time differences of the sound from two different positions. Firing back was therefore hardly possible.

Armored Car: The Armored Car is an automobile or tractor converted for war use. Its high speed as well as its strong fighting power combined with manageable production costs make the Armored Car the backbone of the combat vehicle units.
The first Armored Car was introduced to Emperor Franz Joseph I in 1906. However, since it frightened his horse, he initially had the project stopped.

Fighter Aircraft: The Fighter Aircraft of the First World War had only very little firepower, but a strategic importance that should not be underestimated. Since most ground troops are defenseless against planes, even small combat aircraft groups can block the advance of entire enemy armies. Thanks to their high speed and reach, they are also well suited for attacking artillery positions located behind the front. Aircraft can only be fought by Anti-Aircraft units, Heavy Infantry, Gunboats and other air units.
The first combat aircraft were still very primitive and instead of bombs, they threw steel nails (so-called “flying arrows”) down onto the ground troops by hand.

Tanks: Tanks are the strongest units. Due to their high attack power, they can easily break through enemy lines and their heavy armor makes them difficult to destroy. Due to the high production costs, the number of tanks on the battlefield is very limited. Germany/Austria did not focus on tank development. Actually, they used more captured Entente tanks than own ones, as represented in the game with the Schneider tank, which is actually a French development.
The first tanks were not only feared by the opponents. In the German A7V, for example, 26 men (including a carrier pigeon keeper and turn signal giver) jammed together at inside temperatures of up to 70°C/160°F and deafening noise.

Tank Renault Ft-17: The French Renault Ft-17 is a fast and at the same time powerful tank and ranks between the Armored Car and the heavy Tank in terms of speed, attack power and armor**.**
After World War I, the remaining Ft-17s were used against Germany in World War II, the ones that were not destroyed there were captured by the Germans and used against Russia and later in Normandy against the American invasion.

Panzer Mark I Female: The Mark I Female is a British tank which, unlike the Male, is only equipped with machine guns, but not with cannons. Therefore it has the armor and speed of a regular tank, but only the attack power of an Armored Car.
The Mark I could not yet control the right and left track separately - both were always running straight ahead. It tried to change its direction with an outrigger wheel to the rear, which gave it a terrible turning circle. It also often had a wire mesh “roof” to protect from grenades thrown on top of it.

Big Bertha: The Big Bertha is the heaviest artillery gun of the German Empire. It has the greatest known penetrating power and a terrifyingly long range. However, this is at the expense of accuracy. It is not unusual for Big Berta to hit its own troops on the front line due to its wide spreading.
The Big Bertha was able to fire shells with a caliber of 42 cm and a weight of up to one ton over 10 km.

Anti-Tank Gunners: Similar to the German Empire, Austria-Hungary relied primarily on the development of anti-tank weapons instead of its own tanks. The Anti-Tank Gunners are a dreaded opponent in close combat and can also carry out long-range attacks with its cannons. It specializes in combat against enemy tanks and develops its highest effectiveness there. Due to their high speed, however, it is less suitable for combat against Armored Cars**.**
The first anti-tank units did not yet have cannons, but simply large-caliber rifles ("elephant killers") with which the shooters tried to shoot the driver through the relatively thin armor of the first tanks.

Forts: Forts are fortified strongholds where units can be produced and repaired. The fortified sides of the Forts are impregnable. Attacks would be pure suicide. Averted from the front there are large entrances for the supply of the Fort. If the enemy manages to bypass the fortified Fort and get to the rear entrance, it can be easily stormed by foot soldiers with flamethrowers, poison gas and hand grenades.
Fort Douaumont near Verdun was hit by more than 400,000 shells in 1916 and remained largely undamaged. However, it was captured several times, alternately by French and German infantry - once even accidentally, when two German companies came under their own artillery fire and stormed the Fort unplanned to seek shelter.

Gunboat: The Gunboat is a flexible weapon that can be quickly moved on rivers or lakes, has a long firing range and is suitable for air defense.

Medics: Medics can repair your troops without having to move them into a Fort. Specializing in field repairs, the unit can be used again in the next round. As with repairing in Forts, however, the repair costs must be paid when using medics.

Ground Attack Aircraft: Due to technological progress in aircraft construction, heavy battle planes did not appear until the late years of the war. They were armored with steel plates, had additional 45° downward facing machine guns for ground attacks, light bombs, and a rear gunner with machine guns for aerial combat.

Railway Gun: The railway gun achieves precise accuracy and high penetrating power at a long range, but is hardly mobile.
Usually, new railway tracks had to be laid to move railway guns. For example, they had no lateral directional range, so they had to be moved in a curve to aim left and right. This is why in the game the Railway Gun can move without tracks – however very slowly.

Poison Gas Launchers: These units fire poison gas that spreads over a larger area, dealing damage to friend and foe alike. Because of their protective equipment, the gas cannot be harmful to the gas troops themselves.
At the height of the gas war in 1918, on average one in three used grenades was filled with poison gas.

Airship: Airships were the first air units that could drop large bomb loads on ground troops. Although they were equipped with machine guns for air defense, they were not very effective in air combat due to their sluggish maneuverability**.**
At the beginning of the war, airships were hardly vulnerable. They flew higher than the planes of that time and a few small bullet holes in the hydrogen balloon didn't bother them much. That soon changed with the introduction of incendiary ammunition.

Gun Turret: Forts can be equipped with a gun turret that can fire at enemies in close and long-range combat. Due to the thick armor the turrets are indestructible**.**
The gun turrets could be extended and retracted. They were only extended for a short shot and were otherwise retracted back in the ground. That made them (apart from their strong armor) virtually indestructible.

Mine Layers: These units can lay landmines that immediately destroy an enemy unit when it enters a hex with a mine**.**
Classic anti-personnel mines were rather rare. During trench warfare, it was more common to tunnel under enemy trenches, mountain tops, or entire villages and blow them up with massive explosive charges. The blast of one of these mines in France was so big it was still audible in London!

Trench Club: Trench Clubs were archaic close combat weapons, similar to maces that were used for trench raids, where mounted bayonets were too unwieldy. Soldiers in the trenches produced them themselves from wooden sticks, hammers, gear wheels, nails, etc.

Rule Variations

"Victory Points" – shorter playing time

Players collect victory points (VP). Once a player as 10 VP or a team has cumulated 15 VP, this team wins.

At the beginning of the game, after placing all their units, each player selects one of their 3 starting numbers as their HQ and puts one of his flag tokens on this number on the game board. If an enemy unit (other than Troop Transport, Anti-Aircraft, Medic, Mine Layer, or a flying unit) enters this hex, it captures the HQ and you immediately get 3 VP. Other than that, you get VP for the following achievements:

- Destroy an enemy unit → 1 VP
- Conquer a neutral or enemy Fort → 1 VP
- Pay 60 war bonds to the bank → 1 VP

"Trenches" – expert rules

This rule variant introduces trenches as a separate terrain type.

- **Movement:** Only foot soldiers (Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Anti-Tank Units) and tanks (and of course flying units) can move onto trench hexes.
- **Occupy a trench:** If a foot soldier ends their movement on a (non-enemy occupied) trench hex, the entire trench counts as occupied just as if the soldiers would be spread out across the entire trench. Unlike Forts, trenches are held by a team, not a single player, so allied units can join into the trench. If a tank or air unit ends their turn on a trench, it would not count as being in the trench, but just crossing.
- **Movement within a friendly-occupied trench:** A foot soldier can exit a friendly-occupied trench at any adjacent hex, just as if the trench were one long hex, but not in the same turn it enters. Remember: A foot soldier has to end their turn on a trench hex to count as being in the trench. Since the trench counts as one hex for units in the trench, that also means they can enter the Forts that are connected to the trenches from anywhere in the trench (only after ending its turn in the trench).
- **Defend the trench:** Enemy units can attack any trench hex to fight a foot soldier in the trench, just as if the trench was one long hex. If there are more foot soldiers in one trench, the attacker has to decide which of them to attack (no matter where they are within the trench). *Flank* and *Surround* attacks count as if the trench was one long hex. Independently of which unit gets attacked, all foot soldiers in the trench fire back (in close combat). Foot soldiers in a trench have the defense value of a tank in a forest (). If the gas launcher hits any trench hex, all foot soldiers in the trench would suffer the damage.
- **Attack from a trench:** Attacking from a trench is just like any other battle, since the target hex of the attack counts, not the source hex where the attack is coming from.
- **Define trench hexes:** Some trenches are adjacent to multiple hexes. Agree before the game which of the hexes count as trench hexes and which don't. This way you can increase or decrease the amount of trench hexes in the game.
- Austria-Hungary does <u>not</u> start the game with the extra 3 war bonds (because anti-tank gunners in a trench are very powerful).



- *Example: The British and the French (Mounted) Infantry both count as in the trench. The French tank is not in the trench.*
- *Both the British and French Infantry could conquer the neutral Fort in their next turn.*
- *The Austrian Armored Car and Mounted Infantry could attack the trench. This would count as a surround attack, since they are opposite of each other. They would each have to choose to either attack the French or British Infantry. In any case both Infantry units would fire back. The attacked Infantry would take damage as shown in a tank's forest table () on the unit mat.*

Further variation ideas

- Everyone starts with 1 Special Forces unit of their choice.
- Everyone starts with two of the country-specific units, so e.g., the German player with 2 Big Berthas. This adds more differentiation between the factions.
- Units are destroyed upon their 5th (instead of 6th) damage received. That speeds up the game but also changes the dynamics a lot. Players will start hunting down Infantry, since destroying them within one turn is now more achievable.
- Everyone starts with a full second set of units (so each unit twice). Consider combining this with the previous rule to "clean up" the battlefield faster.

Your house rules?

I encourage you to test your own house rules. If you tested them and found them great, please share them with other players on <u>http://trench-club.com</u> or send them to me to share them: <u>info@trench-club.com</u>.

Gunboat



7

5 | 7 | 9 | 1-4

3 | 5 | 7 | 1-4

2 | 5 | 7 | 10 | 12 | 16

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

18 5

Medic



3

1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 10

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

Can repair one adjacent own unit per turn; damage is removed at the end of the turn; regular repair costs apply

18 5

Ground attack aircraft



10

6 | 8 | 10 | 1

4 | 6 | 8 | 1

1 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 12

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

18 5

Railway gun



0.5

4 | 2-9

1 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 13

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

18 5

Airship



8

2 | 4 | 6 | 1

6 | 8 | 10 | 1

1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 11

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

18 5

Poison gas launcher



2

3 | 5 | 7 | 1-3

Hits the target hex and the adjacent 6 hexes (friend or foe, but not itself)

1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 11

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

18 5

Gun turrets



3 | 1-3

Range counts from any fort hex.

Turret is placed on a fort (immediately or later; max. 1 per fort) and controlled by the occupant of the fort. Cannot be destroyed.

18 (for 3 units)

Minelayer



3

1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 10

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6

Can put one mine marker per turn on own or adjacent hex. Note concealed where the mine is relative to the marker (see right table). If an enemy unit moves on the mine, this unit and the mine are destroyed.

NW | N | NE | W | M | E | SW | S | SE

18 5

–						
12	11	10	8	7	5	–

Experience

War Hero

Veteran

Rookie

–

Enemy unit damaged: +1 Experience

Enemy unit destroyed: +2 Experience

Flank Attack: +

- only for attacker and only in close combat
- 1 other own unit that can theoretically attack (but does not have to) stands adjacent to the defender

Surround: +

- only for attacker and only in close combat
- at least 2 other own units that can theoretically attack (but do not have to) stand adjacent to the defender or 1 directly opposite

Quick Reference

Game phases:

Move troops → **Name attacks** → **Combat** → **Collect money** → **Repair units** → **Buy units**

- **Collect money:** 3 war bonds per fort
- **Repair units:** Unit must be in the fort since the beginning of the turn
- **Buy units:** Place new unit in any owned Fort

Move troops:

Only the target hex counts

- 1 → Meadow
- 0.5 → Road; "curve cutting" is allowed
- 1.5 → Forest
- full turn → River; foot soldiers only
- full turn → Conquer fort; foot soldiers only
- 0.5 → Enter own fort
- 0.5 → Board transport truck

Exception:

- 0.5 → Last move

Enemy contact:

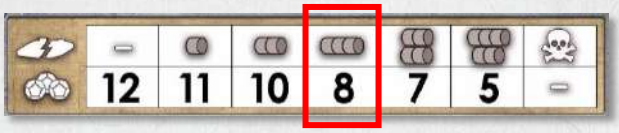


Unit with enemy contact moves to a hex with enemy contact again
→ **movement ends**
(enemy must be able to attack)

Combat:

Attacker and defender roll the dice simultaneously

1. Damage → Number of dice:

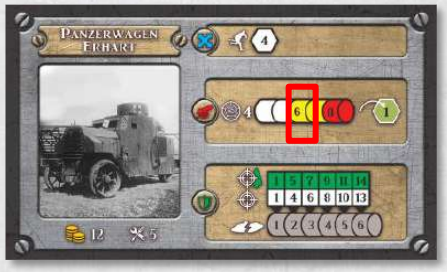


2. Flank/ Surround attack? (attacker only)

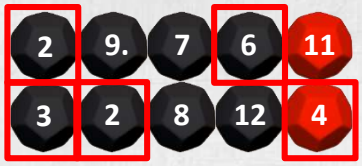


3. Experience → Hit probability





4. Roll dice → number of hits



5. Hits → Damage (terrain bonus only for defender)



6. Set markers (damage, experience)



