
BLITZKRIEG COMMANDER

Lite

Fast-Play Tabletop Wargame Rules For Combined-Arms Operations, 1936-45

Introduction

BlitzkriegCommander is a set of wargame rules that allow you to re-create combined-arms operations of the Second World War and the Spanish Civil War using miniatures on a tabletop. Players each take command of a *Battlegroup*, which can be anything from a company right up to a division. The rules attempt to provide a good balance between playability and historical accuracy, allowing players to perform like their historic counterparts with a game system that is easy to use and fast to play. The rules are suitable for solo, two-player and multi-player games, at home, at the club, or at a tournament.

Miniatures

You will need suitable miniatures to play the game and they can be any scale from 2mm right up to 20mm, including 6mm, 10mm and 15mm. Your miniatures can be based or unbased as this makes no difference when playing the game. It is recommended that you halve all measurements when using 2mm scale miniatures and double all measurements when using 20mm scale miniatures.

Battlefield

A playing area 120cm (4ft) squared will provide ample space for average-sized battles using 6-15mm scale miniatures. For players using 2mm scale miniatures, a playing area half this size will be adequate. For players using 20mm scale miniatures, an area 180cm by 240cm (6ft x 8ft) or larger will be necessary. Small games comprise of between 20 and 40 playing pieces per side, mid-sized games between 40 and 60, and large games up to 100 playing pieces. One centimetre on the tabletop represents either ten or twenty metres in real life, depending on the level of command you choose. Games will typically last from two to four hours in real time, with one game turn representing a variable length of time of up to thirty minutes.

You will need to provide suitable scenery for your table to make it look like a real battlefield. This can be as basic or as complex as you like, but the features you should include are hills, woods, roads, rivers and buildings. As a general guide, there should be at least one third to one half of the table covered with scenery for most battles as this will avoid the unrealistic situation of troops having a clear line-of-sight from one side of the table to the other.

Tools & Markers

You will need a handful of six-sided dice, a directional die and a tape measure. The directional die is a normal six-sided die with arrows marked on it instead of pips, but if you don't have one, a simple circle of card with an arrow drawn on both sides will be OK. The tape measure should have measurements in centimetres marked on it.

It is a good idea to get some markers to indicate various situations in the game. A handful of tiny six-sided dice are ideal for recording hits against units and if you have two different colours, for example red and white, the red die can be used to indicate when units are suppressed. Alternatively, you can make your own markers using dead and wounded soldiers and spare bits from your models mounted on small circular bases - this gives added realism to the game! Cotton wool puffs are ideal for simulating smoke screens.

Online Support

The game is fully supported on the world wide web at:

www.blitzkrieg-commander.com

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Game Concepts

It's always useful when reading a new set of rules to understand some of the concepts used in the game. This section will hopefully do just that!

Overview

Players typically alternate between turns, but for those who prefer more interactive game play, there is the option of using simultaneous play instead. Turns are broken down into five phases and play continues until either one side reaches its objectives or it breaks and withdraws from the battlefield as a result of suffering too many casualties.

The first phase of a turn is where scheduled artillery strikes take place. The initiative phase follows and allows troops in close proximity to the enemy to respond to their immediate situation without having to wait for orders to be issued. The command phase is where command units attempt to issue orders to their troops and if successful, the troops carry out actions such as move or fire. The command system represents the core of the game and allows the unpredictable nature of combat to be simulated in a simple yet elegant way. The fourth phase is the combat phase where combat between units in contact with one another is resolved to completion. The end phase is the final phase of a turn where troops recover from poor morale.

The different types of action in the game are resolved in exactly the same way, so troops firing small-arms are calculated the same as tanks firing guns which are calculated the same as artillery firing a barrage. Not only does this allow for very fluid game play, but it also allows troops to support one another by accumulating sufficient hits against enemy units in a turn to be able to knock them out of the game. No longer do the different arms of service act independently of one another, but players should use combined-arms to get the most out of their troops, and ultimately, the game.

Units, Formations & Battlegroups

Each miniature, or stand of miniatures if they are mounted on bases, is referred to as a Unit. A unit represents a squad of infantry or a single vehicle or gun when playing the game at company or battalion level. This gives a realistic simulation where what you see on the table is what you get in real life. However, you can also play games at the brigade or divisional level by simply stating that each unit represents a platoon. Whilst this is a more abstract method of play, it does allow you to fight larger battles without needing loads of miniatures.

A Formation is a convenient term to use for all the units you will issue orders to at any one time during a turn. Formations aren't fixed as in other games, units can be in a formation one turn then you can split them up into three different formations the next turn. There are also no restrictions on the distance each unit can be within a formation as this is built into the command system. Essentially, the further away a unit is from a command unit, the more difficult it will be to order - simple!

Finally, all the units under your command are said to be a Battlegroup. In other games, this would be your army, but that doesn't seem right as an Army during World War Two was immense. Think of the British 8th Army in Africa or the German 6th Army at Stalingrad - certainly bigger than what you will be commanding in BlitzkriegCommander!

Attacks, Hits & Saves

All units in the game have three main stats: Attacks, Hits and Saves. Attacks indicate the offensive capability of the unit when it opens fire. This could be infantry firing small-arms, tanks firing guns, or aircraft firing rockets. Whenever you use your attacks against an enemy unit, your opponent will usually get to make a saving roll. This represents the armour of the unit, but not all units have armour, such as infantry or cavalry. If an attack isn't saved, it causes a hit against the unit and a unit can only take a certain number of hits before it is knocked-out of the game. This is the hits value of the unit and shouldn't be confused with the number of hits it has taken. Incidentally, hits inflicted against a unit are removed at the end of the turn so there is no major bookkeeping in the game except for units that are suppressed.

Suppression, Fall-Back & Knock-Out

Units that take hits in a turn are likely to keep their heads down until the firing dies down. This is called Suppression and it affects the morale of your troops. Should they take further hits when they are suppressed, they are likely to Fall Back. They really aren't happy about coming under fire again and try to get out of the way. There is the possibility that they will run away if they fall back too far at any one time - this is known as a rout, although for the purposes of the game they are said to be knocked-out. Units are also knocked-out when they take sufficient hits in a turn to match their hits value, as you already know. Knocked-Out is a convenient term used to describe units that are no longer fit for battle. They may have taken cover out of harm's way, they may have run off the battlefield, or they may be casualties lying around waiting for a medic. It may even be that they are dead and that vehicles have been destroyed, but it is not necessary to know exactly what happened except that they are no longer in the game.

Testing For Casualties

The rules use the same basic steps when testing for casualties, whether that be infantry firing at infantry, tanks firing at tanks, or artillery firing a barrage.

1. take the attack value of each unit attacking the same target;
2. apply any modifiers to the attack value of each unit;
3. roll this number of dice;
4. one hit is achieved for each score equal to or greater than the score required to cause hits as detailed on page 9;
5. if the target has a save value, the opposing player should roll one die for each hit taken in the current attack - one hit is saved for each score equal to or greater than the save value of the unit;
6. if the total number of hits against the target is equal to or greater than its *hits* value, it is knocked-out and removed from play, otherwise place a marker next to the unit to indicate the number of hits against it;
7. unless the unit was knocked-out roll one die for each hit taken in the current attack;
8. the unit will become suppressed if any of the die score equal to or greater than the score required to cause hits; if the unit is already suppressed, total the scores of the dice and the unit will fall-back this distance in centimetres directly away from the nearest attacking unit;

Line-of-Sight

Troops must be able to trace an unbroken line-of-sight to an enemy unit before they can use their initiative or carry out orders against it. A line-of-sight is a straight line that extends from the base of one unit to the base of another unit. Units may only trace a line-of-sight in a 180° arc from the front base edge, except those units with restricted visibility (as indicated by 'r' in the notes column of the army lists) that are limited to a 90° arc from the front base edge. Command units are the only units in the game to have full 360° visibility.

Troops may trace a line-of-sight up to 5cm into or out of obscured rough ground, woods, hills and built-up areas. Troops on the same contour of a hill have line-of-sight to one another. Line-of-sight is blocked by any of the following:

- intervening terrain such as obscured rough ground, woods, hills or built-up areas, or smoke screens
- obstacles such as walls, fences and hedges unless troops are in base contact with the obstacle
- other units except commands, infantry on foot, machine guns, mortars and unlimbered guns

Whilst there are no tests for visibility in the game, thus allowing troops to see all enemy units within line-of-sight, players are encouraged to use common sense during play. For instance, it is unfair for an attacker to fire at an anti-tank gun unit that is in cover until it either opens fire or troops are within initiative range, ie: 20cm.

Sequence Of Play

The game begins once both players have deployed their battlegroups on the table. The first player should play one complete turn before the second player plays a turn, with the current player being referred to as the *Active Player*. Each turn is called a *Player Turn*, two of which make up a *Game Turn*. A player turn is divided into five phases: *Scheduled*, *Initiative*, *Command*, *Combat* and *End* phases and a player should play each of these phases in turn. Continue alternating turns between players until the game ends.

<u>Scheduled</u>	<i>resolve scheduled artillery support;</i>
<u>Initiative</u>	<i>units within 20cm of the nearest visible enemy may charge, fire or evade; enemy units under charge may return fire or evade;</i>
<u>Command</u>	<i>issue orders to units and carry out actions as the orders are issued; move command units once all units have been ordered;</i>
<u>Combat</u>	<i>calculate all combat between units that moved into contact with the enemy;</i>
<u>End</u>	<i>remove all outstanding hits; recover own units that were suppressed in the previous turn; remove smoke markers from the previous game turn;</i>

German Armoured Engineers On The Road To Leningrad, August 1941

“At 1235, Lieutenant Schneider, the commander of 3rd Company, 8th Panzer Division, heard machine gun and anti-tank gun fire from the northeast. Just as he was stepping into his vehicle with the intention of investigating the situation, a supply lorry of the advance guard drove up and stopped. The driver reported that his lorry column had been ambushed about 1½ miles east of Volosovo, on the road to Leningrad. While the other lorry drivers had tried to escape by accelerating their vehicles, he had turned round and headed back to notify the march column commander.

On the basis of this information, Schneider ordered 1st and 2nd (Tank) Platoons to move to the road fork at Lagonovo and 4th Platoon, consisting of rocket projectors mounted on half-tracks, to a point immediately south of that road fork. 5th Platoon, composed of combat engineers, was to take up positions on the northeast outskirts of Volosovo.

Schneider got into his vehicle and drove off in the direction of Kikerino. About one mile east of Lagonovo road fork, he stopped at the top of a low ridge, from which he saw about 300 Russian riflemen emerging from the west side of the woods south of Gubanitsy at a point about half a mile north of the highway. They were heading for the ridge just a few hundred yards west of the woods. Schneider also noticed that one Russian machine gun and one anti-tank gun were emplaced at the southwest edge of the forest. He felt certain that these must have been the weapons that ambushed the lorry column. Two burning trucks lay in the ditch along the highway about 500 yards east of his observation point. Small arms ammunition was exploding in one of the trucks.

Schneider arrived at the conclusion that the Russians were attempting to cut off the advance guard and recapture Volosovo. Quick action seemed imperative if the Russians were to be prevented from delaying the divisions advance toward the Luga-Leningrad highway. Upon his return to the Lagonovo road fork at 1305, Schneider met the march column commander who approved his plan to eliminate the Russian threat.

At 1330, the four units were assembling for the attack and Schneider was driving toward Gubanitsy. On his way he saw the first Russians coming down the west side of the ridge. They advanced in extended formation with scouts moving about 20 yards ahead of the main body. He also observed some Russians pulling anti-tank guns from the forest towards the ridge. Two more Russian infantry companies were just emerging from the woods. This second wave followed in the steps of the first.

Five minutes later, 4th Platoon fired its salvo of rockets which landed in the centre of the deploying second wave. The smoke screen laid down by the two tank platoons hid the advancing vehicles from view of the Russians who began to fire from the ridge. The tanks retaliated and the fire-fight grew more intense as 3rd Companys counter-attack gained momentum.

When the smoke began to lift several minutes later, Schneider saw that the tanks had reached the crest of the ridge and that their fire was pinning down the Russian infantry, whose ranks were beginning to break. In a vain attempt to escape annihilation, individual riflemen bunched together, but were mowed down by machine gun fire from the tanks.

The Russian anti-tank guns stood in the middle of the field abandoned by their crews. Isolated nests of resistance continued to fire, but their small arms were ineffective against the German tanks, which drove straight toward their designated objectives. 5th Platoon mopped up behind the tanks, rounding up the prisoners. Remnants of the second wave that had escaped the rocket salvo tried to make their way to the woods.”

Excerpt from “German and Russian Tactical Operations, 1941-1945” which contains numerous accounts of the fighting in Russia from 1941-45. Published by German Forces, it is available online from:

www.germanforces.org

Scheduled Phase

All scheduled artillery support is resolved during this phase.

Artillery strikes can be scheduled to take place on specific turns during the game using assets bought as part of your battlegroup. Assets represent the number of scheduled strikes available to a battlegroup, with one asset allowing one artillery unit to attack one target. As scheduled support is planned before deployment, targets can be any point on the table. You may use more than one asset per artillery unit or aircraft sortie in a turn.

Players should write down on paper before the game begins, the units attacking and the quantity of assets used against each target, together with the turn number each strike takes place. Put the paper face-down at the edge of the table and only reveal to your opponent when each strike occurs.

Scheduled support may be cancelled or delayed during the command phase by an FAO. To cancel or delay a schedule, the FAO must make a successful command roll. A double six indicates that no further requests may be made to cancel or delay the schedule, otherwise the schedule is cancelled immediately or delayed by one turn, depending on which option you want.

Refer to the section on artillery support on page 11 for details of how to resolve scheduled support. Refer to page 8 for details of how to make command rolls.

Initiative Phase

Initiative represents the ability of troops to respond to an immediate situation their superiors may not be aware of. In game terms, this means troops using their initiative may carry out an action during the initiative phase as well as being issued orders later in the command phase. A unit acting on its initiative may either fire at, evade or charge the nearest visible enemy unit within 20cm. Initiative is carried out by the active player who may choose the order in which his units are played.

Players should note that each unit may only use its initiative against an enemy unit it can see at the time it reacts. This means a unit could block the line-of-sight of other units as a result of its move and similarly, a unit could open up a line-of-sight for other units when it moves. Suppressed units and command units may not act on their initiative.

Firing

A unit may fire at the nearest visible enemy unit within 20cm provided it is within range. Resolve the firing immediately, including the effects of suppression and fall-back, before moving on to the next unit (see page 9).

Evading

A unit may evade the nearest visible enemy unit within 20cm. Move the unit directly away from the enemy unit up to its full move distance. The unit may change the direction it is facing as part of the move. Towed guns may limber then move half-distance provided suitable transport is in base-contact, otherwise they cannot evade. Troops on foot may board suitable transport, then the transport move half-distance, provided they are within 5cm of one another.

Charging

A unit may charge the nearest visible enemy unit within 20cm. The distance a unit may charge when using its initiative isn't dependent on its move distance when carrying out orders. Move the charging unit into contact with the enemy unit, ensuring that the bases line-up centre-to-centre. A unit must contact the nearest visible base edge of the enemy unit and each base edge may only be contacted by one unit. A base edge cannot be contacted if there are enemy troops or impassable terrain within 5cm. Combat takes place during the combat phase of the turn (see page 12).

Supporting A Charge

A unit may move in support of the nearest visible combat within 20cm. Move the supporting unit into contact with the nearest friendly unit in the combat, ensuring the bases line-up centre-to-centre. Armour may support in any terrain, infantry support and towed guns may not support at all and transport may only support if it has an attack value.

Counter-Initiative

Units under charge and any units within 5cm of units under charge may fire at or evade charging units. In order to use counter-initiative, units must not be suppressed and must be able to see the charging unit at the time they react. The active player may not change his mind about charging once the inactive player has declared counter-initiative.

Resolve firing immediately before moving on to the next unit. Troops suppressed during a charge still contact the enemy, but they will be at a disadvantage during combat as a result. Evading a charge occurs in exactly the same way as an evade move except that the unit must end its move at least 5cm away from where the charging unit ends its move, otherwise the evading unit is knocked-out. The charging unit may move up to 20cm, the evading unit may move its full move distance.

Command Phase

Orders are issued and their actions carried out in the command phase. Command units issue orders to units by making command rolls. Each command unit has a command value ranging from 6 to 10. The higher the value, the more orders the command is likely to issue in a turn. A command may issue more than one order in a turn, but must complete issuing its orders before you move on to the next command. A command may issue orders to any number of units at a time as a formation and you may choose the sequence in which your commands are played.

To issue an order, state the command unit you are going to use and indicate each of the units you intend to order, together with the actions they are going to carry out. Such units are said to be *under command*. Take the command value of the command unit and adjust this value for any of the command modifiers that apply. You must roll equal to or less than the modified command value on two dice for the order to be issued. A successful command roll means that each unit under command may carry out one action.

An unsuccessful command roll means the order was not issued and the command may issue no further orders that turn. If the CO fails a command roll, no further orders may be issued by any command units that turn. A unit may only receive orders from one command unit in a turn, although it may be ordered multiple times in succession. Once you stop issuing orders to a unit, it may not be issued orders again that turn.

Command Modifiers

The following modifiers should be applied to the command value each time an order is issued:

Modifier	Description	Note
-1	each successive order to the same unit or formation of units	1
-1	if the farthest unit from the command is further than 20cm away, per full 20cm distance	2
-1	moving into, through, or out of dense terrain or smoke	3
-1	moving towards visible enemy within 20cm	4

Note 1. If a unit or formation of units have already been issued orders in the current turn, the command suffers a -1 penalty for each additional order, eg: deduct one for the second order, two for the third order, etc. Units that acted on their initiative earlier in the turn begin their first order on a -1 penalty.

Note 2. If the distance between the command and the farthest unit you wish to order is further than 20cm, the command suffers a -1 penalty per full 20cm distance, eg: deduct one for units from 21-40cm distance, two for units from 41-60cm distance, etc. Where command units of both players are the same base-size, measure from the base-edge, if players have different sized bases for their command units, measure from the centre of the base. On-table units using indirect fire (mortars, infantry guns and on-table artillery) are not affected by this modifier, neither are units travelling their entire move along a road.

Note 3. If any of the units you are attempting to order are going to move into, through, or out of dense terrain or smoke, deduct one from the command value. Movement through dense terrain is problematic as the terrain slows troops down and makes it difficult for them to keep in formation. Vehicles become bogged-down, tanks throw tracks and infantry moving on foot tire easily. Dense terrain differs according to the type of troops as detailed below:

Troops	Dense Terrain
Troops on foot & cavalry	mud, soft sand, deep snow, swamp, marsh
Trucks & towed guns	all except roads, open ground and gentle hills
Other transport & armour	rough ground, woods, mud, soft sand, deep snow, built-up areas except on roads

Note 4. If any unit is going to move towards a visible enemy unit within 20cm. In effect, units have a zone-of-control of 20cm to their front, making it more difficult for troops to make contact when they are under enemy observation.

Actions

A unit may carry out one action when issued an order and the action is carried out immediately. When issuing orders to more than one unit, the units may carry out the same action or each may carry out a different action and you may choose the sequence in which the actions are carried out.

Action	Description
Move	a unit may move up to its maximum move distance in any direction
Deploy	a unit may mount or dismount transport, or limber or set up towed guns (ATG/IG/AAG/Artillery)
Fire	a unit may fire once at a single visible enemy unit within range

Command Bonus

When making command rolls to issue orders to troops and double one is scored, a single order is issued, but two actions may be carried out. A unit may carry out the same action twice, or it may carry out two different actions. Each unit in a formation may carry out the same action, or different actions.

Command Blunder

When making command rolls to issue orders to troops and double six is scored, the command unit is said to have blundered. When this occurs, roll one die and consult the following table. Where units do not fulfil the specified criteria, they do nothing. Note that where it states all units, this means all units to which the command was issuing orders to at the time the blunder occurred, but doesn't include the command unit itself.

Score	Result
1	CEASE FIRING! Roll one die and the command takes this number of attacks from firing (see page 9).
2	CROSS-FIRE! The three units nearest the command each take 3 attacks from firing (see page 9).
3	RE-LOCATE! The command unit moves half-move directly away from the nearest visible enemy unit.
4	PULL BACK! All unsuppressed units in the open half-move away from the nearest visible enemy unit. *
5	OPEN FIRE! All unsuppressed units fire at the nearest visible enemy unit within range (see page 9).
6	LET'S GET 'EM! All unsuppressed units in the open half-move towards the nearest visible enemy unit. *

* Except dug-in troops or unlimbered guns who stay where they are.

Command Movement

Each command unit may move up to its full move distance at the end of the command phase, unless it is suppressed.

Command Units

Command units are different to regular units in that they cannot be targeted by the enemy. They can be caught in artillery fire-zones, however, in which case they are treated just like any other unit. When overrun by an enemy unit, a command unit must join a friendly unit within half its move distance, otherwise it is knocked-out. Command units cannot overrun enemy command units.

A command that is forced to join a unit must remain in base contact with that unit until the next turn and it will take all the consequences that the unit suffers: if the unit becomes suppressed, the command will be suppressed, if the unit is knocked-out, the command is also knocked-out.

Command Summary

1. orders are issued to units by one command unit at a time;
2. a command unit may issue orders to any number of units at a time as a formation;
3. a formation is not fixed and may contain any number of units;
4. there is no limit to the distance between units within a formation;
5. a unit may only be issued orders by one command unit in a turn;
6. a unit or formation may be issued several orders in succession;
7. a unit may carry out one action when an order is issued;
8. units when ordered as a formation do not have to carry out the same action;
9. a command unit must complete issuing orders to one unit or formation, before issuing orders to other units;
10. a command must complete issuing its orders before moving on to the next command;
11. a command must score equal to or less than the modified command value on two dice to issue an order;
12. if a command fails a roll, the order is not issued and the command may not issue any further orders that turn;
13. if the CO fails a command roll, the order is not issued and no command units may issue orders that turn;
14. if a command rolls double one, two actions may be carried out;
15. if a command rolls double six, the order fails and the command has blundered;

Movement

Movement occurs in the initiative phase when troops charge or evade the enemy, and during the command phase as a result of a successful order. It is possible for a unit to move several times during the command phase depending on the number of orders issued. Once a unit has been issued an order, you may move the unit up to its maximum move distance in any direction. Movement distances are listed in the *move* column of the army lists.

There are no penalties for turning, pivoting or reversing. Troops who are able to cross linear obstacles must stop when contacting the obstacle and they may then move full distance on the next successful order. Units may not move through gaps between obstacles of less than 2cm width. Guns emplaced in fortifications cannot move during the game.

Troops may move through other units, but are knocked-out if forced to move through enemy units. Troops may move through a friendly command unit, but when moving through an enemy command unit, there is a chance the command may be overrun. An enemy command unit must move into base-contact with one of its own units within one half-move distance otherwise it is knocked-out and removed from play.

Terrain Restrictions

The following table provides details of the types of terrain encountered in the game and the restrictions that apply. Troops are knocked-out when forced to move into impassable terrain, including command units.

Terrain	Restrictions
Open & Hills	No restrictions
Hedge, Wall, Fence	Impassable to all except troops on foot & armour until breached, both of which stop on contact and may move full distance on the next successful order *
Bocage	Impassable to all except American & British armour from July 1944 until breached - these stop on contact and may move full distance on the next successful order *
Rough Ground** & Woods	Impassable to trucks and motorcycles
Forest, Marsh, Jungle, Swamp	Impassable to all except troops on foot
Stream or Fordable River	Troops stop on contact & may cross on the next successful order
Canal, River	Impassable unless bridged, or crossed by boat/landing craft/amphibious vehicles
Lake, Sea	Impassable unless crossed by boats/landing craft/amphibious vehicles
Frozen Lake	No restrictions
Cliff, Ravine, Wadi, Balka	Impassable to all unless a route has been marked through the terrain
Built-Up Area	Available in the published version
Anti-Tank Obstacles	Available in the published version
Anti-Tank Ditch	Available in the published version
Wire	Available in the published version
Minefield, marked/dummy	Available in the published version
Minefield, unmarked	Available in the published version

* Breached means the first unit of armour that crosses the obstacle will create a gap wide enough for other troops to pass through.

** Rough ground can be open (eg: ploughed fields) or obscured (eg: heath-land).

Water Obstacles

Water obstacles include rivers, lakes and seas. They can be crossed by amphibious vehicles, infantry or combat engineers in assault boats, and tanks fitted with deep wading or flotation equipment. Separate orders must be issued to enter and exit the obstacle. All units move at 5cm per order and all count as in cover, but require just one hit to be knocked out, simulating their vulnerability.

It is advisable to classify your terrain and the effects on movement before the game, as players will then know what they are facing on the table and can deal with it accordingly. One method is to use felt to mark out the boundaries of woods, built-up areas and so on, then place the trees and buildings on the felt. These can then be moved during play to allow you to place troops in otherwise awkward positions without disturbing the boundaries of the terrain.

Firing

Firing takes place during the initiative and command phases of a turn. A unit may fire once at the nearest visible enemy unit within 20cm in the initiative phase or once per order at any visible enemy unit within range in the command phase. To determine the range, measure the shortest distance between the firing unit and the enemy unit. If this distance is equal to or less than the range of the unit firing, then it may fire. The range of a unit is the number to the right of the slash in the attacks column of the army lists (eg: an attack stat of 3/50 has a range of 50cm). Units may fire at any target within a 180° arc from the front base edge, except those units with restricted visibility which are limited to a 90° arc.

Players may measure ranges at any time, but must declare all targets before firing. Command units, infantry on foot, machine guns and mortars may be fired over by armour and troops in vehicles. All other troops are prohibited from firing over other units. Troops being carried in unarmoured transport may not fire. Troops being carried in armoured transport or riding on tanks may fire when the transport is stationary.

Calculating Firing

To calculate firing, take the attack value of the unit from the army list - this is the number preceding the slash in the attacks column (eg: an attack stat of 3/50 has an attack value of 3). Adjust the value for each firing modifier that applies then roll this number of dice. When two or more units are firing at the same target, roll all the dice together.

Firing Modifiers

Adjust the number of attacks by each modifier that applies from the table below:

Modifier	Description
+1	if the enemy unit is within half the range of the unit (eg: a unit with a range of 60cm will gain +1 for firing at an enemy unit up to 30cm away)
+1	if the unit is firing on the flank or rear of the enemy unit (to determine a flank shot, draw an imaginary line at a 45° angle from the corner of the base nearest the unit firing - if more of the unit lies to the side of this line, then it's a flank shot - if undecided, roll a die and a score of 5 or 6 says it's a flank shot)
+1	if the unit is armour firing at a soft-target within 20cm (this represents the machine guns firing, although some armoured units don't have machine guns, in which case this modifier doesn't apply)

Scoring Hits

Cover affects the way in which hits are scored against units as this provides varying degrees of protection and also makes troops more difficult to locate. One hit is achieved for each die roll equal to or greater than the score required to hit the target as follows:

Target	Score To Hit
Troops in the open	hits are scored on 4, 5 or 6
Troops in cover (ie: behind walls, hedges, in trenches, etc)	hits are scored on 5 or 6
Troops in fortifications (ie: pill boxes, bunkers, etc)	hits are scored on 6

The following exceptions apply:

- fully armoured vehicles are hit on 6 in all situations when hit by indirect fire
- open armoured vehicles are hit on 5 or 6 in all situations when hit by indirect fire
- command units are hit on 6 in all situations
- attack stats followed by * do not cause hits against hard-targets (tanks, tank destroyers, assault guns, self-propelled guns, armoured cars and armoured half-tracks)
- attack stats followed by # do not cause hits against soft-targets (infantry, cavalry, anti-tank guns & transport)

Armoured vehicles hit in the flank or rear are more vulnerable than when hit head on. To simulate this, save values are reduced by one when armoured vehicles are hit in the flank or rear, for example an armour save of four will become five and an armour save of five will become six. A save value of six is not reduced.

Artillery using indirect fire cannot score hits against armoured vehicles except if open-topped. When fully armoured vehicles are caught in an artillery fire zone, or when they are the target of on-table mortar or infantry gun fire, roll the attacks as normal, but don't mark the hits against them, just roll for suppression.

Firing

Armour Saves

Once you have rolled to hit the target, your opponent now rolls one die for each hit taken in the current attack. One hit is removed for each score equal to or greater than the save value of the target (eg: a unit has an armour save of 5, so your opponent will need to score 5 or 6 on a single die in order to save one hit). Hits against the flank or rear of an armoured unit reduce the armour save by one, eg: an armour save of four will become five and an armour save of five will become six. A save value of six is not reduced.

Knock-Out

Compare the number of hits the unit has against it to its *hits* value in the army lists. If the number of hits is equal to or greater than this value, the unit is knocked-out and removed from play (vehicles can be marked with blackened cotton wool if you prefer), otherwise place a marker next to the unit to indicate the number of hits against it. Troops travelling in, riding on, or being towed by transport that is knocked-out, are also knocked-out. When transport carrying passengers is hit but not knocked-out, the occupants of soft transport and troops riding on tanks dismount, suppressed. The occupants of armoured transport may choose to dismount, but will be suppressed if they do so.

Suppression

Unless the unit was knocked-out, you must test to see if it becomes suppressed. Roll one die for each hit taken in the current attack. If any of the die score equal to or greater than the score required to cause hits, the unit becomes suppressed.

Suppression means troops are not happy about being shot at and have gone-to-ground, taking the best cover they can find to protect themselves until the firing dies down. In game terms, units that become suppressed cannot do anything in their turn and suppressed commands may not issue any orders. Troops recover automatically from suppression at the end of their turn.

Units that cannot score hits against hard-targets, such as infantry firing small-arms against tanks, may fire for suppression, but they will hit the enemy on sixes in all situations. Similarly, some units cannot score hits against soft-targets, such as the British 2pdr anti-tank gun against infantry. Again, the troops may fire for suppression, but will hit the enemy on sixes in all situations. To resolve suppressive fire, roll the attacks as normal, but don't mark the hits against the target, just roll for suppression.

Fall-back

If the unit is already suppressed, test for fall-back instead. Roll one die for each hit taken in the current attack, add the scores together and the unit must fall-back this distance in centimetres directly away from the closest unit that fired, turning to face the unit as part of the fall-back. *Note that a unit cannot be suppressed and forced to fall-back as a result of the same order, but can become suppressed and fall-back as a result of enemy initiative actions.*

When troops fall-back too quickly, there is the likelihood that they will run away. To represent this, if a unit falls back more than 10cm as the result of a single roll, it is knocked-out. Troops falling back into impassable terrain, enemy units, non-dummy minefields or off-table are knocked-out and removed from play. Infantry, cavalry and soft transport falling back into wire are also knocked-out. Troops falling back into friendly units halt on contact, suppressing them. Dug-in troops and unlimbered guns are only knocked-out if they fall-back further than 10cm, otherwise they remain where they are.

Infantry Support

Infantry support represents all the support weapons that are an integral part of infantry battalions and regiments, such as heavy machine guns and mortars. They are treated the same as other units in the game in that they can use their initiative during the initiative phase and be issued orders during the command phase.

Machine Guns

Machine guns (MG) include all medium, heavy and general-purpose machine guns capable of being used in a sustained-fire role, such as the British Vickers and the German MG-34/42. Machine guns may fire at any unengaged enemy unit within range and line-of-sight. They are not required to carry out a deploy action between moving and firing.

Mortars

Mortars include medium mortars (MM) and heavy mortars (HM). They can fire at any enemy unit within range and line-of-sight *or* at any enemy unit within range and line-of-sight of the command unit that issued the order. Medium mortars have a minimum range of 10cm, meaning they cannot fire at enemy units closer than 10cm. Heavy mortars have a minimum range of 20cm, meaning they cannot fire at enemy units closer than 20cm. Mortars do not receive the bonus for firing within half-range and they are not required to carry out a deploy action between moving and firing.

Artillery Support

Artillery support is only available if you have purchased artillery units as part of your battlegroup and each artillery unit should be placed along your table baseline as a representation of the support available. Artillery support can either be scheduled to occur on specific turns (see page 5) or requested during the command phase by a Forward Artillery Observer (FAO). Each artillery unit may only be used once in a turn which means that artillery units cannot be requested in the same turn they are scheduled. To make a request, the FAO must have line-of-sight to the target and all requested units must fire at the same target. The target must be an enemy unit, but cannot be a command unit.

The following modifiers should be applied to the command value of the FAO when making a request:

Modifier	Description
+1	all requested artillery units are self-propelled (ie: they have a move value in the army lists)
-1	per additional three artillery units requested (eg: -1 for 4-6 units, -2 for 7-9 units, etc.)
-1	per additional rocket or naval artillery unit requested (eg: -1 for 2 units, -2 for 3 units, etc.)
-1	requesting smoke

Artillery Support Bonus

When making command rolls to request artillery support and double one is scored, halve the distance for deviation.

Artillery Support Blunder

When making command rolls to request artillery support and double six is scored, roll one die and refer below:

Score	Result
1 or 2	INCOMING! Roll one die and the FAO takes this number of attacks from firing (see page 9).
3 or 4	COUNTER BATTERY! Roll one die and each requested artillery unit takes this number of attacks (towed artillery is hit on 4+, self-propelled artillery is hit on 5+).
5 or 6	FRIENDLY FIRE! All requested artillery units target the nearest friendly unit to the aiming point.

Resolving Artillery Support

Scheduled artillery support (except rockets) hits the aiming point automatically. Requested artillery and scheduled rockets are inaccurate, however, so you must test for deviation from the aiming point. Roll three dice and a directional die: the artillery will hit this distance in centimetres from the aiming point in the direction of the arrow. The only exception to this is when requested rocket artillery is firing, in which case double the distance.

An artillery unit creates a fire zone 20cm x 20cm centred on the hit point, a rocket or naval artillery unit creates a fire zone 30cm x 30cm centred on the hit point. You may place each zone over the hit point (concentration) or place each end-to-end to form a rectangle, the centre of which must be positioned on the hit point with the length running parallel to the players baseline (barrage). The attacking player must now test for all units within the fire zone, including any friendly units and command units. At least half of the base (or model if unbased) must be in the zone for a unit to be a valid target. Total the attacks of all units firing and roll this number of dice against each target in the zone. When firing a barrage, add the attacks together and divide by the number of units firing, rounding up. Refer to page 9 for details of how hits are scored. Units falling back from artillery fire move directly away from the opponent table baseline.

BlitzkriegCommander On-Line

*Visit the BlitzkriegCommander web site for rule clarifications,
FAQ (frequently asked questions), optional rules, combat reports,
and even create your battlegroups on-line!*

www.blitzkrieg-commander.com

Combat Phase

Combat unsurprisingly occurs in the combat phase of a turn and represents troops fighting at close range, such as infantry fighting other infantry with sub-machine gun, grenade and bayonet, infantry attacking tanks with improvised anti-tank weapons, and tanks crushing infantry under their tracks. Units must be in base contact with enemy units to be able to enter into combat. Troops in combat are said to be *engaged in combat*.

Charging

Troops are classed as charging when they voluntarily move into contact with enemy units during the initiative or command phase of a turn. To charge during the initiative phase, a unit must be within 20cm of a visible enemy unit. To charge during the command phase, a unit must have been issued an order, it must be able to see the enemy unit at the start of its move, and it must have sufficient movement available to end its move in base contact with the enemy unit.

Armour may only charge units that are in the open except when carrying infantry or engineers, in which case they may charge troops in any terrain, subject to the terrain restrictions for movement (see page 8). Troops carried in or on transport automatically dismount when they contact the enemy and any hits taken during the charge remain with the troops, not the transport. Towed guns, infantry support and unarmoured transport may not charge. Troops may only charge across an obstacle if they begin their move in base contact with that obstacle.

Response

Units under charge, and any units within 5cm of units under charge, may fire at or evade charging units. To respond to a charge, units must be able to see the charging unit at the time they respond and must not be suppressed. Resolve firing immediately before moving on to the next unit (see page 9). Troops suppressed during a charge still contact the enemy, but will be at a disadvantage during combat as a result.

When evading a charge, move the unit directly away from the enemy unit up to its full move distance. The unit may change the direction it is facing as part of its move. Now move the charging unit up to its full move distance. If the unit is within 5cm of the enemy unit, the enemy unit is knocked-out, otherwise nothing further happens. Towed guns may limber, then move half-distance provided suitable transport is in base-contact, otherwise they cannot evade. Troops on foot may board suitable transport, then the transport move half-distance, provided they are within 5cm of one another.

Contact

Move the charging unit into contact with the enemy unit, ensuring that the bases line-up centre-to-centre. A unit must contact the nearest visible base edge of the enemy unit and each base edge may only be contacted by one unit. A base edge cannot be contacted if there are enemy troops or impassable terrain within 5cm.

Support

A unit may move in support of a combat during the initiative phase or command phase provided it has sufficient movement available to move into contact with the rear base edge of a friendly unit engaged in combat. Move the unit into contact with the friendly unit, ensuring the bases line-up centre-to-centre. Armour may support in any terrain, infantry support and towed guns may not support at all, and transport may only support if it has an attack value.

Resolving Combat

Each combat should be resolved completely before moving on to the next combat, with the active player choosing the sequence in which combats are played. Both players fight in every combat and each combat continues until either one side is knocked-out, both sides disengage, or the victor decides not to pursue. Each phase of combat is called a *round of combat*. Troops in support of a combat don't fight, but they do affect the result.

The attacker should resolve his round of the combat completely before the other player. To resolve a round of combat, take the attack value of each unit from the table below and adjust this value for any of the combat modifiers that apply from the table at the top of the following page. Note that the modifiers apply to each unit separately, so two units that are charging gain +1 each.

Troops	Attacks
Flamethrowers	12
Combat engineers	6
Cavalry	5
Infantry (excluding Infantry Support)	4
Armour	3
All other troops	2

Combat Modifiers

Modifier	Description
+1	charging
+1	in pursuit of the enemy
+1	per full 3cm pursuit, in addition to the above modifier (eg: +2 up to 3cm, +3 up to 6cm, etc.)
+1	infantry, engineers or cavalry fighting open armour
-1	suppressed
-1	fighting to the flank or rear (accumulative so a unit fighting to both flanks and the rear will be on -3)

Calculating Hits

Roll one die for each attack value, rolling all the dice together. Refer to page 9 for details of how hits are scored. Roll for armour saves and indicate the number of hits against the unit as normal. Do not roll for suppression or fall-back. Once both sides are done, compare the number of hits taken in the current round of combat. If this is the first round of combat, include any hits already taken by the unit in the current turn, such as hits taken during the charge. Add one to the total hits against the enemy unit for each unit you have in support. Now refer to the following table:

Hits	Combat Result
Equal	Both sides disengage
Less	Retreat
More	Either hold, disengage or pursue the enemy

Hold

The units remain where they are, but may pivot on the spot.

Disengage

Roll three dice and move all units involved in the current combat (including support units, but excluding enemy units), between the lowest die score and the total rolled in centimetres, in any direction. None of the units may end their move closer than 5cm to a visible enemy unit. Troops may board supporting transport, then move half the total score. Suppressed troops and unlimbered guns may not disengage, they remain where they are.

Pursue

All troops may pursue enemy units that retreat from combat with the following exceptions:

- troops on foot and cavalry may not pursue armour or vehicles in the open
- infantry support, towed guns and dug-in troops may never pursue
- armour may never be pursued in the open

Troops may pursue any distance, even if this means moving further than their normal move distance. Supporting troops may also pursue and units may lap round onto the flanks of the enemy, provided one unit remains in contact with the front base edge of the enemy unit if this was contacted in the previous round.

Troops supporting a friendly unit that is knocked-out in combat may pursue the enemy subject to any charge restrictions that apply, although this is a pursuit move not a charge. A unit that knocks a supported unit out of combat must pursue the nearest eligible supporting unit should the player choose pursuit.

Retreat

Move the units the difference in hits in centimetres directly away from the enemy unit. When there are multiple enemy units in base contact, move directly away from the unit with the most support. If equal, the retreating player may choose. Retreating units *may not* turn to face the enemy as part of their move.

Troops retreating into friends halt on contact, suppressing them. Units are automatically knocked-out under the following circumstances:

- retreating further than 10cm
- retreating into enemy units, impassable terrain, minefields (not dummy minefields) or off-table
- retreating into other units engaged in combat
- retreating unlimbered guns, dug-in armour, or units in fortifications
- retreating into friendly units that are suppressed (both are knocked-out)

End Phase

At the end of the turn, make damage rolls for all armoured and anti-tank gun units that have four or more hits against them, if using the optional rule for damage. Remove any outstanding hits from all units on the table. The active player should remove all suppression markers from his units, but not those of the inactive player. Finally, remove all smoke markers that were placed in the previous player-turn. Once this phase is complete, the player turn ends and the opposing player begins his turn.

End Of The Battle

The game will end when one of the following conditions is met:

- a major objective has been reached as part of a scenario
- a set number of turns have been played
- a battlegroup reaches its breakpoint and withdraws from the battlefield
- a player concedes defeat

Breakpoint

A battlegroup is likely to withdraw from the battlefield when a percentage of its units are knocked-out. To determine the breakpoint of a battlegroup, count all units except command, transport and off-table artillery units, then halve the result, rounding up. Once a battlegroup has lost this number of units, the player should make a command roll at the beginning of each of his subsequent turns using the command value of the CO (or HQ if the CO has been knocked-out). Deduct one from the command value for each unit knocked-out beyond the breakpoint and the battlegroup will break and withdraw from the battlefield immediately, if the command roll fails.

If a battlegroup breaks, but the opposing player still has a turn outstanding to complete the current game turn, he can choose to continue play until the end of his turn, after which, the game ends. For example, player one breaks on turn six, but the opposing player has yet to play his sixth turn, so he may play this turn as usual.

Reaching An Objective

The outcome of the battle will depend on the achievements of both players. First, determine whether each side has achieved their objectives, then compare the results below:

Outcome	Result
Neither side reached their objectives	Draw
Both sides reached their minor objective	Draw
Both sides reached their major objective	Draw
One side reached their minor objective, the other side reached no objectives	Minor Victory
One side reached their major objective, the other side reached their minor objective	Minor Victory
One side reached their major objective, the other side reached no objectives	Decisive Victory

Deciding The Winner

Each player should calculate the points for all units knocked-out during the battle, including command and transport units, all off-table artillery, and field defences, then award this number of points to his opponent as Victory Points (VPs). Don't forget to adjust the score for any difference in points as determined by the random points modifier (eg: if you only had 900 points for your battlegroup when you selected 1000 points, deduct 100 from the VPs awarded to your opponent). A battlegroup that withdraws from the battlefield by reaching its breakpoint or by conceding defeat, cannot earn more VPs than the opposing side. A player improves his result by one category if he earns at least twice as many VPs as his opponent, meaning a draw will become a minor victory, a minor victory a decisive victory, and a decisive victory a promotion and a nice shiny medal!

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Sample Scenario

American vs German Encounter, NWE, July 1944

Introduction

There are 15 scenarios provided in the published version of BlitzkriegCommander. These are generic scenarios that are suitable for any nation in any of the theatres provided in the game. The first is the popular *Encounter* battle, or meeting engagement, where you basically line 'em up and play! Although the scenario is very basic, it will allow you to see if you like the game or not.

All the scenarios in the game have the same basic guidelines: points ratio, objectives, deployment methods, artillery and air support assets, who deploys first, and who takes the first turn. In this sample scenario, the battlegroups for either side have been selected for you, although this is something you will do yourself once you play the published game!

The Battlegroups

Both battlegroups began with a basic points value of 1000 points. To this is applied the random points modifier, which itself is modified for the particular army list in play. The Americans at this stage in the war get a +2 as they have lots of equipment available. The German get a -2 to their roll, however, due to shortages and interdiction by Allied aircraft as units move up to the front.

After making a roll for each side, the Americans ended up with 1100 points, the Germans only 900 points. This imbalance of forces will be off-set at the end of the game, though, as the German player will be awarded 100 victory points in addition to any points for enemy units he has knocked-out. Similarly, the American player will have 100 points deducted from his victory points.

The American Battlegroup

The following table provides details of the American battlegroup, together with the stats required to play the game.

Quantity	Troops	Type	Move	Attacks	Hits	Save	Notes
1	CO (Command Value 10)	Command	60	3	6	6	-
1	HQ (Command Value 8)	Command	40	2	4	6	-
1	FAO (Command Value 8)	Command	40	-	4	6	-
9	Infantry Unit	Infantry	10	4/30*	6	-	1
3	Support Unit (MG)	Infantry	10	3/50*	5	-	-
1	Support Unit (Mortar)	Infantry	10	3/120	5	-	-
3	Light Tank Unit (Stuart)	Armour	30	2/40	3	5	-
3	Medium Tank Unit (Sherman 75)	Armour	20	4/60	3	5	-
3	Artillery Unit (105mm)	Artillery	-	3	3	-	-

Note 1. Infantry Unit

- 5/10 attacks against armour and soft vehicles

The German Battlegroup

The following table provides details of the German battlegroup, together with the stats required to play the game.

Quantity	Troops	Type	Move	Attacks	Hits	Save	Notes
1	CO (Command Value 9)	Command	60	3	6	6	-
1	HQ (Command Value 8)	Command	40	2	4	6	-
1	FAO (Command Value 7)	Command	40	-	4	6	-
9	Infantry Unit	Infantry	10	4/30*	6	-	1
3	Support Unit (MG)	Infantry	10	3/50*	5	-	-
1	Support Unit (ATG, 75mm)	Infantry	-	4/70	4	6	-
3	Support Unit (Mortar)	Infantry	10	3/120	5	-	-
2	Assault Gun Unit (StuG-III long)	Armour	20	4/70	4	5	-
1	Artillery Unit (RL, Nebelwerfer)	Artillery	-	6	4	-	-
1	Transport Unit (Trucks)	Transport	20	-	3	-	2

Note 1. Infantry Unit

- 5/10 or 10/5 attacks against armour and soft vehicles

Note 2. Transport Unit (Trucks)

- This is used to tow the anti-tank gun unit

Deployment

In an encounter battle, one player sets up the table and other player chooses which side to play from - this can be any one of the four table edges. The other player plays from the table edge opposite. Next, both players roll one die each and the player with the highest score may choose to deploy first or second. The first player then places a unit anywhere along his table baseline, up to 20cm from the edge. The second player then places one of his units on his side of the table in the same manner. Continue alternating between players until all are deployed on the table.

Objectives

The objectives for either side is to inflict 25% casualties against the other to achieve a minor victory, and break the opposing battlegroup to achieve a major victory. Now you are ready to begin the game - again roll one die each and the player with the highest score chooses to play first or second. Good luck!

BlitzkriegCommander Lite

Note that this is the lite version of BlitzkriegCommander and contains only the core aspects of the published rules. The published version contains rules for recce, air support, opportunity fire, army grading, engineering, weather, field defences, fortifications, built-up areas, infantry guns, smoke, on-table artillery, anti-aircraft guns, deployment, scenarios, campaigns, plus 43 army lists for 18 nations covering 15 theatres of war. There are comprehensive examples of play using full colour pictures of miniatures in action on the table - exactly how you see them during play!

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