

Sacre Bleu!

Mass skirmish wargame rules for
the Age of Pirates, Reason & Warfayre!
(17th & 18th Centuries + Napoleonic Wars)



Gaming tips
Rules

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Please note that the scenarios are designed to introduce several special rules which can be used in your own scenarios, or as examples of how to create more rules, if required.

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Introduction

Primarily these rules bring a fresh approach to war-games with 25mm figures. They aren't intended to present large scale set piece battles, but the more scrum-like affair of small units embroiled in action. They are different to other sets in many respects. For a start the basic mechanisms are remarkably simple, but in practice this permits players to concentrate on tactics rather than rows of statistics. Most importantly, they work without headaches, and games are completed in a reasonable time period. For us at least, that is important!

The two most controversial aspects are bound to be what we term the Decision Check and the game sequence. Now prepare for a proverbial bombshell - there are no game turns! Instead each 'phase' a die is rolled, the result gives you the next 'phase' to be played. This can mean one side can shoot, if very lucky, several times in a row before their opponents get to shoot back. Taken at face value this seems illogical, unfair and crazy, but in practice it allows reality to be reflected rather better than normal wargame rules can manage. In real actions we have situations where troops are blasting away like there's no tomorrow (which for some there won't be), while the other side crouches down and takes it, barely letting off a shot. This doesn't happen all the time, but can, and the game sequence system reflects this. The alternative is to use a pinning rules system, but they only provide a basis for not firing back immediately if taking a lot of suppressing fire from an enemy. Real life is far more random than that; perhaps the men aren't shooting back yet because their commanding officer has told them to wait until they see the whites of their eyes? He could be wrong to do so, but in battle it happens a lot. Then again, it might be that the men were caught with their muskets in an unloaded state, or they have fired and extra ammunition needs passing along from other members of their group. Then again we are talking about human beings here - maybe they are too afraid to shoot in case they encourage incoming fire at their person directly in retaliation? Reasons like this are nearly impossible to take into account using traditional and probably complicated system. By using simple but random sequence such vagaries are only too real, and most importantly give the game a realistic ebb and flow like a real battle. You stop thinking in terms of game

turns, but rather in terms of fighting a battle, which has to be worth something, surely!

This system also means you can move, occasionally, twice in a row. This can be taken to represent men running, sprinting or just going along while their opponents are in a lull, perhaps because a local officer told them to wait while he tries to work out what to do for the best, or possibly a man is wounded slightly and needs attending to before moving off? Again, real life things which are not easy to replicate in a game, but this system does it simply. The other advantage is the flow of action is maintained, so the entire game is full of action and drama - both factors which are good from an entertainment and realism perspective.


Now what is the Decision Check all about? Well, it means your men will not do what you want them to all of the time. In fact they will sometimes do something rather stupid, at least that is how it will appear from your eagle-eyed viewpoint of the battlefield. Again it helps to ape real life decision making, where individuals and groups can decide on a course of action which makes sense to them, from their limited point of view, on the information they have to hand. It might be they think their position is being out-flanked, so they need to retreat, or conversely that the only way out of a hopeless situation is to try a desperate charge at the enemy. Sometimes they will just panic and do something stupid. In the game we, as players, can see more than the participants fighting.

The better the discipline of a body of men, the less likely they are to be infected by such possibly bad decision making. In addition the presence of a veteran with some raw recruits may serve to give a steadying influence - he may have been in this situation before, and thus has a better idea of what to do, whereas the rookies will come up with all kinds of mad schemes in reaction.

The rules give a fast paced game with plenty of tension and uncertainty, which to my mind is how it should be. We hope you like the result.

 Richard D. Watts

Rules Section

1	Decision Check 1-3 = side A, 4-6 = side B		Sequence
2	Static Shooting both sides		
3	Movement side A		
4	Movement side B		
5	Shooting side A		
6	Shooting side B		

After the game has been set up, decide which side will be side 'A', and which will be 'B', then either player rolls a die and looks at the following table. When the phase has been completed, roll again to see which phase follows it.

The same phase may be played in consecutive turns if the same die roll result is made again.

Decision Checks

1. Roll a second die, 1-3 = Side A player choose an enemy figure to take a Decision Check, 4-6 = Side B does this.
2. Roll another die, the number equals the number of figures affected (include the chosen figure and then the figures nearest to him).
3. Roll a die against the best discipline level of the affected figures, which can be either good, normal or bad:

Good: 3-6 = no effect
Normal: 4-6 = no effect
Bad: 5-6 = no effect

Modifiers:

+1 if your leader is within 6"
+1 if defending obstacle
-1 if your side is
under half-strength

All modifiers are applied against the targeted figure's position, but the discipline grade used is the best out of the figures being affected.

If a 'no effect' result is not achieved, then one of the following results occurs:

7+: the unit has an outbreak of common sense. The owning player may either move the affected figures **or** let them fire, or neither if he wishes.

A lower score: The figure(s) move in a randomly chosen direction, chosen by spinning a pen or pencil and moving a full move in the direction indicated.