

TRENCH CLUB

Trench Club makes you the general of your army in a major World War I offensive to decide in favor of Germany/Austria-Hungary ("Central Powers") or France/Great Britain ("Entente"). To do this, you must 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. 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 (either the half of the map showing start numbers 1-6 or the half showing 7-12).

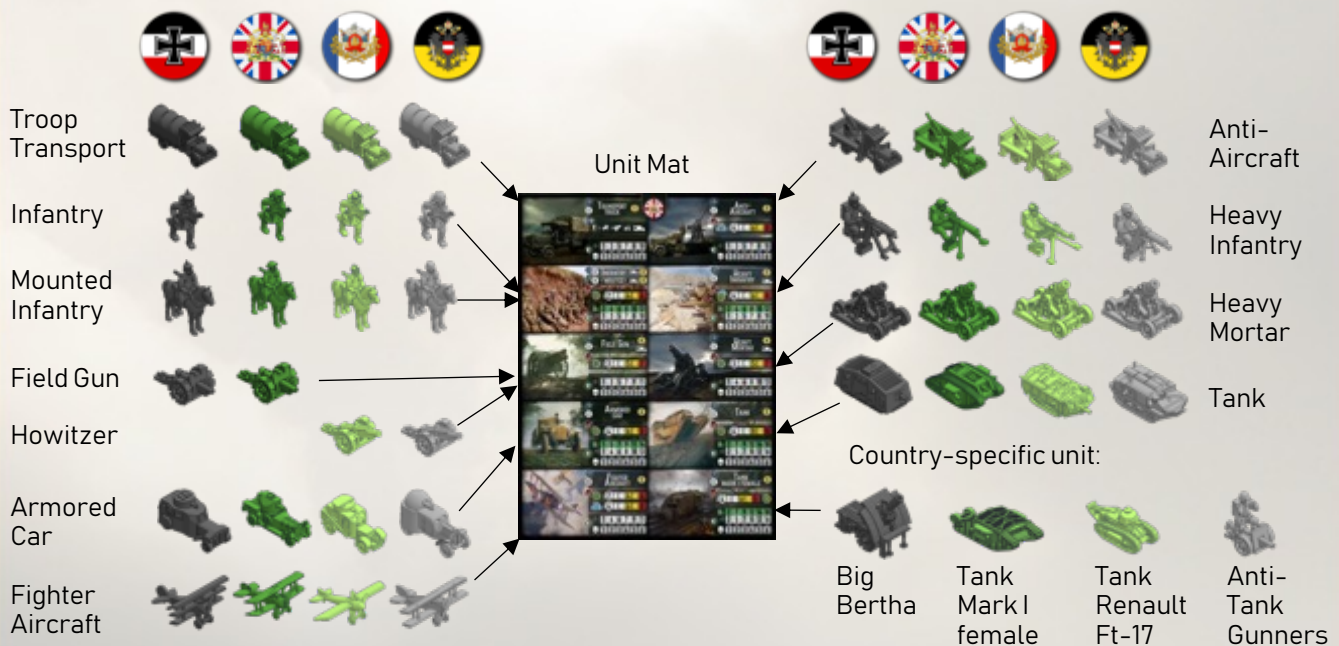
Your team wins if 9 out of the 14 Forts are occupied by your team (or 5 out of 7 for 2 players) or the opposing team surrenders (most common case)

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 a *Field Gun*, while Austria-Hungary and France have a *Howitzer*. These units differ only in their range. (Note: Also included are a British and a German Howitzer and a French and an Austrian Field Gun miniature. You do not need those for the regular skirmish game.)
- Each nation has a country-specific unit at the bottom right of the unit mat.



The Rules: Following, are two versions of the same rules:

- **Summary of the Rules:** If you are playing the game for the first time, you can start playing immediately and the rules will guide you through your first turn. 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.
- **Detailed Rules:** All the rules are described here in 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 ("Quick Reference") on the back of this rulebook and a "how to play" video on trench-club.com (direct link to video in QR code on the right).



SUMMARY OF THE RULES: Start playing immediately

Game Preparation

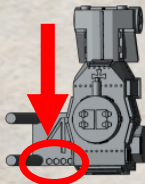
Sit around the table so that two allied players are not sitting next to each other and place your Unit Mat face up in front of you. Each player takes their 11 different units and divides them into 3 groups as they wish (Recommendation for first time players: Group 1: Mounted Infantry, Armored Car, Fighter Aircraft; Group 2: Infantry, Tank, Howitzer/Field Gun, Anti-Aircraft Unit; Group 3: the rest). One player starts, draws one of the gray chips face down, turns it over and places their 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: Move Troops

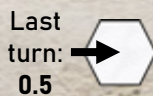
The player whose turn it is may now move all their units. How far a unit can move depends on its speed (indicated on the Unit Mat and on the miniature) and the terrain the unit is moving to. A meadow consumes 1 movement point, a road only 0.5 and a forest 1.5. Aircraft fly and hence ignore the terrain,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



- 1 → Meadow
- 0.5 → Road
- 1.5 → Forest

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 6.

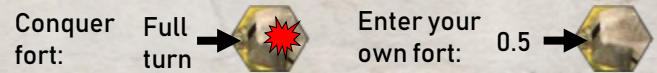
Exception: If a unit has only 0.5 Speed Points left at the end of its turn, the unit may still move to a meadow hex. (Rationale: Otherwise convoys would jam on roads).




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. Enemies that cannot attack in close combat (mortar, trucks) do not count as enemy contact.



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 (right and left) of the Fort. This will cost them their full movement, i.e. the unit must start their movement directly in front of an entrance. 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 (x) of the Fort and all possible hexes from which it can be conquered (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: E.g., Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Field Gun, Howitzer, Heavy Mortar, Anti-Tank Gunners, or Big Bertha. 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, etc.) the transport truck is on.



Then the transport truck 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: Declare Attacks

Now you declare which units will attack specific enemy units. You must designate all attacks before you begin the first attack 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  and . If you play for the first time, just ignore them for now or look them up on p. 11).




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 can attack all units, but can only be attacked by other air units or units with the cloud symbol  on the corresponding Unit Mat, e.g., Anti-Aircraft or Heavy Infantry.



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 declares his attacks

Turn Phase 3: Combat

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 and units marked with the cloud symbol  can fire back (and only in close combat).

Example: The Infantry may fire back against the Armored Car, but not against the Aircraft, as it cannot attack air units. The Howitzer cannot 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 they are allowed to shoot back) do at the same time:

1. Determine the number of dice based on the damage (gray markers) of the unit as noted on the dice mat.

Example: The Armored Car with 3 damage fights 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:

F 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.

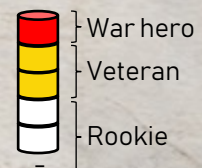


Surround Attack: 3 extra red dice if at least 2 other of your own units that theoretically could attack (but do not have to) are adjacent to the defender or you have at least 1 of your units in the hex directly opposite the attacking unit.



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

Experience:

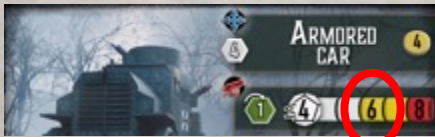


3. Now roll the dice and determine which of the dice landed a hit. This depends on the combat experience and can be read on the Unit Mat.

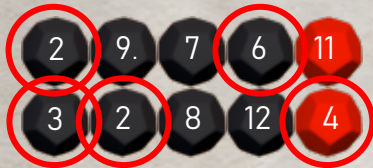
(Note: For convenience, the attack value without combat experience is also imprinted on the miniature itself.)



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 (Veteran) hits at ≤ 6 .



→ 5 hits



British Infantry (Rookie) hits at ≤ 2 .



→ 2 hits

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 1 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 2 repair costs are paid and all damage markers are removed from the unit.

Finally, new units can be purchased. After the purchase price has been paid (see Unit Mat for costs), 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 their units

Now all players take their turns, one after another, in a clockwise direction. The team that first occupies 9 Forts (5 for 2 players) wins. However, usually one team surrenders before this happens.

(For shorter game see page 11).



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 their Unit Mat and places it in front of them.

Shuffle the 12 gray chips and distribute them face down to the players (3 per player). Player may not look at their chips. Then each player takes one unit from each troop type (11 units per player) and distributes each to one of the 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.



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 gray 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 next player's turn (clockwise). They also turn over one of their 3 chips and place the units on the board. This proceeds 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. Declare 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 his first turn with only 1 (freely selectable) of his 3 armies, and then the second player takes his first turn with only 2 of his armies. In the second round, the first player takes his turn with the remaining 2 of his armies and then the second player with all 3 of his armies. Starting in the third round, each player may take his turn with all their units. **[1 - 2, 2 - 3]**

Turn Phase 1: Move Troops

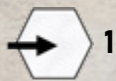
All units (one after the other) may (but do not have to) be moved.

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.

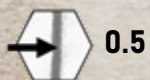
Examples of movement of an Infantry (speed: 2):



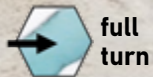
Moving to a meadow hex requires 1 speed point. Craters, single trees, stones, houses, trenches, etc. on the map are only for decoration and the terrain is still treated as meadow.



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.



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).



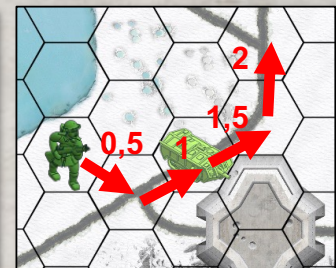
Foot soldiers (Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Anti-Tank Gunners) can cross rivers and lakes. Moving to a water hex costs a full turn, regardless of the speed of the unit. While the unit is on the water, it can neither attack nor defend itself.



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).



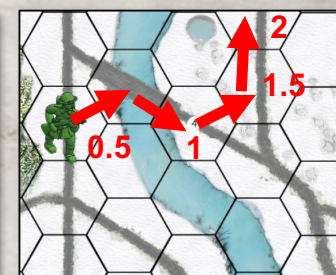
On meadow



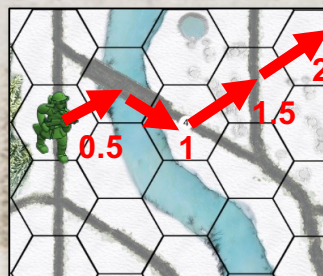
Via road over allied unit



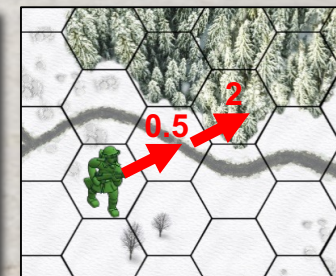
Via road and meadow



„Curve cutting“ (only target hex counts)



Exception rule: last move with 0.5 on meadow



Over road and forest

Comments:

- Air units, of course, are unaffected by the terrain as they fly. Each hex costs 1 speed point.
- Each unit must make its move all at once (you may not move another unit in between).
- Units are not required to exhaust their movement points (i.e., if a unit can move 3 hexes, it may only move 2 hexes if you wish).
- You can move through/over friendly or allied units, but not through/over enemy units (also applies to air units).

- You cannot go/fly over Forts.
- Each hex has just one terrain type and that is the most obvious one of the illustration. E.g., if it is a road on a hex, but also a couple of trees, the hex is considered a road and not a forest. The only exception is a bridge, which counts as a road for land units and water for ships.

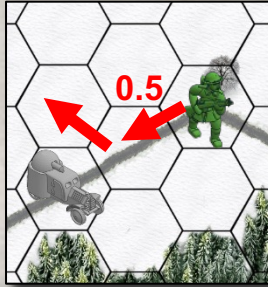
Enemy Contact

When a unit is threatened by enemy units, it must 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 movement is over. Only adjacent enemy units that can attack your own unit in close combat count as enemy contact.

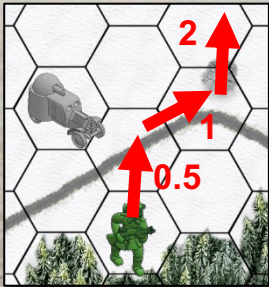
This rule is best illustrated by a few examples:



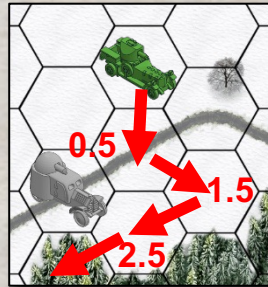
End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)



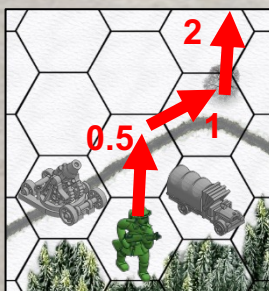
End of turn (two successive enemy contacts)



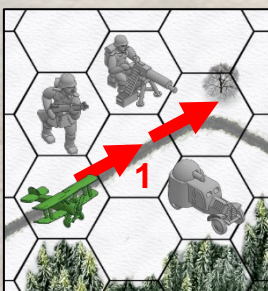
Turn not over (only one enemy contact)



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 troop types marked with the symbol , e.g., Infantry, Mounted Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Field Gun, Howitzer, Heavy Mortar, Anti-Tank Gunner, Big Bertha.

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.



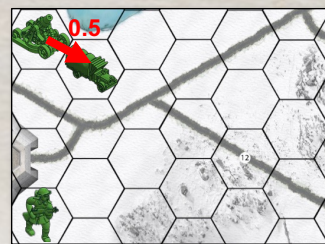
Then the truck makes its move. Finally, the truck unloads all loaded units onto adjacent empty hexes (not into another transporter or Fort). It may only do this in exactly this sequence. That means a unit may not hop on while the truck is moving; the truck may not continue to move after unloading; etc.

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).

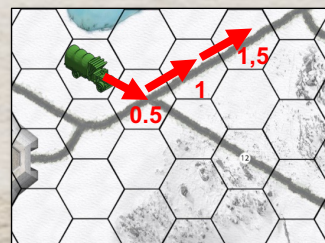
The transport truck must move in way that there are enough surrounding empty hexes to unload all units.



1. Heavy Mortar boards the truck



2. Infantry boards the truck



3. Transport Truck moves



4. Transport Truck unloads units to adjacent empty hexes

Conquering and entering 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 that conquering units have to start their movement 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 (x) of the Fort and all possible hexes from which it can be occupied (or entered if it is already your own Fort marked with your flag chip).

Notes: "That's right! This means..."

- ...Forts cannot be "defended" by units inside nor "attacked" by units from outside (just conquered). That's because Forts are impregnable, and attacks would be pure suicide. However, if the enemy manages to bypass the fortified sides 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 a German company came under their own artillery fire and stormed the Fort unplanned to seek shelter.
- ...it does not make sense to leave units in a Fort (unless you want to repair them next turn)
- ...if one of your foot soldiers and one of the enemy's foot soldiers are both in front of a Fort's entrance, this creates a stalemate situation. Who ever enters the Fort first is screwed, because then next turn the other foot can conquer the Fort, immediately eliminating the first one.

Movement into owned Forts

Any 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.

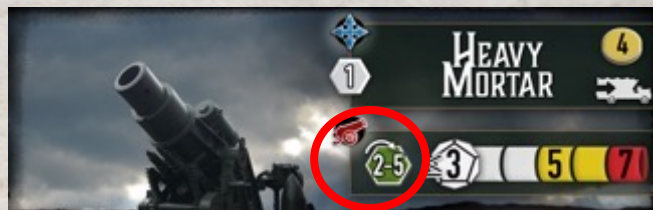


Turn Phase 2: Declare Attacks

After the moves are completed (conquering Forts also counts as a move phase), all attacks are declared. 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 who 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 2-5, i.e., it can attack enemy units that are 2, 3, 4 or 5 hexes away. It cannot attack in close combat.



Only units with the cloud symbol behind the range may attack air units (or shoot back against them in close combat), e.g., Anti-aircraft units . Heavy Infantry and other air units .

Turn Phase 3: Combat

After all attacks are declared, 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. Announce the attack.

In the example above, the first battle would be: "This German Armored car is attacking this British Infantry"

2. Determine 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 they can shoot back) determine the number of combat dice.

The number of dice depends on the attacking unit's current damage.



4. Determine whether the attacker attacks in a "Flank Attack" or a "Surround Attack".

- Flank Attack:** Your unit attacks an enemy unit in close combat and another one of your unit is adjacent to this target enemy unit as well. Your other unit must be (theoretically) able to attack the target enemy in close combat (but doesn't actually have to attack). Units that cannot attack are e.g., Troop Transport Trucks, units that cannot attack in close combat (e.g., Mortar) or units that cannot attack on ground or air (e.g., an Infantry cannot attack a fighter aircraft).



- Surround Attack:** Your unit attacks an enemy unit in close combat and two (or more) of your other units are also adjacent to the target enemy unit - or one of your units is directly opposite side of the enemy you are attacking. Again, only units that could (theoretically) attack the target enemy 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 consider your own, but not allied, units.

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

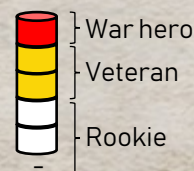


5. Now attackers and defenders roll the determined number of dice at the same time.

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.

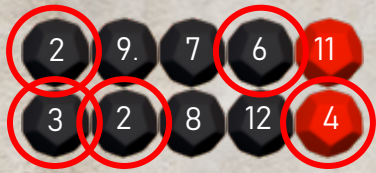
(Note: For convenience, the attack value for rookie (non-experienced) units is also embossed in the stand of each miniature)

Experience:





German Armored Car (Veteran) hits at ≤ 6.



→ 5 hits



British Infantry (Rookie) hits at ≤ 2.



→ 2 hits

6. Now determine 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).

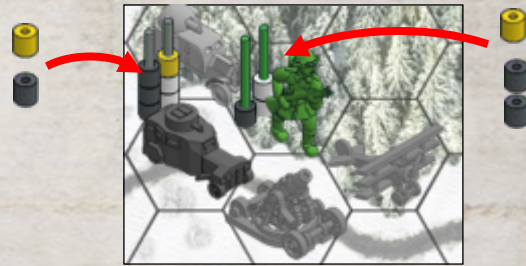


The Infantry receives 5 hits. Since it is standing as a defender in the forest, it suffers 2 damage (on a meadow or road it would have taken 3 damage).

7. Now the damage points are distributed. For each damage point suffered, the affected unit gets a gray 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).

- Enemy unit damaged: +1 Experience
- Enemy unit destroyed: +2 Experience



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

For each occupied Fort, the player gets 1 ⚙️ at the end of their turn. A player can transfer some of their money to their ally at any time, but for each donation, 1 ⚙️ 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. The flat 2 ⚙️ repair costs are paid 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 for the costs indicated on the Unit Mat (X).

Note that Regular Infantry costs 2 ⚙️ to buy and has 2 movement points. Mounted Infantry costs 3 ⚙️ and has 3 movement points. Apart from that, the two units are the same.



If you purchase Special Forces (the black/brown minis), you don't know which one you'll get. Draw a card face down for a random Special Forces unit. However, if the purchasing team has fewer units on the board and fewer Forts than the opposing team, the players of the purchasing team are free to choose the Special Forces unit.

After purchase, the new unit is placed in any of your owned Forts (or the gunboat on any water hex).

Note: If you run out of unit miniatures, you can use chips with attachment clips. We recommend to allow no more than 2 units of the same type per player.



End of the turn

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

Victory

A team wins when it first occupies 9 Forts (5 if playing with 2 players only). However, usually the opponent team surrenders before that happens.

To shorten the playing time, you can also set the victory condition to 7 occupied Forts (4 if playing with 2 players only). In this mode, Anti-Tank Gunners are not eligible to conquer neutral or enemy Forts.

Miscellaneous

Stopwatch

We recommend a stopwatch/smart phone timer to limit the turns to 5 minutes (for "Phase 1 - Move" and "Phase 2 - Name Attacks"). This makes the game faster and more exciting.

Special symbols on unit cards



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.



1-2 Attack value against **tanks** i.e., every unit with "tank" in the name.



1 Attack value against **foot soldiers**.



Unlimited range, i.e., can attack any field on the map.



Attacks all hexes in this pattern. Roll the attack dice only once and apply to all hexes.



1x/⚙️: The unit can build a trench or a road/bridge spanning 2 hexes once per turn instead of attacking before or after their movement. One of the 2 hexes must be adjacent to the unit. Cannot be built under enemy units, Forts, enemy occupied trenches.

Note: Some of the above symbols might only be used in "Trench Club: Legacy".

Have fun playing! For questions about rules, tips and tricks, etc. please visit <https://trench-club.com>

“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. Movement on a trench hex costs 1 movement point.

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 to any adjacent hex, just as if the trench were one long hex, but not in the same turn it enters. Remember: A foot soldier must 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 their 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 multiple foot soldiers in one trench, the attacker must 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 defence value of a tank in a forest (🌲).

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.

Notes:

- Two teams may not occupy the same trench, and thus there is no combat within a trench. Combat is always attacking a trench or attacking from a trench.
- Trenches in adjacent fields count as the same one trench. Also, roads over trenches do not split the trench. It still counts as one trench.



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.

Play without dice (only “Trench Club Legacy”)

If you don't like rolling dice, you can use cards instead. They will produce the same outcome, so you can also have one player play with dice and another one uses cards in the same game. For each fight, draw a random one of the 10 dice cards and read the number of hits the unit lands from the table. The cards also include an indicator on the top left to let you know if you were rather lucky or unlucky.

Damage and flank/surround Attack value

Damage and flank/surround	Attack value	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
🌲	🌲	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	
🌲	🌲	0	0	1	2	2	3	3	5	
🌲	🌲	0	1	2	3	3	4	5	6	
🌲	🌲	0	1	2	3	3	4	5	6	
🌲	🌲	1	1	2	4	4	5	6	7	
🌲	🌲	0	1	3	3	4	5	6	8	
*	🌲	1	2	3	5	5	7	7	9	
🌲	🌲	1	1	2	4	4	6	7	8	9
🌲	🌲	1	2	3	4	6	6	8	9	11
🌲	*	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	9	11

Example: An Armored Car (attack: ≤4) with 2 damage and flank-attack will land 2 hits. This was quite bad luck.

SOLO/COOPERATIVE RULES

Setup

The solo game is setup like a 2-player game. Choose which nation you'll be controlling, and which nation will be controlled by the Automa. The Automa starts with all units on his unit chart, except the Troop Transport Truck (10 units). Add troops depending on your chosen difficulty level:

- **Easy:** no additions.
- **Standard:** 1 extra Armored Car
- **Hard:** 1 extra Armored Car + 1 extra Infantry
- **Overkill:** 1 extra country-specific unit + 1 extra Mounted Infantry

Distribute the 6 starting location tokens as in the standard 2-player game, and alternate unit placement between you and the Automa. To determine how many and what type of units are distributed to each of the Automa's 3 face-down location tokens, first put all of that nation's military unit tokens into an opaque cup or bag. When you turn around the Automa's first start location token, pull 4 tokens from the cup. Put the corresponding miniature for the first one on the number and the next ones clockwise around, starting from the top. Proceed the same way for the second starting location token. For the third starting location token, pull all remaining military tokens from the cup. Start the game following the [1 - 2, 2 - 3] rule, as on page 5.

Actions priorities (move/attack)

Each of the Automa's units moves/attacks. Start with foot soldiers, then other close-combat units (all units that have range=1), then all long-range units (range >1). Follow the "Action Priority" chart. Try to action according to the highest priority order. Try to do priority "1" first. If this is not possible, move on to "2", then "3", etc. until you can meet the order. Then, if there are multiple options which would all fulfill this order, move to the letters to pick the right one. Start with "a". If this still leaves multiple options, then add "b", then add "c", etc., until you narrowed down the options leaving only one. If an order is still ambiguous or not clear, make a random choice.

Purchase units

At the end of the turn, the Automa will purchase new units. If the Automa has less than 2 foot soldiers, it will purchase **Mounted Infantry**. Otherwise, it will purchase an **Armored Car** (if it has already 2 and you chose to restrict units to 2 of each type, then it will purchase Field Gun/Howitzer, then a random unit)

The purchased unit is placed in the Fort that has the closest enemy unit to it (but no enemy foot soldier adjacent to the Fort entrance). If multiple Forts have the same closest distance to an enemy unit, then pick the one with the most equally close units, then the one with the closest second, third, etc. enemy unit.

Examples



Example: Action priority for German tank

- Priority 1 can be met. There are enough enemies the tank can reach.
- 1a cannot be met. Unit Ⓐ cannot be reached. Unit Ⓑ cannot be destroyed, since it would require 8 hits and the tank will only land 6 hits.
- 1b can be met. Both Ⓒ and Ⓓ cannot shoot back.
- Between these two options, choose Ⓓ as the target (per 1d), because the Heavy Mortar has a lower attack value (≤ 3) than the Anti-Aircraft (≤ 4).
- Movement: The tank could attack this target from the hexes Ⓔ and Ⓕ. None of these is a forest (per b), but Ⓔ is closest to your next unit Ⓒ (per c) so the tank moves there.



Example: Action priority for German Field Gun

- Priority 1 can be met. There are enough enemies the Field Gun can reach.
- 1a can be met. The Field Gun will land 5 hits, which is enough to destroy units Ⓐ or Ⓑ. To select between Ⓐ or Ⓑ we check 1b and select Ⓑ as the target.
- Movement: This target can be reached from multiple positions. The Field Gun will stay on/next to a road (per a). Condition b leaves positions Ⓓ and Ⓔ, which are both 3 hexes from the next enemy. Both positions are also equally close to your next unit Ⓒ (per c). The unit will move to Ⓔ since it is closest to its original position (per 1d).

SOLO RULES – Action Priorities

Note: In the below actions, “you” refers to the Automa, “enemy” to the human player. Unless stated otherwise, distances “closest”/“furthest” are measured in movement points consumed, not in hexes (e.g., forest counts as 1.5). If you have multiple units of the same type (e.g., 2 Howitzers) move the one first, that can fulfill a higher priority action.

I. Foot Soldiers

Sequence: Infantry → Mounted Infantry → Heavy Infantry → others

1. Conquer Fort (if no enemy foot soldier is adjacent to this Fort's entrances)
2. Move to a hex adjacent to a neutral/enemy Fort entrance (if there is no other of your foot soldiers adjacent to an entrance of that Fort already, unless there is also an enemy foot soldier adjacent to an entrance to that Fort)
 - a. Move furthest away from closest enemy unit
3. Move towards a neutral/your Fort that the foot soldier can reach within 2 turns
 - a. Move to a hex from where you can reach the Fort entrance next turn
 - b. Move furthest away from closest enemy unit
 - c. Move closest to the Fort entrance
 - d. Move to a Forest
4. Move towards and attack enemy unit you can destroy
5. Move towards and attack enemy unit that cannot fire back
6. Move towards closest neutral/enemy Fort entrance
7. Follow close-combat units action priorities

II. Close-combat units

Sequence: By highest unit price (Aircraft → Tank → other Tanks (e.g., Mark I) → Armored Car → others)

1. Move towards and attack enemy. Select target as follows:
 - a. Enemy unit you can destroy with this attack
 - b. Enemy unit that cannot shoot back
 - c. Aircraft only: Enemy unit that is furthest from enemy Anti-Aircraft
 - d. Enemy unit with the lowest attack value
 - e. Most expensive enemy unit
 - f. Least experienced enemy unit
2. Move as close as possible to the highest priority target (as above)

Movement: If there are multiple hexes from where you can equally fulfill the order priority, move to the hex...

- a. Aircraft only: furthest from enemy Anti-Aircraft
- b. with a forest
- c. closest to your next unit
- d. closest to your original position (i.e., where the unit came from)

III. Long-range units

Sequence: By lowest range (Field Gun/Howitzer → Anti-Aircraft → Heavy Mortar → others)

1. Move within range and attack enemy; Select target as follows:
 - a. Enemy unit you can destroy with this attack
 - b. Foot soldier adjacent to neutral/your Fort entrance
 - c. Unit that has been attacked by another unit this turn already (fire support)
 - d. Most expensive enemy unit
 - e. Most experienced enemy unit
2. Move as close (number of hexes) as possible to the highest priority target (as above)

Movement: If there are multiple hexes from where you can equally fulfill the order priority, move to the hex...

- a. on or next to road
- b. furthest (number of hexes) from next enemy
- c. closet (number of hexes) to your next unit
- d. closest to your original position (i.e., where the unit came from) in movement points, then in hexes

Combat

Unlike the human player, the Automa has no “Declare Attacks” phase. Each unit attacks right after moving. The Automa units never get flank/surround bonus and do not roll dice. They deal a fixed amount of hits, depending on their damage and experience:

- 0-2 damage:
- Hits according to the unit's attack value (e.g., 6 for a Tank)
 - +2 hits for each experience level (veteran/yellow and war hero/red)
- 3-5 damage:
- Hits according to half (rounded up) the unit's attack value (e.g., 2 for a Howitzer)
 - +1 hits for each experience level

Player cooperatively

Coop works the same way as solo. Divide your units between the two players. Use the units from the allied nation for one player (e.g., one player French, the other British). During setup, each player gets 1 face down start marker only for their units. The 3rd face down start marker can be shared, so both players can place units there. Forts and coins are shared.

TRIVIA

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. Mounted Infantry is characterized by its high speed and is especially suited to conquer remote Forts with a surprise attack. Heavy infantry is equipped with machine guns and grenades. They have a high combat strength, can storm Forts, and fight airplane. 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. 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".



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. Identifying the location of enemy artillery guns was only possible through imprecise 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. Three quarters of all injuries in the First World War were caused by the shrapnel of artillery shells. At the height of the gas war in 1918, on average one in three used shells was filled with poison gas.



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.



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 their own domestically produced ones, as represented in the game with the Schneider tank, which is actually a French development. The first tanks were not feared solely by the enemy. 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, and 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 hit the driver through the relatively thin armor of the first tanks.

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. Therefore, in the game the Railway Gun can move without tracks – however very slowly.

Fighter Aircraft: The Fighter Aircraft of the First World War had 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.

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.

Mine Layers: These units can lay landmines that immediately destroy an enemy unit when it enters a hex with a mine.

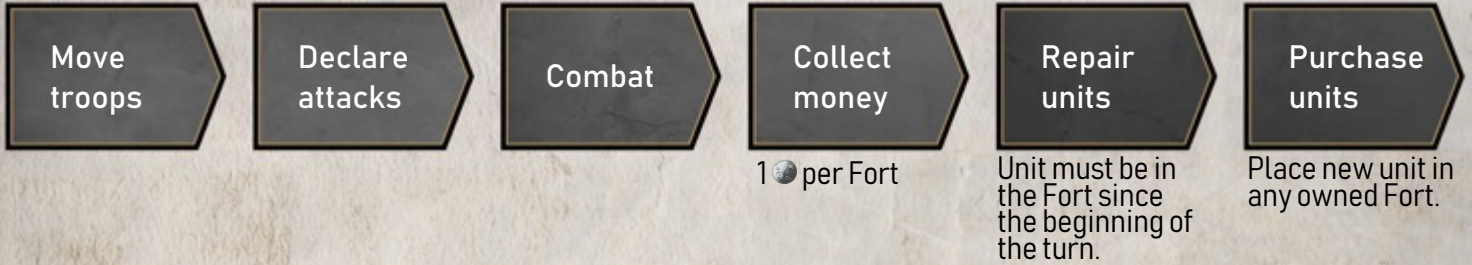
Classic anti-personnel mines were rather rare. During trench warfare, it was more common to tunnel under enemy trenches, mountain tops, or entire villages and blow them up with massive explosive charges. The blast of one of these mines in France was so big it was audible in London!

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.



QUICK REFERENCE

Game phases:



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 owned Fort
- 0.5 → Board transport truck

Exception:

- 0.5 → Last move

Enemy contact:

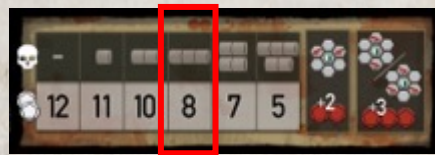


Unit with enemy contact moves to next hex with enemy contact again → **movement ends** (enemy must be able to attack the unit)

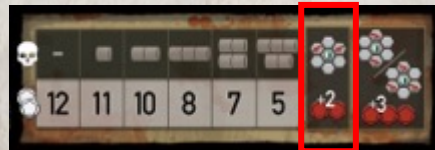
Combat

Attacker and defender roll the dice simultaneously

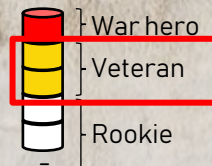
1. Damage → Number of dice:



2. Flank/Surround attack? (attacker only)



3. Experience → Hit probability



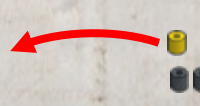
4. Roll dice → Number of hits



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



6. Set markers (damage, experience)



Enemy unit damaged: +1 Experience
 Enemy unit destroyed: +2 Experience