



Miniature Warfare in Antiquity: Rules and Guide to Play

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Introduction

The Ancients era is one of the most-loved of all historical miniatures wargaming periods, and also one of the oldest - the Wargames Research Group published their first set of "modern" Ancients rules in 1969. The WRG 2.0 rules became a standard in the hobby, and ever since there has been constant evolution in the rules used, from the then-revolutionary *De Bellis Antiquitatis* through *De Bellis Multitudinis*, Arty Conliffe's *Tactica* and spin-offs, *Field of Glory*, and now *Art de la Guerre*, *Mortem et Gloriam*, *Impetus*, and a number of other rules sets, some even grid-based. There have been many others (Bob Bryant's *Might of Arms* has long been a personal favorite.)

More than any other period, it seems that competition play has always been a primary focus of Ancients miniatures gaming. This has been both good and bad: the resources available for Ancients gamers has always been very high as a consequence - you can get virtually any army in all the major scales, and the choice is staggering. The wealth of reference material is likewise enormous. On the downside, tournament gamers can sometimes be too competitive for casual play, with too strong a tendency toward rules-lawyering. That attitude has its place, but not so much in casual gaming.

One noticeable consequence of this, however, is that the rules tend to be at once very comprehensive but also difficult to learn, making their use in a convention or club settings potentially problematic. (I have used *ADLG* to run convention games, and although it can be great fun it is never easy!) There are some simple rules out there: *To the Strongest* is a very simple, grid-based game, and lots of people play *Command & Colours* with miniatures instead of blocks. These games are fun, but fall far short of a simulation of the battlefield - they sacrifice too much for the sake of playability to be to everyone's taste.

Blood of Kings & Heroes is designed to fill in the gap between these two types of games: it is intended to be used for convention and club play where teaching the rules and getting the game going are paramount, but leverages the use of a computerized system to provide simplicity without losing too much realism. It is fundamentally based on the *ADLG* system, but uses fewer, larger units and a more interactive turn sequence to facilitate convention and remote play. Unlike many other Ancients systems, the scope of the game is restricted to "Antiquity" - that is, from the earliest recorded warfare up until the Middle Ages. (We have already produced similar systems for early and late Medieval warfare: [Chanson de Geste](#) and [A Bloody Dismal Fight](#)).

This system is designed to produce games which look good on the tabletop: lots of 28mm figures (or even more 15mm ones) makes for a grand display! The number of units is not overwhelming, but the units tend to be 3-4 bases (that is, "elements" for *DB** or "units" for *ADLG*) in strength, making for healthy sized units. A normal army will have between 9 and 20 such units. A game with armies of this size will typically require 3-4 hours to play to completion, fitting neatly into a convention slot or as a single-evening club or remote game.

Whether you are leading the spearmen of Ur against the Gutians in the Zagros Mountains or battling the Huns to save the Empire on the Catalaunian Plains, *Blood of Kings & Heroes* provides an easy, fast-playing game which still provides a convincing taste of the reality of warfare in antiquity!



Seleucid armored elephants stomp phalangites and Thracian swordsmen.

^ Equipment Needed for Play

As with any miniatures game, figures and terrain are needed to represent the battlefield and combatants. This game is meant to represent entire field battles, and so is not a skirmish game in terms of tabletop representation. As with many Ancient and Medieval rules sets, exact man:figure ratios and ground scales are not specified. Miniatures may be understood to be representative, however: a couple of houses surrounded by a wall represent a village, etc. One figure is a larger number of actual combatants. To put this in perspective, a Republican Roman legion would typically be represented by a 4-base unit of Principes and Hastatii, a two-base unit of Velites, and a single base of Triarii (these latter two might be combined with those from other legions to form units up to four bases in strength). This means that *Blood of Kings & Heroes* is compatible with

army lists for many other popular Ancients systems - a similar Roman legion in *ADLG* is identical.

Rules and tape measures in inches are required for play. Dice are not. The game app will perform all needed randomization if you choose not to use dice. (If you do use dice, they are traditional six-sided ones.) Markers are needed for Disorder and Demoralization - further losses are expressed as base losses (see below on unit basing). Small chits or other markers for showing which units and Leaders have already acted during the turn are quite useful. The use of a tablet or smart phone during play (rather than a PC) is not critical, but may prove convenient. Only one device for running the game app is required, and it is used by the game master (or whoever is appointed to act in that capacity). The game app will run on PCs, tablets, and smart phones: any device with a javascript-capable web browser may be used. If desired, more than a single device may be used during play, but the "official" one for determining outcomes must be clearly identified for any given action.

A normal wargames table is required, although for most battles a fairly small one will suffice. 4 foot x 6 foot or larger is ideal. For smaller tables, players may wish to reduce figure scale to 15mm or smaller, and to reduce all distances and ranges by half, or replace inches with centimeters.

^ Units, Troop Types, and Base Sizes

The following list provides all of the different troops types used in the game.

Heavy Cavalry: Armored horsemen operating in massed formations. May be armed for close combat or may rely on missile weapons or both. If carrying missile weapons, these must be specified.

Medium Cavalry: Unarmored horsemen operating in massed formations. May be armed for close combat or may rely on missile weapons or both. If carrying missile weapons, these must be specified.

Light Horse: Horsemen operating in loose formations, using skirmishing and typically relying on missile weapons. They avoid close combat. Missile weapons should be specified if carried.

Cataphracts: Heavily armored horsemen riding armored horses operating in massed formations. Typically armed for close combat, but may carry missile weapons (if so, specify).

Pike Phalanx: Disciplined infantry operating in massed formations using very long two-handed spears (pikes). Formations are very deep.

Heavy Spearmen: Disciplined infantry operating in massed formations using shields and long spears. May be armored (if so, specify). Formations are often deep. Sometimes accompanied by supporting missile troops (if so, specify).

Heavy Swordsmen: Infantry operating in massed formations, relying on bladed weapons such as swords and axe. Formations are dense. May be armored (if so, specify) and may carry two-handed weapons such as the Thracian rhomphaia (if so specify). Formations are often deep. Sometimes accompanied by supporting missile troops (if so, specify).

Medium Spearmen: Infantry operating in loose formations suitable for fighting in difficult terrain. These troops use spears as their primary weapon, but do not rely on a shieldwall for defense. They may be armored, and may also have integral missile support - these must be specified.

Medium Swordsmen: Infantry operating in loose formations suitable for fighting in difficult terrain. These troops use swords and other bladed weapons as their primary armament, which may be two-handed (if so, specify) but do not rely on a shieldwall for defense. They may be armored, and may also have integral missile support - these must be specified.

Light Medium infantry: Infantry operating in loose formations, suitable for difficult terrain. They rely on weapons such as javelins, and are not usually dedicated close-combat troops, being unarmored. They are not skirmishers, however. Missile weapons should be specified.

Bowmen: These are massed archers on foot, operating in loose order. They are unarmored.

Light Infantry: These are skirmish infantry, typically armed with missile weapons of some type (bow, sling, or javelin). They will not charge enemy units frontally when in open terrain, as they are averse to close combat.

Levy: Infantry operating in ill-disciplined masses, armed with a variety of weapons.

Artillery: Ballistae, catapults, and similar war engines. These move very slowly and are very poor in melee.

Elephants: War elephants with riders using long spears, bows, etc, to supplement the use of the elephant itself as a weapon. They may be armored (if so, specify).

Light Chariots: Smaller two-horse chariots used primarily as missile platforms. Type of missile weapon should be specified (usually bow or javelin).

Heavy Chariots: Larger four-horse chariots intended to be used in close combat.

Note that some troop types inherently have armor (e.g., Heavy Cavalry, Cataphracts) and do not need for this to be indicated in the game app during fire or melee - it is automatically assumed. (There is, however, no harm in checking the "Armored" boxes as the game app ignores them if they are redundant.)

Some units will be rated as "aggressive," indicating that they are trained to charge in a vigorous fashion or respond proactively to attacks. This form of heightened impact (the term used in *ADLG*) is restricted to Medium Swordsmen, Medium Spearmen, Heavy Swordsmen, Medium Cavalry, Heavy Cavalry, Cataphracts, and Heavy Chariots. In some cases, this heightened combat impact is because of natural aggression (rather than training), as is the case with (for example) Gallic infantry. In such cases, immediate charges are a behavior that is difficult to control, and the unit can be classed as "Impetuous". Aggression and Impetuous tendencies must be specified by the scenario.

Units will consist of 1 to 6 bases, all of the same type (a normal size unit for most types will be 3 or 4 bases). Any troop type may come in any size unit, but artillery units should almost always be only a single base in size, and Light Infantry, Elephant, Light Horse, and Chariot units will often only have two bases (although they may be larger). The following chart defines base sizes for game purposes. Note that these bases may need to be composed of two single-rank physical bases, depending on how troops are mounted (e.g., if your forces are based for DBA, etc.).

All units are based on a 60mm (2.5-inch) frontage.

Type	Base Depth	Number of Figures Per Base
Leaders	60mm (square or round)	1-3
Heavy and Medium Cavalry, Cataphracts	40mm	3
Light Horse	40mm	2
Heavy Swordsmen and Heavy Spearmen	40mm	6 to 8
Pike Phalanx	60mm-90mm	9-12
Medium Swordsmen and Medium Spearmen	60mm	6
Light Medium Infantry	60mm	6

Bowmen	60mm	6
Levy	40mm-60mm	3-5
Light Infantry	30mm	2
Chariots, Artillery, Elephants	60mm or deeper	1 (as per model)

For representation purposes, you can use the following, although it is only a suggested scale: a base of mounted troops will represent 200-250 men, and an infantry base twice that number. For smaller actions this can be reduced by half, so that each mounted base is 100 men, and each foot base 200. Number of figures recommends representation in 28mm, but this is actually unimportant: casualties are by bases, not by figures. It is only important that different troop types can be easily distinguished on the table, and that the figures "look the part." Larger numbers of smaller figures can also be placed on bases of the sizes suggested, or dimensions can be reduced to fit the figures (along with proportional reduction of all other game distances).

Note that the size of a unit at the start of play is significant. When a full half or more of the bases in a unit are destroyed, the unit is immediately removed from play. Units in this game represent the body of that troop type within a wing/division of the army, so a typical army will have three to five units in each of three to five wings, with each one commanded by a Leader. (Because this is not intended as a tournament rules set, point values and army lists are not provided: these can be taken from the usual sources to provide a sense of proportions and relative values of different troops types).



Late Republican Romans and their Pergamene allies formed up in front of a temple, somewhere in Anatolia.

△ Turn Sequence

The game is played as a sequence of turns, during which each unit notionally makes a single action (there are exceptions). During each turn, each Leader on the tabletop will be given a single initiative, and will have a set number of activations which can be used to act with the units under his or her command.

One side is designated the Attacker, and the other the Defender (the terms are only meaningful by scenario). The turn sequence is:

1. Impetuous units which have a valid target within line of sight and charge range in open terrain must test to see if they perform an uncontrolled charge. Such charges are performed in the order preferred by the commanding player, with the Initiative button used to determine which side will go first if both sides have uncontrolled charges, and with subsequent uncontrolled charges alternating between sides until all are completed. Further uncontrolled charges may be triggered during the course of play (see below).

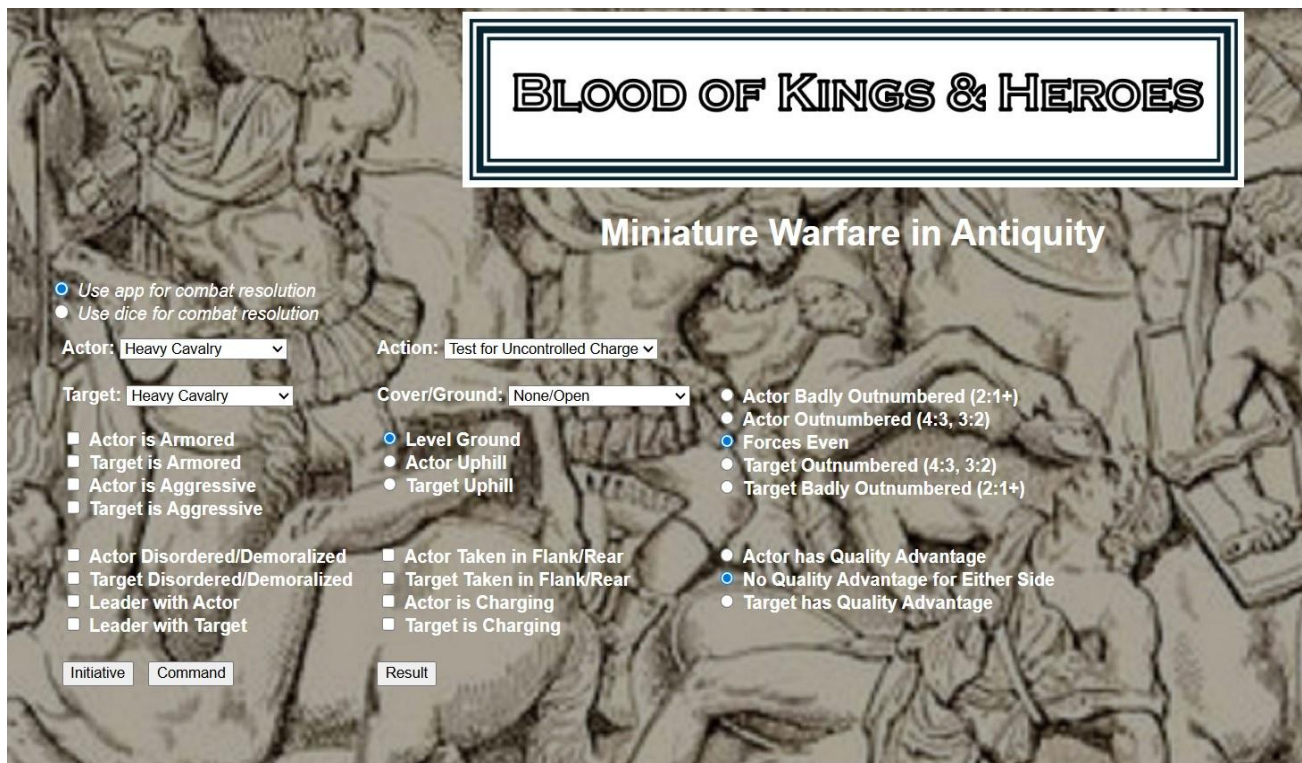
2. Click the Initiative button. A side will be identified. That side may choose to go first, or to have their opponent do so.
3. The side acting first will now select a Leader to give the Initiative to. Click the "Command" button, to be given a number of activations (from 1 to 3). To this number Exceptional Leaders will add 1. Up to that number of activations may be taken by the units commanded by the Leader who is given the Initiative. Each Leader may only be given the Initiative once per turn (that is, they may only "act" once per turn).
4. For each activation, one unit may make an action such as moving, firing, charging, fighting an ongoing melee, rallying, etc. (see below). During this phase, the Leader may move at any single point, to bring them into contact with one of their units, or to bring units into their command radius. Leader movement does not require an activation.
5. When the Leader is done moving and activating their units, the Initiative passes to the opposing player, who then clicks the "Command" button and uses their activations, as above. The Initiative will pass back and forth, one Leader per side, until all the Leaders on the table have been given an Initiative, and have activated their units. If one side has more Leaders than the other, the side with fewer Leaders may "pass" on an Initiative once for each extra leader possessed by the other side.
6. Any units which can fire may now do so, even if they have already acted for the turn (including firing). This fire is simultaneous.
7. Any units which are involved in on-going melee, but which have not yet acted this turn, will now fight the ongoing melee. The order of activation for all of these cases is performed by clicking the initiative button, and the Attacker or Defender will select any one of their units to fight, as indicated. This activation passes back and forth between the players for each activation, until all required units have fought.
8. Check to see if either side has lost their camp or baggage train. Count the number of destroyed and demoralized units, and the number of killed or captured Leaders, to determine if either army has broken. If not, repeat the turn sequence.

Note that using markers to indicate which units and Leaders have acted can be a good idea (small colored chits work well for this).

Using the Game App

The tabletop game is run in basically the same fashion as a traditional paper-and-dice game, but instead of looking modifiers and results up on charts, you simply consult the app. If desired, the app can generate combat results directly, or can provide modifiers for players to use when dicing. (In this game, both fire and combat are competitive rolls using single, six-sided dice.) The sequence of events is still driven by players, following the steps listed above. For non-combat activities, the app will determine the outcomes directly, and no dice are needed (rallying, temptation to charge, etc.)

The app interface is shown below:



On the upper left-hand side of the screen is a check box which lets you indicate whether dice will be used to decide combat outcomes, or whether the app will do so. This can be changed at any time during play without negatively impacting the game.

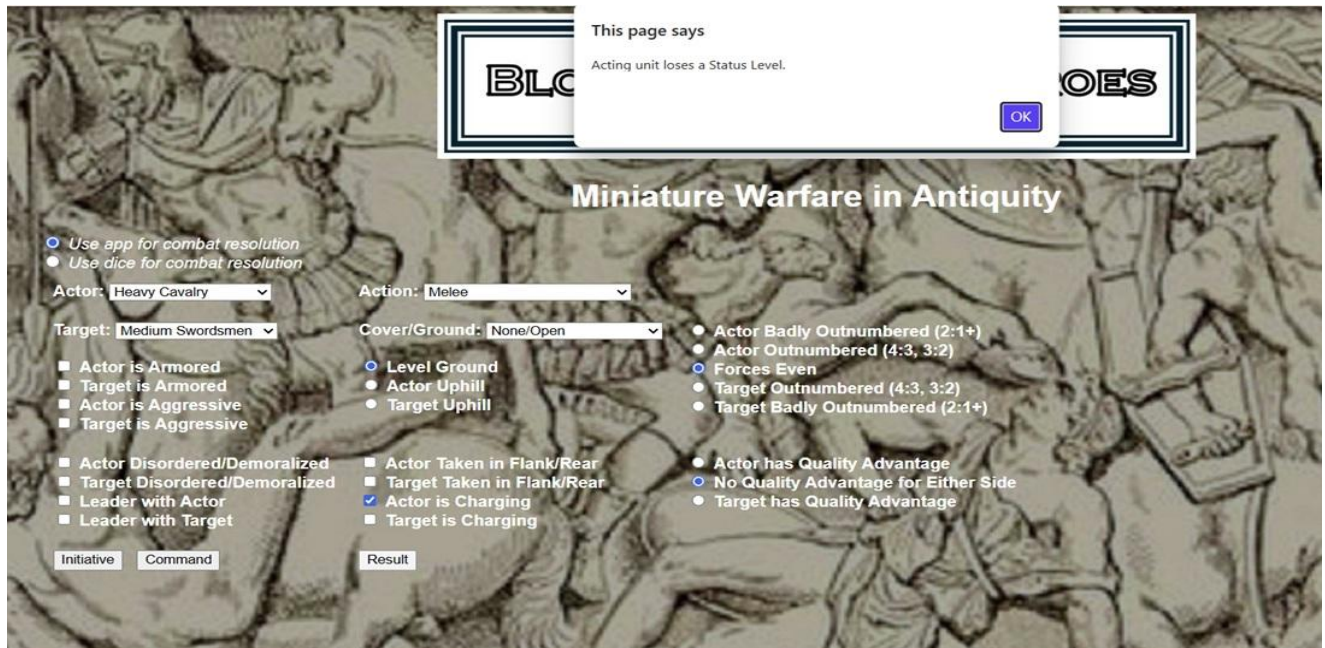
The Initiative and Command buttons are in the lower left-hand corner. Using these buttons requires no other fields to be set - you simply click, and a result box pops up, telling you which side has the initiative, or how many activations the Leader who is given the Initiative may use.

All other actions require that at least two of the app's controls be used: the "Unit" list, and the "Action" list. Other fields may also need to be set, as described in the Actions section, below. Once all needed fields have been set, the Result button in the lower center is clicked, and a result box will pop up, explaining the results of the action, or asking a question.

When asked a question, "OK" always means "yes" and "Cancel" always means "no." Once any questions have been answered, a result box will appear. Click "OK" when you have read the result, to dismiss the box.

The screen below shows a combat result: "Acting unit loses a Status Level." A unit of Heavy Cavalry has made a Melee action after charging, into an enemy group of Medium Swordsmen. The two units are the same size, and they are fighting in the open on level ground. The defender came off pretty well, considering - their attacker will take 1 status level of damage, which equals disorder since neither were disordered or demoralized at the start of the combat. (The specifics of combat are described below). The disordered

status would be marked on the tabletop and the melee would continue in subsequent turns - both attacker and defender have now made their action for the turn (fighting the melee).



When navigating the interface, it may be useful to understand where the controls for different aspects of play are located. The picture below shows the basic groups of controls for describing the tabletop situation:

BLOOD OF KINGS & HEROES

Miniature Warfare in Antiquity

UNIT INFORMATION

Actor: Heavy Cavalry

Target: Heavy Cavalry

- ☐ Actor is Armored
- ☐ Target is Armored
- ☐ Actor is Aggressive
- ☐ Target is Aggressive

ACTION

Use app for combat resolution
Use dice for combat resolution

Action: Test for Uncontrolled Charge

Cover/Ground: None/Open

- ☒ Level Ground
- ☐ Actor Uphill
- ☐ Target Uphill

TERRAIN

- ☐ Actor Badly Outnumbered (2:1+)
- ☐ Actor Outnumbered (4:3, 3:2)
- ☒ Forces Even
- ☐ Target Outnumbered (4:3, 3:2)
- ☐ Target Badly Outnumbered (2:1+)

UNIT SITUATION

- ☐ Actor Disordered/Demoralized
- ☐ Target Disordered/Demoralized
- ☐ Leader with Actor
- ☐ Leader with Target

- ☐ Actor Taken in Flank/Rear
- ☐ Target Taken in Flank/Rear
- ☐ Actor is Charging
- ☐ Target is Charging

ODDS

- ☐ Actor has Quality Advantage
- ☒ No Quality Advantage for Either Side
- ☐ Target has Quality Advantage

QUALITY

Initiative Command Result

The "Unit Information" area allows you to specify the type of unit taking the action, and - if relevant - what type of target unit is being acted upon. To the right of this area is a drop-down list of possible actions (the "Action" section). These two areas must always be filled out, regardless of the action being taken.

Below that, there is an area labelled "Unit Information" where you can indicate whether the actor or target units are rated as aggressive, and whether they are armored. These are unchanging aspects of the units, which are specified by the scenario.

Below these are two stacks of modifiers which are used to describe the "Unit Situation". On the left, check boxes allow you to say whether the units in question are disordered or demoralized, and whether a leader is attached to either or both of them. To the right is a stack of check boxes used in combats, where you can specify whether a unit has been taken in the flank, and whether it is charging or, for the target, counter-charging.

In the center of the display is a drop-down list and a set of check boxes which allow you to describe the terrain. This is used to indicate what terrain or cover is occupied by the target of fire, a charge, or a melee. This includes whether the actor or the target is uphill of its opponent.

On the right-hand side of the screen are two additional lists of check boxes. The upper one lets you indicate the relative strengths of the actor and target units for fire and combat. The lower set of boxes allows you to indicate whether one unit is of superior quality to its opponent in fire and combat situations.

The specific use of each of these conditions is explained below, but it is helpful to have some idea of the screen layout. With practice, this becomes very easy to use, but can be a little confusing at first. It may be helpful to think of the modifiers as a checklist - you run through to make sure every relevant aspect of the current situation has been considered. (You would not believe how often well-understood modifiers are simply forgotten in the course of regular play with paper-and-dice systems! This helps you avoid that problem.)

If at any point if you put the wrong values into the app fields, you may simply ignore the result, correct the settings, and click again. (You will need to "click through" any questions just by answering anything to make them go away.) Each click of the Result button is effectively a roll of the dice, but you can never keep a roll if you calculate the modifiers wrong! As you learn the interface, you will find that it becomes easier to use, and that you will understand which actions use which fields. (Each field is essentially a dice modifier.)

Leaders and Command Control

Leaders are the commanders of the wings (or divisions) of an ancient army, one of whom will generally be the overall commander of the entire host. Any given leader will have a set of units which they may activate - the units in their wing/division, or, for the overall commander, any unit in the army.

Leaders may be rated "Exceptional" by scenario, which gives them greater influence on troops when leading in person - being "attached" in game terms - and also gives them an additional activation when they are given the Initiative.

Leaders have a command radius of 12 inches: any unit under their command within 12 inches of their base - measured between any part of the Leader's base, and any part of any base in the unit - may be given an activation once per turn. The only exception to this rule are Light Infantry and Light Horse - they only need to be within 24 inches of their leader to be activated, reflecting their greater sense of initiative. When activated, that unit will immediately make whatever valid action the player chooses (see Actions, below). The Leader may give as many activations as they have for that Initiative: the number granted by the app, plus their Exceptional Leader bonus if they have one.

Leaders always also have a 24 inch base move each turn, which they may make before, between, or after any activations are given to units (or even in the case that they give no activations to units). They may activate closer units, then move, and then activate units which they have brought within command range while moving. They may only move once during the turn, however, and may not activate units during the course of their move. They may never move into contact or within 3 inches of an enemy unit unless attached to a friendly unit, and will move as if they are Light Horse in terms of terrain penalties (see below).

Leaders may take personal command of a single unit at any point, by placing themselves into contact with any base in that unit. This can help with some actions (such as Melee, Regroup, or making a Test for Uncontrolled Charge). When attached to a unit, however, it is possible for a Leader to be killed or captured in Melee. Leaders who have fallen are not replaced, and count heavily against the army's morale. An attached Leader may still give activations to units to which they are not attached, and is not required to activate the unit they are with. Attached Leaders may detach from a unit at any time, unless the unit they are with is in an ongoing combat: once a Leader has been involved in a Melee action (with either the Acting unit or the Target), they may no longer move in that turn, unless they spend an activation on their own Initiative to do so.

Leaders may not be targeted for fire or charges, and are only involved in melees with the units to which they are attached. If "run over," they simply make an immediate free move (up to 24 inches) to take them out of the way. They may use this move to attach to a nearby friendly unit.

A Leader who is not using an Initiative, and who is involved in a Melee as a result of an enemy Melee Action, will *not* be considered to have acted for the turn, and may still be given the Initiative during that turn. They may not move away from the combat during their own initiative without using an activation to do so, however - they are deemed to have been "caught up in the struggle"!

An army will have the ability to command all of its units as long as it still has a Leader on the table. When killed or captured, the command responsibility for that Leader is immediately assigned to any single surviving Leader at the player's discretion. When all Leaders have been killed or captured, the affected side may no longer make activations, although its units may still make uncontrolled charges, defend themselves in combat, and fire on available targets at the end of each turn. With no Leaders, proactive (voluntary) charges and maneuvering are no longer possible.

Note that a Leader who is attached to a unit will move with that unit or not at the player's discretion, even if the Leader has already used its movement for the turn. Similarly, Leaders may always move with the units they are attached to for any reason, in addition to their own independent move for the turn. Thus, for example, a unit making a Retire action with an attached Leader would bring that Leader with it, and the Leader could then use his own movement to go elsewhere during the turn.

Actions

The following is a list of the actions which may be taken in the game, as listed in the app "Action" list:

Rest: This is the action taken if a unit chooses to do nothing. It does not require the app to perform, and so does not appear in the list of actions. A unit which chooses to do nothing is considered to have acted for game purposes, even though it did nothing.

Regroup: This is the action used to regroup from disorder or demoralization (also called "rallying"). You must select the unit which will make the action, using the "Unit" list, and indicate if they have a Leader with them by checking the "Leader with Actor" box. No other fields are relevant. A Regroup action - if successful - will raise the Status Level of a unit by one (from Disordered to OK or Demoralized to Disordered) or by two (Demoralized or Disordered to OK). Regroup actions may be made by units involved in ongoing combats. In this case, the Melee action is immediately resolved following the Regroup action(see below).

Advance: This is the most common move action, allowing a unit to move and wheel in a forward direction, as well as perform facing changes and some other types of movement (see below). It requires only that the "Unit" list, and the "Action" list be filled out. If a Leader is with the unit, this should also be indicated by checking the "Leader with Actor" box, as this will impact whether orders are delayed or lost. No other fields are relevant.

Retire: This action is performed by a unit which wishes to retire out of an ongoing combat (see below). If the retire fails, a Melee action is immediately performed. It requires only that the "Unit" list, and the "Action" list be filled out. If a Leader is with the unit, this should also be indicated by checking the "Leader with Actor" box. No other fields are relevant.

March: This action causes units to form a column one base wide, and to move in a way that is faster than with a typical Advance action, but which also makes them more vulnerable. It requires only that the "Unit" list, and the "Action" list be filled out. If a Leader is with the unit, this should also be indicated by checking the "Leader with Actor" box. No other fields are relevant.

Charge: Charges start with a move into contact by the charging unit. If contact is made, a sequence of other actions is taken, which may include a Fire action by the target of the charge, an evasion if the target is Light Infantry, Light Horse, Medium or Heavy Cavalry, Cataphracts, or Chariots, and a Melee action. It requires that the "Actor" list, the "Target" list, check boxes for "Aggressive" Actor or Target, the "Cover/Ground" list, and the "Action" list be filled out. If a Leader is with the unit, this should also be indicated by checking the "Leader with Actor" box. No other fields are relevant for the Charge action itself - other subsequent needed actions will use other fields.

Fire: Missile fire is explained below. Needed fields include "Unit", "Target", "Cover/Ground", and "Action" lists, as well as the "Actor is Disordered/Demoralized" check box, if relevant. Additionally, a selection from the force ratios must be made ("Actor Badly Outnumbered", "Actor Outnumbered", "Force Even", etc.), and a "Quality" box should be checked. Other fields are not relevant.

Melee: Melee actions are described below. Melee requires that all fields in the app interface be correctly filled out.

Test for Uncontrolled Charge: This is not an "action" as such, but a test. Units which are classed as Impetuous will need to take this test in order to avoid making an immediate uncontrolled charge. Taking the test does not use their action for the turn, but making the charge will (see below for details). The test requires only that the "Unit" list, and the "Action" list be filled out. If a Leader is with the unit, this should also be indicated by checking the "Leader with Actor" box.

Generally speaking, a unit may make any single action of their choice in a turn, when activated by a Leader who has command of that unit (their battle or army commander). There are some restrictions to choice of actions, however, depending on whether a unit is locked in combat, and the formation it is currently in. Further, actions may be used before the unit is activated, because of the actions of enemy units who force them to fight a melee, respond to a charge, or perform other actions. Each unit may only act once during a turn, unless the rules specify otherwise. Note that taking a test for Uncontrolled Charged does not use the action of the testing unit.

Units in an ongoing combat - that is, those units which start their action in contact with one or more enemy units - may only perform a Melee action, a Retire action (to pull out of combat, which may be followed by a Melee action if it fails), or a Regroup action followed immediately by a Melee action.

Formations and Movement

Units have two formations: "battle" formation is always at least two bases wide (except for single-base units), and may be as wide as the number of bases (e.g., a single rank); "march" formation is one base wide. In both types of formations, bases must share a facing and be touching along at least one full edge of the base, and arranged in regular rows. The front ranks of the formation never have fewer bases than the back ranks. Single-base units also always have a formation, even if this cannot be easily seen on the tabletop (formation should be noted as "march" when the unit has made a March action, and until it changes formation or moves again using Advance or Retire - otherwise it will be in "battle" formation, like any other unit).

Movement as provided by the app is in base inches: the number of inches which may be moved in open terrain. This base number is modified by terrain and by changes of formation and facing. You may always choose to move less than your full distance when making non-charge move actions. The following movement options are possible, in any combination which does not exceed total base movement (no individual base may move more than the maximum base movement):

Forward Movement: Unit moves straight forward, or frontally up to 45 degrees in echelon to either flank, or any combination of these. Unit may change depth

and frontage, but no base may move more than the full distance used for unit movement, measured from the center of the base's starting point, to the center of the base where it ends up. Units are thus free to extend into a 1-base-depth line from a 2-base depth formation as part of normal forward movement.

Sideways and Backward Movement: Unit moves at half speed sideways or backward - otherwise this is like forward movement.

Wheels: The unit may move one front corner in a forward direction, while keeping the other in place, paying for the movement made by the moving corner.

Facing Changes: Unit may change unit facing by rotating around the unit center point, or around the center or end of their frontage. Unit may also change facing with each individual base within a unit.

Note that formations will be dictated by how the bases end up on the table. The only restriction is that any forward movement or wheeling in a March action must be made in a 1-base-wide "march" formation (this allows a march column to form line to flank, assuming a "battle" formation, at the end of a march move by paying for a facing change).

Movement made with a Retire action is a special case: the unit will move directly backward at full speed (as provided by the game app), up to 45 degrees to either side, paying normal terrain costs. Wheels are not allowed in a retire movement.

Note that you may not move within 1 inch of the front of an enemy unit except to make a Charge action to bring a unit into contact with that enemy.

Units may freely interpenetrate friendly Light Infantry and Light Horse in any direction, and move directly through Bowmen who are in a formation 1 base deep from the front or rear. No other voluntary interpenetration is allowed.

The table below shows the effects of terrain and facing changes ("factors") on base movement:

Factor	Cost	Notes
Facing Change	3 inches	First facing change free for Light Infantry and Light Horse; all facing changes free for Leaders.
Rough Terrain	2 inches/inch moved	Full speed for Light Infantry, Medium Spearmen, Medium Swordsmen, Bowmen, Light Medium Infantry, and Elephants; 3 inches/inch moved for Light or Heavy Chariots.
Very Rough Terrain	3 inches/inch moved	2 inches/inch moved for Light Infantry; 4 inches/inch moved for Light or Heavy Chariots.
Linear Obstacles	2 inches to cross	Fences, hedges, walls, ditches, etc. Impassable to Chariots.
Choke Point	3 inches plus distance moved	Bridges, gates, etc. Does not apply to Leaders.
Roads	1 inch for every 1.5 inches moved	Only in "march" formation

All types of terrain should be fully described by the scenario, or agreed by players before play begins. Some terrain (water-logged fields) will be rough for movement purposes, and combat, but will not provide cover from fire. Most rough terrain (open woods) would also provide cover. Towns and villages will be very rough for movement unless the unit in question is in march column, in which case they count as roads. Roads negate negative movement effects of all terrain for units marching along them.



Neo-Babylonians clash with Achaemenid Persians.

^ Fire

Bowmen, Artillery, and Light Infantry may always fire, as they are by definition equipped with missile weapons. Other troop types equipped with missile weapons (e.g., crossbows, bows, or javelins) may also fire (specify by scenario). Note that this will include units which have "supporting" missile troops attached, or which are only partially armed with missile weapons. Units with javelins can fire at any target within 6 inches. All other fire has a range of 12 inches except for Artillery, which is 24 inches. The range is the shortest line of fire between the firing base and any base in the target unit.

Fire may only be conducted from the front of any base in the unit, and up to 45 degrees to either side of facing outward, measured from the edge of the base. Only the front rank of bases may fire. The exception to this is Light Horsemen, who may treat any side(s) of the unit as the front for the purposes of fire.

Targets for fire must be within range and arc, as well as visible to the firing unit (within line of sight). Line of sight is determined by having a clear line between both front corners of the firing base and any point on a base in the target unit. Line of sight extends 3 inches into, out of, or through woods or similar concealing terrain unless stated otherwise by scenario. All units block line of sight - you cannot shoot through friendly or enemy units (although you can fire over the heads of units one or more

terrain levels below the firer, as these do not block line of sight unless within 1 inch of the target, and on the same terrain level as the target).

Units engaged in melee are not valid targets for Fire.

Only bases within range, arc of fire, and with a clear line of sight may fire, but not all bases in a firing unit are required to fire on the same target. Some bases may be unable to fire, but the action may still be taken by those which are. Fire for each target in a single Fire action will be conducted separately with the app. However, all fire on a single target in a single Initiative must be performed with one calculation in the app. (If a Fire action by a multi-base unit has two target units, then two calculations are performed with the app to determine the results - one for each target unit; if two units are firing on the same target, their fire is combined in a single calculation with the app). All fire on any target at the end of the turn is performed with a single Fire action on the app.

For any fire, closer targets must be preferred to those which are further away. If equidistant, the player may decide which to fire on. It is always permitted to concentrate all of a unit's fire on the closest target unit, measured as the shortest distance between the firer and target. Split fire on a target which is closer only to some of the bases in a firing unit is always optional, and performed according to the player's choice. The type of the firing unit is always calculated based on the majority type firing, counted in bases. If there is a choice between two sets of equal numbers of bases, it is made by the firing player.

When calculating strength ratios for setting modifiers in the app, the number of firing bases (for the Actor) is compared to the total number of bases in the Target unit. "Outnumbered" is any difference in size which is more than exactly equal in bases, but which is less than fully twice ("Badly Outnumbered").

Units equipped with pavises will be given soft cover against missiles when they are in the open. This does not translate to hard cover when they are also in soft cover however - it only provides a benefit when they are otherwise unprotected.

^ Combat (Charges and Melee)

^ Charges

Charges are a mechanism for initiating a combat using a friendly unit which is not already engaged in a melee. To make a Charge, a unit must be able to wheel and then move directly forward until some part of its front is in contact with some part of the target unit. This movement may not cross the frontage of another enemy unit within 1 inch. Units in "march" formation may not Charge, nor may Light Infantry at targets in the open except against other Light Infantry. Artillery units may never Charge.

Frontal charges against Bowmen may involve taking fire during the Charge action. This is done exactly as for normal Fire actions. If a "devastating fire" results (the loss of 2

Status Levels) then the charging unit will fail to contact its target, and end its move an inch short of contact. No Melee action will follow. Bowmen who have already acted for the turn will not be able to perform a Fire action at a charging unit. Units which are already engaged in melee may not fire at units charging into a continuing combat.

Aggressive troops may counter-charge when charged frontally (through the frontal arc, 45 degrees outward from facing to either side). The app will indicate when this is occurs, and the Target unit will be moved an equal distance to the charging unit along the line of the charge before combat. Counter-charging has the benefit of denying the charging unit the benefit of impact (the mutual impact cancels out.) A counter-charge will use the Target's action for the turn even if contact is not made.

When Charged, Light Infantry and Light and Medium Horsemen may attempt to evade the Charge. Once the target unit has made its evade movement - which is performed like any other movement, except that an initial facing change is always free, and the full movement must be used - any movement remaining to the charging unit may be taken, in an attempt to contact the target. Other target units may not be contacted, even if they are exposed by the evade move. This charge movement in pursuit of an evading target may not cross the front of a any non-target enemy unit within 1 inch.

Note that evade moves will use the evading unit's action for the turn, but eligible units may still evade even if they have already used their action during the turn. Units already engaged in melee may never evade.

Whether contact (and a melee) results from a Charge action or not, any unit which Charged, evaded, or made a Fire action is considered to have acted for the turn.

Charges may not involve a change of formation of any type on the part of the charging unit. Unit depth and frontage must remain the same as at the start of the move. Only a wheel, followed by movement directly forward is allowed. If contact is made, the front of the charging unit will wheel to either left or right in order to maximize the amount of contact between the two units.

Charge Ranges: Light Horse and Light Chariot units may charge 18 inches. Other mounted units (including Heavy Chariots) may Charge up to 12 inches. Light, Light Medium, and Medium Infantry and Bowmen nd Elephants may charge up to 9 inches. Heavy Infantry, Levy, and Phalanxes may charge up to 6 inches. Artillery may not Charge.

When a unit makes a Charge action resulting in contact, and a Melee action is made, the "Actor is Charging" box must be checked. This box is not important for conducting the Charge action itself - only the immediate Melee action occurring as part of that charge. If there is a Countercharge, then the "Target is Charging" box must be checked.

Note that it is not possible to Charge two units at a time, even if the Charge movement will bring the charging unit into contact with more than one enemy unit. The first enemy

unit which would be contacted must be declared as the target of the Charge. If there is a choice of targets, it is the charging player's decision. Note that it *is* allowed for more than one enemy unit to be contacted by the move, and that both of the contacted enemy units may be involved in the combat, but the one designated the target *must* be involved in the combat. The other may become a Supporting unit (see below). Supporting units may never fire or evade in response to a charge.

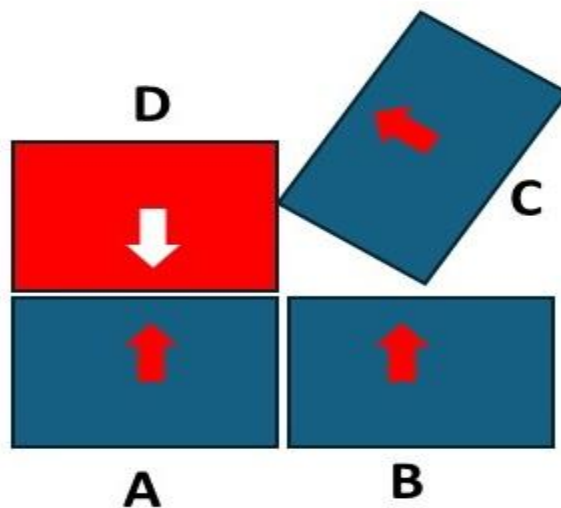
^ Melee

Whenever an activated unit is in contact with an enemy unit, there may be a combat. This is the case if any part of the front of either unit is in contact with the enemy. This situation may result from a Charge action, in which case a Melee action is immediately made. This may result from two units being in combat at the start of the turn, which is termed an "ongoing combat."

Combat involves at least two units - an Actor and a Target - but may also involve others. Any unit involved in a combat which is neither the Actor nor the Target is termed a "Supporting" unit. The Actor is always the activated unit which triggered the combat - the unit which has just made a Charge action, or the unit selected by a player to be activated. The Target unit is either the one designated in the Charge which was just conducted, causing the melee, or is one of the enemy units (if more than one) in contact with the front edge of the acting unit, in a case where no Charge action has taken place immediately before the Melee. The acting unit's player may select which enemy unit is the Target under circumstances where there is more than one possibility.

Supporting units do not change the modifiers entered in the game app, except for the determination of force ratios, and whether the Acting or Target units are taken in flank or rear. Supporting units include:

- Any enemy unit (that is, the enemy of the acting unit) which is in frontal contact with the acting unit, whether it has already acted during the turn or not.
- Any unit friendly to the Actor which is in frontal contact with the Target unit, whether it has already acted during the turn or not.
- Any unit friendly to the Actor which is in side-to-side contact with it and shares a facing, but which is not otherwise in contact with the enemy, and which has not already acted during the turn. There may be up to two such units - one on each side (left flank and right flank). Involvement of such units as Supporting units is always optional, and is not allowed if a friendly unit is in non-rear-corner contact with the Target unit on the nearest enemy flank. (See diagram below.)
- Any unit friendly to the Target unit which is in side-to-side contact with it and shares a facing, but which is not otherwise in contact with the enemy, and which has not already acted during the turn. There may be up to two such units - one on each side (left flank and right flank). Involvement of such units as Supporting units is always optional, and is not allowed if a friendly unit is in non-rear-corner contact with the Acting unit on the nearest enemy flank. (See diagram below.)



Unit A and Unit D are the Actor and Target in a Melee. Unit B cannot act as a Supporting unit, because Unit C is in non-rear-corner contact with the enemy on the flank nearest to Unit B. Unit C can act as a Supporting unit, as it is in frontal contact with the enemy.

All units involved in the combat will be considered to have acted, whether they are the Acting unit, the Target unit, or a Supporting unit. Any Leaders attached to any unit involved in the combat will also be considered to have acted for the current turn, and may not be subsequently given an Initiative. Leaders attached to any unit directly involved in combat or acting as a supporting unit will be indicated on the app interface by checking the appropriate "Leader with Actor" or "Leader with Target" box, so long as the unit is involved in the combat. Likewise, they will be vulnerable to be killed or captured or involved. (If more than one Leader is involved on a given side, and one of them is killed/captured, it will be the Target or Acting unit's leader; if neither have Leaders, but only Supporting units, dice for it.)

A unit is considered to be "Taken in Flank/Rear" for game purposes if any enemy unit has contacted them on the side with any part of its front.

After a Melee has been conducted, any unit which is contacted on the flank, but which is not contacted on the front, may choose to change facing to face any contacted flank. This is always optional, and may only be done once per turn by any given unit. Note that flank contact does not include front-corner contact with an enemy unit: contact must be made along the side of the unit, on the rear of the unit, or on a rear corner. Front corners are only considered to be a part of the unit's front facing.

For determining force ratios in a Melee action, all bases in the involved units are counted, regardless of whether they are in contact or not, or have already been engaged in a Melee action during the turn.



Hoplites defending the walls of Lilybaeum.

^ Ongoing Combats

When a Melee action is taken, but does not result in the destruction of one side or the other, the units will remain in contact after acting. This is considered to be an ongoing combat. Whenever either unit is activated, a new Melee action will be taken. There are some special cases which occur when an ongoing combat is involved.

One of these is when an activated unit attempts to perform a Retire action. If successful, the retiring unit will pull out of the combat and a Melee will not be fought if contact is broken. If unsuccessful, an immediate Melee action will be made.

If a Regroup action is made by a unit in an ongoing combat -- something which requires the activating Leader to be attached to the unit - there will be an immediate Melee action, regardless of whether the Regroup action was a success or failure. The activating unit (the one attempting to Regroup) will trigger the Melee action, and its Leader will be involved in this Melee. Note that units which are contacted on more than one face at once (to front and flank, to rear and flank, etc.) may not perform Retire actions.

It is possible to charge into an ongoing combat, so long as the Charge action would involve no interpenetration of units involved in the melee (even Supporting units), even if otherwise allowed (this is important: *no* interpenetration of units!). In such cases, neither evasion nor defensive Fire are allowed by the unit which is the target of the Charge, nor may it countercharge. Units in the Melee on both sides which have already acted may influence it as Supporting units (see above). The Target will engage in the Melee regardless of whether it has already acted or not.

^ Test for Uncontrolled Charge

Some troop types are aggressive such that they will always be tempted to charge the enemy when given the opportunity, even if they have no orders to do so. Any unit rated "Impetuous" will be in this category. As indicated in the description of the turn sequence above, such units may need to test to see whether they will charge at the start of the turn. Further, if at any point during play a situation arises which would allow an Impetuous unit to charge, and they have not already resisted the temptation during the turn, they must immediately test. This can happen even during the course of an opponent's move, at which point movement between the two units is pro-rated from the point where the temptation to charge first came into play.

To be tempted to charge, the Impetuous unit must have a clear line of sight to an enemy unit to its front (up to 45 degrees to either side of facing), blocked only by friendly Light Infantry or Light Horsemen not currently engaged in melee, and within their normal Charge distance.

If at any point during play, an enemy unit enters the frontal zone of an Impetuous unit, as described above, then an immediate "Test for Uncontrolled Charge" must be made.

Note that units are never tempted to charge by targets in or across rough terrain or fortifications.

^ Combat Effects and Rallying

Unit Status is a measure of how a unit is currently functioning, in terms of morale and losses. Combat outcomes are expressed as a change in Unit Status. All units begin the game with their full strength known (the number of bases in the unit), and all have a Unit Status of "OK". Unit Statuses are:

OK: The unit is good condition. The loss of bases does not stop a unit from having this status.

Disordered: The unit is in disarray. This situation is very common, and can be corrected by having the unit make successful Regroup action.

Demoralized: The unit is in a state of disarray bordering on panic: this is almost "*sauve qui peut*" territory. The situation can also be recovered from by Regrouping, but it may take more than one action.

Destroyed: The unit's soldiers have panicked, surrendered, become casualties, died, etc., and it is removed from play. Any time a unit has lost a full half or more of its starting number of bases, it is immediately destroyed and removed from play.

Gaining a Status Level means going upward in the list above, and losing a Status Level is movement further toward the bottom of it. For example, a unit with an OK Status Level which goes down two levels will have a new Status Level of "Demoralized". Note that the Status Level does not correspond to the number of bases lost until the unit is destroyed. A unit with no losses can be Disordered or Demoralized, and a unit which has taken losses can be OK or have any other Status.

When an OK unit loses a Status Level, it becomes Disordered. When a Disordered unit loses a Status Level, it becomes Demoralized. When a Demoralized unit loses a Status Level, it loses a base. When a Demoralized unit loses two Status Levels, it loses two bases, and so on.

Any outcomes from Fire or Melee actions are implemented immediately. The exception to this is missile fire occurring at the end of the turn, which is simultaneous: any firing unit will make their Fire action before suffering from fire taken during the same portion of the turn.

When status losses are awarded to a side with Supporting units in a melee, the first Status level lost must be assigned to the Target or Acting unit. Others may be evenly distributed between all the involved units, but no unit may be awarded more Status level losses than the Target or Acting unit (whichever side lost the combat).

Note that Disorder and Demoralization do not stop a unit from being activated. In many cases, however, it will reduce their effectiveness. These units may still move, charge, fire, and fight.

When a unit charges into a combat and destroys its enemy, it must move forward to occupy the space vacated by the target of the Melee. In any other circumstance, such a move on the part of the Actor in the Melee is optional. In both cases, the occupying move is only permitted if no other enemy units are in contact with the Actor of the Melee.

Enemy camps and baggage trains are not classed as units in this game, and are automatically destroyed if they are attacked. Note that camps are immobile, and so are not allowed to move, whereas baggage trains may be capable of movement - this should be specified by scenario.

^ Calculating Fire and Combat Outcomes Using Dice

When dice are used to calculate combat outcomes, the two sides each roll a single die, with modifiers applied as specified by the game app. The following system is employed to determine the outcome:

Fire: If the firer and the target have modified rolls which are equal, or if the target's roll is greater, the fire has no effect. A difference of 3 or less in the firer's favor inflicts 1 Status Level of damage; a difference of 4 or 5 inflicts 2 Status Levels; a difference of 6 or 7 inflicts 3 Status Levels; and a difference of 8 or more results in automatic destruction of the target unit. Any fire result which inflicts a loss of 2 or more status levels is termed "devastating fire" (this will halt a charging enemy).

Melee: If the attacker and the target have modified rolls which are equal, both sides suffer a single Status Level of damage. A difference of 3 or less inflicts 1 Status Level of damage on the side which scored lower; a difference of 4 or 5 inflicts 2 Status Levels; a difference of 6 or 7 inflicts 3 Status Levels; and a difference of 8 or more results in automatic destruction of the losing unit.

A Leader attached to a unit on the side which suffers a loss of one or more Status levels in a melee may be killed, wounded, or captured. This will happen on a die roll on a single die, equal to or less than the number of Status Levels lost in that combat. The affected Leader is removed from play and not replaced (see above). When using dice to determine Leader casualties, any time 6 or more Status levels have been lost, the leader will escape by rolling a 1 on a single die.



Persian heavy cavalry rides to reenforce the flank.

^ Army Morale

Each army in a battle is given a Break Point. This is the total number of bases in the army, also counting the baggage or camp if there is one, as a single base. Each base adds one to the total, but Leaders are not counted. As the battle progresses, each side will keep track of how many points it has lost toward breaking. The status of each army is checked at the end of each turn. Once the total of points toward breaking equals or exceeds the Break Point, the army is broken, and has lost the battle. It is possible for both sides to lose in the same turn, resulting in a draw.

The points counted toward breaking are calculated by adding the following:

- *For each Light Infantry, Light Horse, Light Chariot, Levy, Light Medium Infantry, or Bowmen base destroyed: 2 points*
- *For each Medium Cavalry or Medium Sword/Spear base destroyed: 3 points*

- *For each Heavy Cavalry, Cataphract, Heavy Chariot, Elephant, Phalanx, or Heavy Sword/Spear base destroyed: 4 points*
- *For each unbroken unit currently Demoralized: 1 point*
- *For a killed/captured enemy Leader who is an Army Commander: 3 points*
- *For a killed/captured enemy Leader who is a Subordinate Commander: 2 points*
- *For a sacked camp/baggage train: 3 points (or by scenario)*

Note that a broken unit counts all of its bases against the army Break Point, and not just bases lost in combat.

Army Break Points may be adjusted by scenario to reflect the quality or character of a specific historical force. So, for example, religious zealots might be given a bonus of 5 to their Break Point to reflect their fanaticism, etc. This is really a mechanism for creating balanced scenarios. The recommended system here aims at producing shorter, more decisive games.

Design Notes

This game was created to provide an easy-to-learn system for convention and club play, and to provide good remote games over Zoom or Skype. To facilitate these goals, it avoids the approach taken by many systems for Medievals and Ancients where armies are made up of large numbers of individual single-base "elements", and where the relative positioning of these is paramount. Despite this, systems such as *Art de la Guerre* have been used in many ways as a basis for the basic structure of play: clear victory conditions based on a points system, and games which play to conclusion in a single, reasonable-length gaming session of 2-3 hours.

For all of these intended scenarios, 28mm figures are preferred: they are easier to see in a convention setting or over an Internet camera, and they show off this colorful period to great advantage. Using smaller figures in greater numbers on the base sizes recommended for 28mm could also give a very impressive "birds-eye" effect.

We are spoiled for choice when it comes to Ancients rules, and a game such as this will never be well-suited for competition play. That is not its intended purpose. If engaging games can be generated, which are easy to learn and play to a satisfying conclusion in a matter of three or four hours, while retaining some of the feel of traditional ancients games, then their purpose has been achieved. Ancients as a period may be over-represented at conventions in the form of tournaments, but is probably under-represented for participation games. Hopefully, a system syuch as this can help to change that.

Some gamers may feel that generic rules sets covering "ancients and medievals" are too ambitious, losing period flavor for the sake of covering a huge span of time. We have to some extent avoided that by focusing only on "antiquity," avoiding the need to accomodate the significant changes in warfare that arose during the Medieval era.

Further, the lack of specific knowledge about pre-Medieval warfare often means that with the best will in the world, we cannot really know exactly what it is we are trying to represent within a short span of time. Even Hoplite Greek and Roman warfare - relatively well-documented - still present us with significant gaps. A generic rules system for Antiquity is probably a good compromise between being too generic and too period-specific.

Ultimately, the goal of these rules is to provide a quick-playing game which is both realistic and easy to learn, but which provides sufficient period feel. We hope we have achieved this, and we hope you enjoy these rules in the intended spirit.
