

Old Dessauer 15mm: 18th Century Wargame Rules by Wes Rogers

Introduction: This is a game of warfare in 18th Century Europe using 15mm size model soldiers. Each model = 50 infantry in 3 ranks, 40 cavalry in 3 ranks, 8 artilleryists, or 2 cannon. 1" = 40 paces (about 35 yards). Time scale is undefined. Dice: 6-sided (D6). Distances: Inches. Troops: Infantry, heavy cav (HC), med. cav (MC), light cav (LC), and light, field, or heavy artillery. Units are battalions of infantry, groups of 1-4 squadrons of cavalry, or batteries of 2-4 gun models, each with 4 crew models. Morale grades: A, B, C, or D. The rules measure damage by removing models (hits). Units are in play until down to 25% strength (shattered). Formations: Column (1-4 inf or 1-3 cav models wide), line (wider), square, limbered, manhandled. Pre-measuring distances is Ok. The rules will work with any reasonable basing system. However, if you mount your models at 3/8" width per infantry figure and 1/2" per cavalry figure, this will be the correct frontage for the ground scale. Each gun model should have a 1" frontage. Bases are usually 1/2" deep for infantry, 1" deep for cavalry, and 1.5" deep for guns. This is a 2-page set of rules; apply common sense.

Turn Sequence and Movement: Decide who goes first, then alternate active/passive sides each turn.

- 1) Active side rallies shaken units, then moves, then fires. Passive makes retreats and removes shattered units.
- 2) Fight one round of combat (simultaneous hits). Make retreats and remove shattered units (passive side first).

Troop Type	Column, Limbered	Line, Manh.	Charge: 1.5X speed. Squares: Move 2" (Grade D cannot move). In combat, count the face in contact plus the adjacent faces. Disorder: A unit is disordered upon entering or attacking disordering terrain, or after suffering any combat hits. It must then reform. Generals move 24" per turn. The artillery notation is light / field / heavy. You can bend a line but that is a formation change. A bent line may not move.
Infantry	6"	4"	
HC, MC	12"	8"	
LC	16"	12"	
Artillery	4"/4"/3"	4"/2"/1"	

Retreat Moves: You must move a retreating unit 4-18" away from the enemy (your choice) within a 22.5° arc to either side. It may face the enemy or about face. It enters shaken morale status. It may not advance or fire until it passes a rally from shaken test. A unit under attack from opposite sides cannot retreat and is eliminated, as is a unit that cannot retreat without contacting a new enemy unit. Units retreating off-table are eliminated. Retreating artillery abandons its guns. Squares form column when they retreat. Active units may make **voluntary retreats** if not in combat, suffering 1 rout hit and becoming shaken. Light infantry and LC suffer no rout hits but still become shaken when they do voluntary retreats.

Firing: Roll one die per 4 infantry or crew models, rounding up a remainder of 3. Units may move ½ and fire. Arc of fire is 22.5° to either side. One rank may shoot (2 ranks if skirmishing). Ballshot may shoot over 1-contour obstacles and friends on lower contours if the target is 2X as far as the obstacle and at least 4" behind it. Ballshot may shoot over low obstacles and enemy units on lower contours if the target is 4" beyond the obstacle. No other overhead fire is allowed. Units may fire through enemy skirmishers or guns (who then suffer no hits) at a penalty. If a unit suffers any hits it must take a fire test. If it fails it must retreat, suffering 1 rout hit; 2 rout hits if already shaken. Dense targets: Squares, lines enfiladed at 22.5° or less, and units 2+ ranks deep. No shooting into a combat. Splitting fire is Ok if not all figures can hit the initial target. Hits on artillery remove gunner models. **Firing Through Gaps:** One die of fire allowed per 2" of gap. This is total fire, not per unit.

Combat: To attack with a unit, move as much of its front into contact with the target as movement and spacing will allow. The attacker must also fight any unblocked (by ½ frontage or more), unengaged enemies overlapping its frontage and within 1". Units in combat remain stationary. A unit using charge speed may only wheel 45° at the start of the move and the target must be visible at the start of the move. Flank/rear attacks must begin the turn at least partly behind the target's frontage. Add up combat points (CP) vs. the enemy. More CP = advantage, same = even, fewer = disadvantage. To hit, roll 1D6 per 4 infantry or crew or per 3 cavalry in the unit's front rank (front 2 ranks for cavalry) regardless of actual models in contact. Round up a remainder of 3 infantry or crew, or 2 cavalry. Units under flank/rear attack still use their full front rank. If fighting several targets, divide the unit's dice as evenly as possible between all targets. If a unit suffers more hits than it inflicts, it loses and must retreat, suffering 2 rout hits. Units under flank/rear attack suffer 4 rout hits. If already shaken, the loser is shattered. Inf. losing to cav. also suffers 1 "pursuit hit" per 3 cav. If gunners lose or tie a round of combat they are shattered. Steady passive infantry in line gets the defensive fire bonus on the 1st round of combat unless rifles or under flank/rear attack.

Base Combat Points: Hvy Cav = 5, Med Cav = 4, Lt Cav or infantry = 3, inf w/o bayonets = 1, crew/skirmishers = 0.

Fire	Close	Far	Shooting Modifiers		Combat Point Modifiers		
Muskets	3": 3-6	6": 5-6	Grade ^r A/B/C/D:	+2/+1/+0/-1	Defensive fire:	+3	
Rifles	6": 5-6	9": 6	Firer moved or is in square:	-1	Per morale grade higher:	+1	
Canister	6/8/10": 3-6		Ballshot vs. dense target:	+1	Under fl/rear attack, or shaken:	-2	
Ballshot	10/12/16": 5-6	16/20/24": 6	Vs. atty ^r /skirmishers ^r :	-1/-2	Attacking soft/hard cover:	-1/-2	
			Vs. soft ^r /hard cover:	-1/-2	Vs. obstacle, 1 st round only:	-1	
			Disordered:	-1	Disordered (inf/cav):	-1/-2	
			Firing through skirmishers/guns:	-1	Cavalry vs. steady square:	-4	
			rifles ignore		Infantry vs. square:	+1	
			Need 7+ to hit? Roll a 6 then a 4-6		General with unit:	+1	
Rally from Shaken			Fire Test		Combat: Scores to hit per die		
Score to pass, A/B/C/D:		1/2/3/5	Score to pass, A/B/C/D:		0/1/2/4	Advantage:	3-6
Any visible enemies able to charge you?:		-3	Each hit:		-1	Even:	4-6
General with unit:		+1	Shaken:		-2	Disadvantage:	5-6
			General with unit:		+1	Disadvantage by 3+ CP:	6

Approaching the Enemy: You may not move a unit within 1" of the enemy unless making a retreat move or an attack move.

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Cavalry reinforcing a combat: Since cavalry can strike in two ranks, you may attack with a second cavalry unit behind the first, if the first is in one rank. Treat this as an attack by two units. Only two total ranks may attack.

Skirmishers: Skirmishers were rare in this period. Skirmishing figures move free-form at 4" rate, but must stay within 4" of their unit command model. Space them at 2X frontage. If attacked, they may evade up to 1D6". If the enemy contacts an evading unit the evaders are eliminated and the attacker may continue his charge. Skirmishers may not attack steady close-order troops frontally and must evade close-order attacks. Skirmishers never count as disordered. Skirmishers are disordered when they reform into close order. Treat skirmishers in buildings or fieldworks as normal close-order troops. Forming and reforming from skirmish order is a type of formation change. Irregular skirmishers such as Pandours may not form close order.

Gunners Evading: Gunners may evade up to 1D6" when charged.

Danger to Generals: If a general is with a unit that suffers 2 or more fire or combat hits, he is killed on a 1. If a general is attached to a shattered unit he must make a retreat move. If this is impossible he is captured and removed from play.

Wheeling: Units wheel about one corner like opening a door. Unsteady units wheel at half speed.

Change formation and/or facing, Steady Units: It takes a full move for a unit to change formation and/or facing. If the unit is Grade A-B it costs ½ move. If the unit is Grade D it becomes disordered. If the unit is already unsteady, double the cost. If a unit needs two turns to complete a maneuver, put it into its new formation or facing. It must then stand in disorder until the required number of active turns have passed. A column may form line on the center or out to either flank. A line must form column around its front center. A unit may change both facing and formation at the same time, at no extra cost. **Limbering and unlimbering** costs a full move. Skirmishers form up with their unit command model in the front center (it does not move). A unit is **steady** if it is in close order and not disordered and not shaken. **Sidestep, backstep, oblique:** Half speed. Quarter speed if unsteady.

Pass through a friend: 1/2 speed or both units become disordered. The friend must remain stationary that turn. Example: To pass safely through a friend 1" deep your unit must subtract 2" from its move. Skirmishers and retreating units may flow freely through friends. They are not trying to keep formation and may use minor gaps or go around the edges of the friend. Friendly units prevent charge-speed attacks made through them.

Rallying and Reforming: Shaken units must pass a rally test at the start of their turn to recover morale but may still reform from disorder if they fail. Units that rally may act normally that turn but still need to reform if also disordered. Reforming from disorder costs a full move.

Visibility: Unlimited across open ground. Blocked by: Terrain (see below), close-order units, unlimbered artillery.

Woods: Units within or attacking into woods become disordered. Skirmishers move normally in woods. Other troops move at half speed. Woods are impassable to cavalry and artillery except along roads. Woods give soft cover vs. shooting but no cover in combat. Units in or on the edge of a wood are visible at 4" range, but at any distance if they fire. Each 1" of woods = 2" for musket fire, 4" for canister fire, and 6" for ballshot fire.

Hill Contours: Each contour = 50 feet of elevation. Gentle hill slopes have no effect on movement. Steep slopes cut movement by half (skirmishers move normally) and disorder cavalry. Attacking up a steep slope counts as vs. obstacle on the first round. Crestlines block line of sight unless the sighting unit is on a higher level or touching a crestline on the same level.

Roads: A column or limbered gun on a road may move at 1.5X speed.

Obstacles: These are low walls, fences, streams, hedgerows, etc. Their effects vary greatly, so define them carefully. They usually cost 1" to cross. Many will give soft cover vs. shooting (usually no cover vs. ballshot). Streams usually cost 2X width to cross and are disordering terrain. Units may only cross rivers at bridges or fords. Units cross bridges in one-stand-wide columns, and become disordered.

Town Blocks: Blocks usually hold 12-24 figures and are 1-2 contours high. It costs nothing to enter a block but half a move to emerge. Units in or attacking blocks become disordered. A typical block is soft cover vs. field or heavy ballshot and hard cover for all other purposes. Troops inside may fire out with one figure per 1/2" of block frontage. In combat the entire garrison fights, dividing its dice among all attacking units. The attacker may attack each side of the block with figures = max. garrison size, in any number of ranks. Units retreat out of town blocks in column. You may not split units among blocks. The attacker may occupy the block if all defenders are forced out. Cavalry may not attack town blocks.

Fieldworks: Typical works cost 1" to cross, and are passable only to infantry. They count as a low obstacle for purposes of firing over them. They give hard cover vs. small arms, canister, and light guns, but soft cover vs. heavier ballshot and combat. Define a "disorder zone" behind or inside the works. Troops in this zone move like skirmishers, but at half speed, and are disordered. Troops attacking fieldworks become disordered.

Limited Control (optional): If your unit starts a turn with no general in 6" you must roll a 4-6 to move the unit. Measure the distance from the general's head to the head of the nearest model in the unit, by any path that does not go through impassable terrain or within 1" of an enemy unit unless a friendly unit is closer to the path you are tracing.

Point Values for Models

Infantry and Gunners		Cavalry		Artillery and Support	
Grade A/B/C/D:	8/6/4/3	Grade A/B/C/D:	20/15/10/8	Light gun:	45
Regular light infantry:	+4	Heavy cavalry:	+2	Field gun:	60
Rifles:	+2	Medium or light cavalry:	+0	Heavy gun:	75
Gunner:	+2			General:	50