MASS BATTLE TOOLKIT



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MASS BATTLE TOOLKIT

Thirsting to drink from the skulls of your enemies, but uncertain how? Hunger no more. Assembled within these pages are all the rules and tables you'll ever need to let slip the dogs of war with unabashed ease.

How about twenty abstract, PC focused scenarios, the results of which directly impact the final outcome? Or sudden combat twists to test your party as they battle their way through the dizzying throng? An arrow to the knee never felt so good!

Prefer detailed *Unit vs Unit* combat? We've got you covered with rules for battle maps, troop statistics, movement, terrain, attacks, morale, company advancement, and more.

Want your cake and eat it too? But of course! Mix and match zoomed in and big picture rules as you please, all the while funnelling the adventurers towards the final showdown with enemy leaders to determine ultimate victory.

Mass Battle Toolkit is written for the *Low Fantasy Gaming* **RPG**, but is easily adapted to any d20 based system. 5e conversion notes are included at p.19.

Overview

Mass Battle Toolkit is divided into two broad sets of rules: (i) *Party Spotlight*, and (ii) *Unit Combat*.

Party Spotlight focuses on the adventurers, zooming in on a series of *Sudden Twists* and *Critical Events* that the PCs must deal with as the battle unfolds. The events are dealt with "in media res", dropping the party straight into the action.

The spotlight rules are abstract and improvised, obviating the need for maps, miniatures, etc. How well PCs' handle *Critical Events* affects how swiftly the battle proceeds to the *Final Confrontation*, and what state the PCs are in when they get there.

Unit Combat on the other hand "zooms out" to manage the battlefield as a whole, concerned with troop related movement, combat and morale. These rules are location based and work best with a map, miniatures, tokens, etc.

The *Unit Combat* rules are essentially a simple mini game to quickly resolve regiment warfare. Similar to *Party Spotlight*, the overall results of *Unit Combat* impact on how quickly the *Final Confrontation* occurs, and how depleted the PCs' resources become.

The two rule sets may be used separately or together. If using *Party Spotlight* only, the GM handwaves unit based results. If using *Unit Combat* only, the GM handwaves PC efforts until the *Final Confrontation*. If using both rule sets, *Critical Events* are resolved first (the results of which may bear upon *Unit Combat*), followed by *Unit vs Unit* battle.

Regardless of mix of rules adopted, all mass battles end in the *Final* Confrontation: an epic showdown between the party and enemy leader(s) as they fight for ultimate victory.



Party Spotlight

The following rules are intended to zero in on the PCs, highlighting the adventurers' exploits as the larger conflict surrounds them.

Two *Critical Events* occur each turn. By default the GM rolls 1d20 to determine which events arise (alternatively the GM might choose, using a timeline, geographic sequence, etc).

Most importantly, whatever situations arise, the PCs are the only characters available to deal with them (NPC allies, if any, are too busy managing other emergencies).

The GM decides on a case by case basis whether a *Critical Event* happens to a specific PC(s), random PCs, or whether the players choose who is involved. Some turns might not involve the whole party, if so, PCs who miss out this turn are prioritized next turn.

Critical Events are intended to cover a broad range of combat and non-combat scenarios, but not every entry will be appropriate for all battles. GMs are encouraged to swap out ill suited events with custom scenarios.

Each entry includes a suggested resolution method, which the GM should tweak to taste. By way of assistance, a simple "skill challenge" framework¹ appears below:

- GM rolls 2d6 or decides (moderate 5, difficult 8, hard 11) how many successes are needed to achieve the objective.
- Players suggest courses of action to progress the mission. GM decides what checks if any might be required.
- Subject to GM discretion, a PC cannot use the same attribute and/or skill twice in

a row. This is intended to encourage variety in approach, rather than repeating the same high percentage tactic over and over (which whilst statistically prudent, makes for a dull game).

- *Great Successes* count as two successes, *Terrible Failures* count as two fails.
- If the PCs fail 3 checks, the mission is unsuccessful.

Critical Events

(1) Assume Command

A high ranking official (infantry captain, militia head, scout sergeant, knight commander, siege crew boss, quartermaster, perhaps even the General?) is dead, incapacitated or otherwise indisposed, their forces in disarray as the enemy threatens to charge. Can the PCs step in and take control?

Resolution: a mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (difficult: 8 successes), focusing on Cha, Will, Leadership and Persuasion.

PC Impact: If the challenge is failed, PCs lose 1 point of Will or Cha (determine randomly).

Unit Impact: If successful one PC may spend a *Reroll die* to reroll a single unit roll this turn.

(2) A Worthy Foe

An enemy champion (witch hunter, veteran knight, skorn werebear, etc) or monstrous foe (owlbear, giant, dire wolf, etc) appears from the chaos, driving back PC forces. Can the adventurer defeat the champion and turn the tide?

Resolution: play out a dual between the PC and the champion. If the PC is reduced to zero hp, they are automatically killed (the champion ensures they are dead, in a manner calculated to devastate allied morale).

¹ For more on Skill Challenges, see David Shamp's *Skill Challenge Guide* on the LFG website.

PC Impact: per the dual.

Unit Impact: If successful, one enemy unit at the same location is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

(3) Death From Above

Siege weapons hammer the area the PCs are in with boulders, fire, toxic gas, ballista bolts, etc, raining death from above.

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (difficult: 8 successes), focusing on Dex, Will, Int, Con, Athletics and Acrobatics. Additionally, the PC must make a *Luck* (Dex) save or roll 1d12 on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table (LFG p.54).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, the closest allied unit is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

(4) Fire & Flame!

A large blaze has broken out nearby (building, wagon, corpse pile, trees, grasslands, etc), thick smoke wafting through the air. If the PCs don't take action, the fire will swiftly spread/grow into a raging inferno.

Resolution: the PCs must put out the fire and/or convince others to break away from the fighting to help them. A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (hard: 11 successes), focusing on Cha, Will, Str, Con, Leadership, Persuasion and Athletics.

PC Impact: If the challenge is failed, PCs lose 1 point of Str or Con (determine randomly).

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, all units at the location must make a *Move* check or be destroyed.

(5) Innocents in Peril

One or more unexpected non-combatants are in danger (eg 2d6 civilians being dragged away by the enemy, stowaway children cowering beneath a supply wagon about to be attacked, allied warrior's helm is knocked off revealing a highborn's underage heir). Will the PCs intervene?

Resolution: The PCs may choose not to intervene, but gain some infamy among their allies, imposing disadvantage on later Cha based checks. Alternatively the PCs may attempt a Group *Rescue* exploit (LFG p.48), then play out a combat with 2d4 infantry (per PC).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If successful, one unit automatically passes morale checks this turn (player's choice).

(6) Hold the Line!

Enemies are about to break through the shield wall or other defensive line where the PCs are fighting, can they hold the line?

Resolution: play out the melee for 2d6 rounds. The PCs must avoid being incapacitated until reinforcements arrive, fighting 1d3 foes (per PC) per round. Foes that survive one round are added to the next.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the same location is destroyed.

(7) A Friend in Need

Through the carnage, the PCs spot a wounded NPC friend slowly but inevitably being encircled by enemies as his/her allies are cut down. Can the PC save their friend in time?

Resolution: play out a melee with the NPC, the PCs, and 2d6 enemies (per PC).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: no effect.

(8) And My Axe

During a furious melee, a PC spots an exhausted soldier drop to both knees after felling multiple

foes. Behind him, another enemy readies her spear to skewer him. Will the PC intervene?

Resolution: The PC may choose not to intervene and fail this event. Alternatively, the PC may attempt a *Rescue* exploit (LFG p.48) to save the warrior, followed by combat with the female spearwoman (AC 15, 4 HD, 1d6+3 damage).

PC Impact: If saved, the grateful soldier pledges to repay his rescuer (PC gains a free random henchmen for 1 year). Once only, reroll repeats.

Unit Impact: no effect.



(9) Frantic Beasts

Nearby animals (war dogs, mules, chargers, supply horses with carts, etc) have been spooked by the death of their handlers, siege weapons, fire, foul weather, etc. Can the PCs help calm the beasts, or will they break free and wreak havoc? *Resolution*: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (moderate: 5 successes), focusing on Cha, Will, Str, Animal Lore, Leadership, and Athletics.

PC Impact: If the challenge is failed, PCs lose 1 point of Con or *Luck* (player's choice)

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, allied units at the same location cannot move this turn.

(10) With Me Brothers!

Soldiers fighting alongside the PC are losing heart due to recent setbacks (captain killed, suffered heavy losses, serious fatigue, etc), and are threatening to break. Can the PC rally them?

Resolution: Play out a melee with 1d4 enemies (heavy infantry), all of whom must be defeated. If at least one foe is slain in spectacular fashion (player describes) using a *Major exploit* (LFG p.48), a Cha or Will (Leadership) test causes troop morale to soar.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit is Broken.

(11) Traitorous Scum

Traitors have been hired or coerced to kill the PCs mid battle by an old nemesis, enemy forces, unknown threat, etc. Will the PCs survive the ambush from within?

Resolution: Determine surprise and play out the melee for 1d6+1 rounds. The PCs must avoid being incapacitated until help arrives, fighting 2d4 foes (per PC) armed with poison (50% *Fireblood*, 30% *Elderberry Toxin*, 20% *Ghoulsheen Admixture*; LFG p.33).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the location is destroyed.

(12) Fall Back!

As the battle unfolds, PCs and nearby soldiers are forced to withdraw, driven back by overwhelming odds. Can the adventurers escape?

Resolution: The withdrawal might be resolved as a Chase (LFG p.83), Party Retreat (LFG p.45) or skill challenge (difficult: 8 successes), focusing on Con, Int, Will, Athletics and Acrobatics.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the location is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

(13) Behind Enemy Lines

A fluke coincidence provides a fleeting chance to gain a battlefield advantage, if only the PCs can sneak behind enemy lines (to sabotage enemy supplies, assassinate scouts, gather crucial intel, etc). Can the PCs infiltrate enemy territory, get the job done, and make it back in one piece?

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (hard: 11 successes), focusing on Int, Dex, Con, Stealth and Wilderness Lore. If the mission is failed, a Chase (LFG p.83) is required to avoid capture or death.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: if successful, one allied unit automatically destroys their target this turn (players' choice; no *Armour* save, no *Bosses*).

(14) Right Place, Right Time

As the PC drops another foe, they spot disaster about to unfold a short distance away (battering ram or siege tower flounders when one of the handlers is killed, dying standard bearer can't raise her signal banner at a crucial time, riderless messenger horse with orders still in the saddlebag). Can the PC complete the task in time?

Resolution: Reaching the spot quickly requires a Str (Athletics) or Dex (Acrobatics) check (player's choice). A skill challenge (moderate: 5 successes)

focusing on Str, Dex, Will, Con, Leadership and Athletics allows the PC to finish what was started.

PC Impact: If the challenge is failed, PC loses 1 point of Dex.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the location is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

(15) Dark Ritual

Word somehow reaches the PCs in the midst of combat that an enemy warlock, sorceress, priest, etc is performing a dark ritual elsewhere on the battlefield (gathering a bowl of hearts to offer to the dark gods, etc). Can the PCs stop the ritual?

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (difficult: 8 successes), focusing on Int, Dex, Perc, Stealth, Arcane Lore and Gather Information. Once the secret ritual site is located, play out the combat with the enemy spellcaster (as *Sorcerer* LFG p.115, plus 1d4 enemies per PC).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, the GM determines the sorcery's effect.

(16) Sniper Hunt

A hidden sharpshooter (siege tower, tree line, valley ridge, high building, etc) is targeting the PC's area, protecting enemy champions and picking off key allied warriors (standard bearers, medics, etc). Can the PC eliminate the enemy sniper?

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge as the PC maneuverers for position (difficult: 8 successes), focusing on Perc, Dex, Int, Stealth, Wilderness Lore and Gather Information. On a fail, the PC is shot at (+7/2d8+4). If the skill challenge succeeds, the PC gets one chance to kill the sniper, otherwise they decamp to another battle location (attack roll vs AC 14, or a *Luck* (Dex) check, player's choice).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one important allied NPC is killed.

(17) Medic!

Through the smoky haze, urgent cries for a medic ring out as a dying NPC (messenger with critical orders, scout with information, highly respected sergeant good for morale, etc) is dragged to relative safety. The ally is critically injured and on the verge of death; can the PCs save him/her?

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (moderate: 5 successes), focusing on Int, Perc, Will, Apothecary, Insight and Gather Information. A healing kit or similar might be required at the GM's option. If successful, the NPC lives but remains unconsciousness. The PCs may choose to make a *Luck* (Int) check to stabilize the NPC at 1 hp (ie conscious) for a short time.

PC Impact: If the challenge is failed, PCs lose 1 point of *Luck*.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one random allied unit is destroyed (50%, no Armour save) or Broken (50%).

(18) Shields Up!

A barrage of arrows, spears, bolts, fire pots and other personal ranged weapons target the PCs' location. Soldiers without shields or that can't find cover drop like flies.

Resolution: A *Luck* (Dex) save is required to avoid 2d8+2 damage. On a terrible failure, also roll on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table. At the players' option, they may face the projectile storm with overt defiance (eg: Braveheart style) and roll their *Luck* save with disadvantage. If they still succeed, gain a +1 bonus on this turn's *Final Confrontation* check, and fame amongst the troops.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the same location is destroyed.

(19) Suicide Mission

A genuine suicide mission presents itself (hold the tide of enemies on the bridge so allies can escape, light the warning beacon atop the tower surrounded by foes, collapse the tunnel taking out the tide of giant rats as well as oneself, Hold the Door! etc, Will the PC sacrifice themselves for the greater good?

Resolution: The player chooses whether to complete this task. If they don't the event automatically fails. If they do, a great success *Luck* (Will or Con) save is required to succeed. If successful gain a +1 bonus on this turn's *Final Confrontation* check, and the PC's heroics become legend.

Either way, the player rolls 1d6 to determine the fate of their PC: (1) dies gloriously, (2-3) rolls 1d10 on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table and is captured for interrogation and torture, (4-6) rolls 1d6 on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table, is reduced to zero hp, and left for dead. The GM might improvise a rescue mission/adventure if appropriate.

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the same location is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

(20) In the Thick of It

The PCs are battling where the fighting is fiercest, hewing enemies left and right in a desperate bid to survive. But as one foe falls, another takes its place. How much longer can the PCs endure?

Resolution: A mix of roleplaying and skill challenge (hard: 11 successes), focusing on Str, Con, Will, Cha, Athletics and Leadership. Additionally, PCs suffer 3d6 + PC level damage, and 1d4 Str, Con or Will loss (determine randomly). If the skill challenge is successful, the damage and attribute loss is halved (round down).

PC Impact: as above.

Unit Impact: If unsuccessful, one allied unit at the same location is destroyed (no *Armour* save).

Event Points

The party's success or failure during *Critical Events* reflects the overall flow of the battle, moving PCs closer to (or further away from) the *Final Confrontation* (p.17). The PCs gain *Event Points* as outlined below, accumulating turn to turn.

EVENT POINTS	
Party succeeds	Gain 1 <i>Event Point</i> , and a +1
at both Critical	bonus on this turn's <i>Final</i>
Events.	Confrontation test.
Party succeeds	
at one <i>Critical</i>	Gain 1 <i>Event Point</i> .
Event.	
Party fails both	Lose 1 <i>Event Point</i> .
Critical Events.	

In addition to *Event Points*, the outcome of a *Critical Event* has a direct impact on the PCs involved, and might also affect *Unit Combat* results (if using those rules).



Incapacitated PCs

If all PCs are reduced to zero hp (or otherwise incapacitated) whilst dealing with a specific *Critical Event*, roll 1d6 (for each PC) to determine their fate: (1) *Dead*, (2-3) *Captured* for interrogation/torture/ransom, or (4-6) *Left for Dead*, but somehow make it back to allied territory (player explains). The GM might improvise a rescue scenario if other PCs remain uncaptured.

Sudden Twists

Combat in a mass battle is unlike normal small scale adventuring conflict. The PCs are in the thick of extreme danger; swept up in a gruesome throng of panicked shouts, slashing blades and deadly arrows. Amidst the chaos, injury and death threaten from all corners.

During a *Critical Event*, if combat is occurring nearby, the first time one of the PCs rolls a natural 1 or 20 on an attack roll (or other 1d20 check), a *Sudden Twist* is triggered. Roll 1d20:

SUDDEN TWIST	
1	<i>Duck!</i> A stray crossbow bolt or distant marksmen takes a pot shot at the PC (attack roll at +4, 2d8+1 damage).
2	<i>Incoming!</i> Somebody hurls a brace of fire pots in the PC's vicinity; a <i>Luck</i> (Dex) save is required to avoid 3d6 damage and being set on fire.
3	Allied Reinforcements appear from nearby trees, over a small rise, from another street, etc. If the PC is mid battle, enemies are automatically defeated (50% chance they are over run and slaughtered, 50% they flee).
4	<i>Dead Weight.</i> A hireling, henchmen, pet or important NPC accompanying the PC (if any) has been wounded and knocked unconscious for 1d3 hours. Can the PC keep them safe?
5	<i>Broken Weapon.</i> The PC's weapon is somehow destroyed (if magical it is damaged instead, not usable until repaired).
6	<i>Backstab.</i> A sneaky git stabs the PC in the back whilst they are preoccupied fighting others (1d6 + PC level damage).
7	<i>Lootin' Time</i> . The PC seizes the opportunity to quickly loot nearby bodies, gaining 1 x Carry Loot (LFG p.136).

8	<i>Band of Brothers.</i> Rallying cheers from the PC's surrounding allies reinvigorates the adventurer (restore up to half of lost hit points).
9	<i>Corpse Hazard.</i> The PC threatens to become entangled in the growing pile of dead and dying underfoot (Dex (Acrobatics) check or fall prone, plus a further Str check to avoid dropping held items).
10	<i>Tide of Battle.</i> Sheer numbers threaten to force the PC and their opponent into dangerous terrain (eg toppled off a wall, thrown into a raging river, knocked down a steep slope, pinned against a rock, pushed down a sewer chute, etc). A Str (Athletics) or Dex (Acrobatics) check resists.
11	<i>Crushing Intervention.</i> A catapult stone, heavy warhorse, hurtling wagon or other large moving object threatens to crush the PC. A <i>Luck</i> (Dex) save is required to avoid being reduced to zero hp.
12	<i>Selfless Protector</i> . If the PC is reduced to zero hp sometime during the mass battle, a nameless solider automatically intervenes to negate the attack. The soldier dies in the process (player describes). Once only, reroll repeats.
13	World of Hurt. A spear, javelin or blackpowder weapon strikes the PC in a vital location, causing serious injury (roll 1d6 on the <i>Injuries & Setbacks</i> table).
14	<i>Spoils of War.</i> As the PC fells their latest foe, a valuable object is somehow revealed on their person (spills from a pouch, hangs about their neck, etc; 1 x Valuables, LFG p.147).
15	Shaken Soul. A series of dreadful atrocities personally witnessed by the PC threatens to traumatize them. A Luck (Will) save avoids a serious madness: "Fair warning sister, I fought

	well just now, but dare not rely on my blade. Sometimes I freeze mid battle, just for a few moments, my mind
	locked with old terrors." (LFG p.91).
16	<i>Fearsome Charge!</i> A small force of enemy cavalry or war beasts (pack of <i>Hounds, Boars, Dire Wolves</i> , etc), thunder through the area, leaving carnage in their wake! The PC must make a <i>Luck</i> (Con) save or roll on the <i>Injuries & Setbacks</i> table. NPCs in the vicinity are killed or scattered.
17	<i>Extreme Terrain.</i> Terrain the PC is standing on or near becomes dangerous (a wall falls down, forest wildfire, bridge collapse, rockslide, choking smoke bomb, etc). The PC suffers 6d6 damage (an appropriate <i>Luck</i> save reduces damage by half). nearby NPCs are similarly affected.
18	<i>Obscurement.</i> A vision obscurement floods the area (heavy smoke from nearby fires, an alchemical smoke bomb, rolling fog, night time torches are extinguished by freak winds, etc), limiting vision to 20 ft and imposing a 33% miss chance on attacks. Checks relating to hiding or escape gain advantage.
19	<i>Snap Opportunity.</i> A distant enemy champion or other important NPC is exposed for a moment through the melee. A Dex check allows the PC to take a single action against the NPC.
20	Sorcery. An enemy spell caster or warrior with a one shot magical item unleashes it upon the PC and nearby allies. Roll 1d6 (as 7 th level Magic User): (1) Lightning Bolt, (ii) Wall of Fire, (iii) Web, (iv) Heat Metal, (v) Hold Person, (vi) Blindness. There is a 20% chance of a DDM effect.

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Unit Combat

Before the mass battle commences, the GM determines:

- 1. Which types of units each side has, and how many of them,
- 2. The *Battle Map*, and
- 3. Unit starting locations.

Number & Types of Units

For ease of play, standard units are broken down into five categories (see p.15): *militia, infantry, heavy infantry, archers,* and *cavalry.* Five examples of special units are also provided as a guide (*scouts, veteran company, siege weapon battery, ogre warband* and *dragon*). GMs are encouraged to create/customise their own special units to reflect their campaign.

The GM decides the number and type of units each side has. For example, one side might have 4 archer units, 5 infantry units and 2 cavalry units. The number of individuals within each unit is abstracted, but GMs might like to describe approx numbers for roleplaying purposes (eg the above force might consist of 2,000 soldiers - about 1,000 men-at-arms, 700 archers, and 300 mounted knights).

Map & Starting Locations

The GM decides how many battle locations there are, bearing in mind the map, number of units and *Critical Events* the GM has planned (if any).

Unit positions within a location may be as abstract or precise as the GM wants them to be, from basic sketches to gridded play mats with miniatures, 3D terrain, counters, etc.

By way of example, battle locations for a pitched battle in an open field might include (i) the front, (ii) centre, (iii) rear, (iv) right flank, (v) left flank, and (vi) supply lines.

Locations for a city siege might include (i) the main gate, (ii) eastern walls, (iii) streets, (iv) sewers, (v) *Temple of Graxus*, and (vi) the *Stargazer's Citadel*.

Turn Order

A turn of *Unit vs Unit* combat is resolved in the following order. Each side alternates activating individual units until each phase is complete.

- 1. Ranged Attacks
- 2. Movement
- 3. Melee Attacks
- 4. Victory Points

If also using the *Party Spotlight* rules, resolve *Critical Events* before Ranged Attacks, as PC outcomes may impact on unit combat.





(1) Ranged Attacks

To make a ranged attack, a ranged unit that is not in melee chooses a target and rolls 2d6. If the target is in significant cover (forest, rock formations, trenches, walls, barricades, heavy smoke, etc) apply a -1 penalty. Targeting a unit in melee with another unit affects both units.

RANGED ATTACK

2 - 4	<i>Ambush!</i> The attacking force is ambushed by hidden enemies; immediately place a (bonus) enemy infantry unit at the same location.
5 - 7	<i>Defiant.</i> The target weathers the storm with few losses.
8	<i>Shaken.</i> The target must make a <i>Morale</i> check or break.
9+	<i>Rain of Doom.</i> The target is destroyed (subject to <i>Armour</i> save, if any).

(2) Movement

Unit movement between battle locations is not always automatic. The following rules apply.

- Players (for allies) and the GM (for enemies) take turns moving units until all units have had the opportunity to move.
- A engaged unit (in melee with an enemy unit) cannot move until the enemy unit is destroyed or broken.
- Subject to difficult terrain, an unengaged unit may move to an adjacent location, or engage the closest enemy unit (in the same location) without a move check.
- If the unit intends to move into or pass through difficult terrain, the GM may call for a *Move* check.
- Moving to engage a unit other than the closest enemy requires a *Move check*.

To make a *Move* check, roll 2d6 and apply any modifiers. If the score is equal to or higher than the unit's *Move* attribute, it engages the intended target or moves to the intended location. If failed, the unit fails to move this turn.



Movement Modifiers

Move check modifiers for different terrain types are noted below.

MOVEMENT MODIFIERS	
Terrain Type	Modifier
<i>Favourable</i> (roads, paths, game trail, shortcut through the backstreets, secure battlements with no enemies).	+1 bonus
<i>Average</i> (relatively open plains, light woods, low hills, skirmishing melee, occasional pot shots from enemies).	-
<i>Difficult</i> (trackless forest, river crossing, rising hills littered with scree, winding underground tunnels, "in the thick of it" melee, pinned down by unrelenting arrow volleys, part of the building is on fire).	-1 penalty
<i>Very Difficult</i> (mountains, steep valley, thick jungle like plant life, swamp, bodies pilling up while surrounded by foes, pushing through a fleeing crowd of civilians, burning rubble strewn streets with heavy smoke).	-2 penalty
<i>Impassable</i> without special gear or removing the enemy first (river, lake, cliffs, chasm, blazing inferno, collapsed bridge, courtyard under heavy catapult fire, enemy fortifications).	GM's call



(3) Melee Attacks

Players (for the allies) and the GM (for the enemy) take turns making melee attacks until all units have had the opportunity to do so. To make an attack, roll 2d6, apply modifiers, and consult the *Melee Attack* table.

MELEE ATTACK	
2 - 3	<i>Crushing Defeat.</i> The attacker is destroyed.
4	<i>Costly Mistake</i> . The attacker must make a <i>Morale</i> check or break.
5	<i>Outmaneuvered.</i> The target gains a terrain advantage or the attacker is forced into less favourable terrain (target's choice).
6	<i>Steady now.</i> Casualties on both sides, but neither gives any real ground.
7	<i>Drive them Back!</i> The target is forced into less favourable terrain, or the attacker gains more favourable terrain (attacker's choice).
8	<i>Shaken.</i> The target must make a <i>Morale</i> check or break.
9+	<i>Drink from Their Skulls.</i> The target is destroyed (subject to <i>Armour</i> save, if any).

Melee Modifiers

Apart from unit traits, the following melee modifiers apply. The GM determines whether modifiers stack.

MELEE MODIFIERS	
Attacker outnumbers target 2:1 or more	+1
<i>Attacker</i> with terrain or positioning advantage (high ground, target trapped in dead end street, etc)	+1
<i>Attacker</i> with terrain disadvantage (crossing river, mud, frozen lake, tangled undergrowth, fighting upstairs, scaling castle walls, heavy smoke, etc)	-1

(4) Victory Points

Each turn, the overall result for unit combat generates *Victory Points* for the party's side. Winning and holding battle momentum moves the PCs closer to the *Final Confrontation*, whilst losing momentum stalls progress. The PCs' side gains *Victory Points* as outlined below, accumulating turn to turn.

VICTORY POINTS	
Twice as many enemy units as allied units were destroyed this turn.	Gain 2 <i>Event Points.</i>
At least as many enemy units as allied units were destroyed this turn.	Gain 1 <i>Event Point</i> .
More allied units than enemy units were destroyed this turn.	Zero <i>Event Points</i> .

Miscellaneous

A number of miscellaneous factors relevant to unit combat are outlined below.

Broken Units

A unit that becomes *Broken* immediately moves to an adjacent location with the fewest enemies. For the remainder of the mass battle, the *Broken* unit suffers disadvantage on all tests, and attacks against it gain advantage. A *Broken* unit that destroys an enemy unit is restored to normal status.

Destroyed Units

Destroyed units are removed from play. If a PC was directly involved in a destroyed unit that is destroyed (eg if using *Critical Events*, etc), they automatically escape to an adjacent battle location, but must make a *Luck* save or roll on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table.

If more information is required about precise unit losses (perhaps for future mass battles), roll 1d4 on the *Survivors* table below:

	SURVIVORS
1	<i>No survivors.</i> The entire unit was mercilessly slaughtered.
2	<i>30% Survive</i> , but all have incapacitating injuries (broken limbs, severe organ damage, acute shock, etc).
3	50% <i>Survive</i> . Of these, half fled the battlefield with minor wounds, the remainder are incapacitated. If this unit is replenished for a future mass battle, it has a 50% chance of retaining prior advancements (p.17).
4	<i>70% Survive.</i> Of these, three quarters successfully fled the battlefield with minor wounds, the remainder are incapacitated. If this unit is replenished for a future mass battle, it retains prior advancements (p.17).

Party Resource Attrition

By default PCs are ignored in unit combat, or are taken into account via *Critical Events*.

Alternatively, the GM may randomly determine the mass battle's impact on the party as they fight in the background: roll 2d6 and see below. Check for 1d4 PCs at the end of each mass battle turn. If a PC is reduced to zero hp or otherwise incapacitated, see p.9.

PARTY RESOURCE ATTRITION	
2 - 3	<i>Serious Injury.</i> PC rolls 1d8 on the <i>Injuries & Setbacks</i> table.
4	<i>Setback.</i> PC rolls 1d10+6 on the <i>Injuries & Setbacks</i> table.
5	<i>Damaged Gear.</i> PC's weapon or shield is damaged (unusable until repaired).
6	<i>Testing.</i> A random class ability is expended.
7	<i>Cuts & Bruises.</i> PC suffers 1d6 + level damage.
8	<i>Bloodied & Battered.</i> PC's current hp is reduced by 1d4 hp per level.
9	Dig Deep. The PC loses 1 Reroll die.
10	<i>Close Call.</i> The PC loses 1 point of <i>Luck.</i>
11-12	<i>Spoils of War.</i> The PC obtains a treasure (1 x Valuables, LFG p.147).

Magic

Given the very large numbers of soldiers involved in mass battles, a small number of spell casters are unlikely to alter the battle in any significant way. Magic becomes more important when zooming in for PC combat. Alternatively, treat a "unit" of spellcasters as a *Siege Weapon Battery*.

Siege Weapons vs PCs

Siege weapons are generally too imprecise to aim at individual PCs during a mass battle. If they are somehow targeted however, a *Luck* (Dex) save is required to avoid being reduced to zero hp.





Units

Standard Units include *Militia, Infantry, Heavy Infantry, Archers* and *Cavalry.* GMs are encouraged to tinker with the categories as desired (eg: light vs heavy cavalry).

Special Units cover everything that isn't a standard unit, but has the potential to influence the battle or is otherwise important. Examples might include scouts, siege weapons, an ogre warband, a dragon, or a ragtag band of refugees the PCs must protect. Some examples of *Special* units are included below.

All units have four attributes:

- *Armour*: if a unit is destroyed, roll 2d6. On this number or higher, the attack or effect is negated.
- *Move*: relative unit speed and agility. If a *Move* check is required, roll 2d6 and score this number or higher to succeed.
- *Morale*: when forced to check for morale, roll 2d6 and score this number or higher, otherwise the unit is *Broken* (p.13).
- *Trait*: every unit comes with one or more traits. Some examples are provided below.

Standard Units

Archers

Lightly armoured, swift travelling ranged attackers. Decent morale.

Armour	10+
Move	5+
Morale	8+
Trait	May make <i>Ranged Attacks</i> into
	other battle locations (maximum
	range determined by the GM).

Cavalry

Heavily armed and armoured, extremely fast. Resolute.

Armour	8+
Move	7+
Morale	6+
Trait	May move twice per turn. +1
	bonus on <i>Attack</i> rolls, and targets
	suffer a 1 point <i>Armour</i> penalty.

Heavy Infantry

Heavily armed and armoured, slow, good morale. *Armour* 8+

Trait	+1 bonus on <i>Attack</i> rolls and reroll 1's (once per attack).
Morale T	
Move	8+
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Infantry

Moderately armed and armoured, decent morale. The average soldier unit.

Armour	9+
Move	7+
Morale	8+
Trait	+1 bonus on <i>Attack</i> rolls.

Militia

Lightly armoured, poorly equipped and organised, easily broken. At least they're cheap.

Armour	NA
Move	9+
Morale	10+
Trait	-1 penalty on <i>Attack</i> rolls.

Special Units

Dragon

A flying juggernaut that rains fire on its hapless foes.

Armour	5+
Move	4+, Flying
Morale	3+
Trait	May move twice per turn. May
	attack twice per turn and uses
	d10s instead of d6s. Usually has
	positioning advantage (flying).



Ogre Warband

A small wark	oand of giant kin.
Armour	7+
Move	7+
Morale	7+
Trait	+2 bonus on <i>Attack</i> rolls.

Scouts

A stealthy band of swift moving pathfinders. Armour Special Move 4 +Morale 6 +Trait Once per turn, enable another unit in the same or adjacent location to move twice. Unengaged Scouts have a 7+ Armour save vs Ranged Attacks.

Siege Weapon Battery

A battery of catapults, ballistae, trebuchets, cannons, etc. 10 +Armour

Move 9 +Morale 8 +Trait May attack any reasonable target on the battlefield (GM's call). +2bonus on Ranged Attack rolls vs humanoid or creatures, +1 vs colossal. Targets

Veteran Company

A rare contingent of elite warriors, well armed and armoured.

giant

suffer a 1 point Armour penalty.

sized

Armour	8+
Move	7+
Morale	4+
Trait	+1 bonus on <i>Attack</i> rolls. May
	attack twice per turn.

NPC Stats

Archers, AC 11, HD 1, Long bow 1d8, 19: as weapon, S10 D11 C10 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. Secondary shortsword.

Cavalry, AC 16, HD 1, Lance 2d4+2, 19: as weapon, S13 D10 C13 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 60 ft mounted on Warhorse. Secondary Sword/Axe/Hammer. Shield may be sacrificed to negate one attack.

Champion, AC 14, HD 4, Greatsword 1d12+3, 19: as weapon, S16 D10 C14 I10 P10 W13 Ch10 L5, My 30 ft. One random ability from p.133 Midlands Low Magic Sandbox Setting.

Heavy Infantry, AC 15, HD 1, Sword, Axe or Hammer 1d8+1, 19: as weapon, S13 D10 C12 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. If armed with a shield (50%) may sacrifice it to negate one attack.

Infantry, AC 13, HD 1, Spear 1d6+1 or Polearm 1d10, 19: as weapon, S11 D10 C11 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft.

Militia, AC 10, HD 1d6 hp, Club 1d6 or Spear 1d6+1, 19: as weapon, S10 D10 C10 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft.

Ogre, AC 12, HD 4+3, Spiked Club 2d8, 19: special, S19 D8 C15 I6 P7 W8 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft. When *staggered*, an ogre enters a murderous rage, gaining a free attack against every foe within reach. On a 19+ attack roll, the target rolls on the *Injuries* & Setbacks table (Luck (Con) save resists). 10 foot reach.

Scouts, AC 12, HD 1, Short bow 1d6+1 or Sword 1d8, 19: as weapon, S11 D13 C12 I10 P13 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. Advantage on stealth and perception related checks.

Veteran, AC 15, HD 2, Greatsword 1d12+2 or Sword/Axe/Hammer & Shield 1d8+2, 19: as weapon, S14 D10 C13 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L5, My 30 ft. If armed with a shield may sacrifice it to negate one attack.

Warhorse, AC 15, HD 3, Hoof 1d8+1, 19: trample for double damage and knock prone, S19 D13 C16 I12 P10 W13 Ch6 L6, Mv 60 ft.

Unit Advancements

At the GM's option, units that survive one or more mass battles might gain one of the following advancements (roll 1d10):

UNIT ADVANCEMENT	
1	<i>Pathfinders</i> ; once per mass battle, turn a failed <i>Move</i> check into a success.
2	<i>Lucky Mascot</i> ; once per mass battle, provided the mascot still lives, ignore the unit's first destroyed result.
3	<i>Manly Grit</i> ; lower the unit's <i>Armour</i> value by 1 point.
4	<i>Rock Steady</i> ; lower the unit's <i>Morale</i> by 3 points (minimum 3).
5	<i>Proven Tactics</i> ; the unit ignores <i>Ambush!</i> (ranged) and <i>Crushing Defeat</i> (melee) attack results.
6	<i>No Mercy</i> ; enemy units that must check <i>Morale</i> due to an attack from this unit automatically break.
7	<i>Rage of the Iron God</i> ; attack twice per turn instead of once.
8	<i>Weaponmasters</i> , roll d8s instead of d6s on attack rolls.

9	<i>Heroic Aura</i> ; allied units in the same location (including this unit) gain advantage on <i>Morale</i> checks.
10	GM Special: create a new trait for the unit.

Final Confrontation

At the end of each mass battle turn, the GM rolls 3d6 plus either the party's *Event Points* or *Victory Points* (whichever is higher) to determine if the battle moves to the end phase.

If the result is **18 or more**, the *Final Confrontation* occurs. If 17 or less, continue with *Critical Events* and/or *Unit Combat.* At the GM's option, if the party has already faced 6 turns of mass battle (or some other number the GM determines), the *Final Confrontation* automatically occurs.

Final Confrontation is the battle's ultimate climactic encounter; when the party goes head to head with the enemy *Boss* (and perhaps bodyguards, etc). The GM determines the details of this set piece encounter. Unless the GM rules otherwise, whichever side wins the *Final Confrontation* also wins the mass battle.



UNIT COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat Order

- 1. Ranged Attacks
- 2. Movement
- 3. Melee Attacks
- 4. Final Confrontation Check

MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

<i>Favourable</i> (roads, paths, game trail, shortcut through the backstreets, secure battlements with no enemies).	+1 bonus
<i>Average</i> (relatively open plains, light woods, low hills, skirmishing melee, occasional pot shots from enemies).	-
<i>Difficult</i> (trackless forest, rising hills littered with scree, winding underground tunnels, "in the thick of it" melee, pinned down by unrelenting arrow volleys, part of the building is on fire).	-1 penalty
<i>Very Difficult</i> (mountains, steep valley, thick jungle like plant life, swamp, bodies pilling up while surrounded by foes, pushing through a fleeing crowd of civilians, burning rubble strewn streets with heavy smoke).	-2 penalty
<i>Impassable</i> without special gear or removing the enemy first (river, lake, cliffs, chasm, blazing inferno, collapsed bridge, courtyard under heavy catapult fire, enemy fortifications).	GM decides

Movement

A engaged unit cannot move until the enemy unit is destroyed or broken. Moving to engage a unit other than the closest enemy requires a *Move check.* If a unit intends to move into or pass through difficult terrain, the GM may call for a *Move* check.

Broken Units

A unit that becomes *Broken* immediately moves to an adjacent location with the fewest enemies. For the remainder of the mass battle, the *Broken* unit suffers disadvantage on all tests, and attacks against it gain advantage. A *Broken* unit that destroys an enemy unit is restored to normal status.

RANGED ATTACK	
2 - 4	<i>Ambush!</i> The attacking force is ambushed by hidden enemies; immediately place a (bonus) enemy infantry unit at the same location.
5 - 7	<i>Defiant.</i> The target weathers the storm with few losses.
8	<i>Shaken.</i> The target must make a <i>Morale</i> check or break.
9+	Rain of Doom. The target is destroyed.

MELEE ATTACK Crushing Defeat. The attacker is 2-3 destroyed. Costly Mistake. The attacker must 4 make a *Morale* check or break. Outmaneuvered. The target gains a terrain advantage or the attacker is 5 forced into less favourable terrain (target's choice). Steady now. Casualties on both sides, 6 but neither gives any real ground. Drive them Back! The target is forced into less favourable terrain, or the 7 attacker gains more favourable terrain (attacker's choice). Shaken. The target must make a 8 Morale check or break. Drink from their Skulls. The target is 9+destroyed.

MELEE MODIFIERS

Attacker outnumbers target 2:1 or more	+1
<i>Attacker</i> with terrain or positioning advantage (high ground, target trapped in dead end street, etc)	+1
<i>Attacker</i> with terrain disadvantage (crossing river, mud, frozen lake, tangled undergrowth, fighting upstairs, scaling castle walls, heavy smoke, etc)	-1

5e Conversion Notes

Convert to 5e by implementing the following:

- (i) Replace all *Luck* saves with the appropriate Attribute save (eg a *Luck* (Dex) save becomes a Dex save).
- (ii) DCs are set by threat level. For Minor threat the DC is 10, for Moderate threat 15, and for Major threat 20.
- (iii) For a "great success", the PC rolls with disadvantage, or must beat the DC by 5 or more (GM's call). For a "terrible failure", they must fail the check by 10 or more (or natural 1).
- (iv) For *Injuries & Setbacks*, use the table on p.20.

NPC Stats

Archers, AC 14, HP 2d8+2, Longbow +3/1d8+1, S12 D13 C12 I10 W11 Ch10, Mv 30 ft. PP 12, CR 1/8 (25 xp).

Cavalry, AC 18, HP 8d8+16, 2 x Lance/Greatsword +5/2d6+3, S16 D11 C14 I11 W11 Ch15, Mv 60 ft mounted on warhorse. PP 10, Saves Con +4/Wis +2, CR 3 (700 xp).

Champion, AC 17, HP 15d8+45, Spear +7/2d8+4, S18 D15 C16 I10 W12 Ch15, Mv 30 ft. PP 11, Saves Str +7/Dex +5/Con +6, Athletics +10, Intimidation +5, CR 5 (1,800 xp). Adv on saves vs fear.

Heavy Infantry, AC 17, HP 5d8+10, Greathammer +5/2d6+2, S15 D10 C15 I10 W11 Ch10, Mv 30 ft. PP 10, Athletics +5, CR 2 (450 xp).

Infantry, AC 15, HP 2d8+2, Halberd+3/1d10+1 or Javelin +3/1d6+1, S13 D12 C12 I10 W11 Ch10, Mv 30 ft. PP 12, Athletics +3, CR 1/8 (25 xp). *Militia*, AC 12, HP 2d8, Spear +2/1d8, S10 D10 C10 I10 W10 Ch10, Mv 30 ft. PP 10, CR 1/8 (25 xp).

Ogre, AC 11, HP 7d10+21, Greatclub +6/2d8+4 or Javelin 2d6+4, S19 D8 C16 I5 W7 Ch7, Mv 40 ft. Darkvision 60 ft, PP 8, CR 2 (450 xp).



Scouts, AC 13, HP 3d8+3, Multiattack 2 x Shortsword +4/1d6+2 or Longbow +4/1d8+2, S11 D14 C12 I11 W13 Ch11, Mv 30 ft. PP 15, Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5, CR 1/2 (100 xp). Adv on Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on sight or hearing.

Veteran, AC 17, HP 9d8+18, 2 x Longword +5/1d8+3 or Heavy Crossbow +3/1d10+1, S16 D13 C14 I10 W11 Ch10, Mv 30 ft. PP 12, Athletics +5, Perception +2, CR 3 (700 xp).

Warhorse, AC 11, HP 3d10+3, Hooves +6/2d6+4, S18 D12 C13 I2 W12 Ch7, Mv 60 ft. PP 11, CR 1/2 (100 xp). Trampling Charge: if move 20 ft in a straight line, DC 14 Str save or prone (if successful, bonus attack with Hooves).

1d20	INJURIES & SETBACKS
1	Eye Injury. You have disadvantage on Perception/Investigation checks that rely on sight (blind if both eyes). Roll 1d20, on a 6+ the eye is damaged and can be mended with <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or two months of rest. Otherwise the eye is lost. A <i>Regenerate</i> spell is required to restore a lost eye.
2	Arm or Hand Injury. You can no longer hold anything with two hands, and you can hold only a single object at a time. Roll 1d20, on a 6+ the limb is damaged and can be mended with <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or two months of rest. Otherwise the limb is lost (1d6: 1-3 hand, 4-5: below elbow, 6: arm). A <i>Regenerate</i> spell is required to restore a lost limb.
3	Leg or Foot Injury. Your move speed is halved and you require a crutch or peg leg to walk. You have disadvantage on movement based Dex checks. Roll 1d20, on a 6+ the limb is damaged and can be mended with <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or two months of rest. Otherwise the limb is lost (1d6: 1-3 foot, 4-6: below knee). A <i>Regenerate</i> spell is required to restore a lost limb.
4	Ear Injury. You have disadvantage on Perception/Investigation checks that rely on hearing (deaf if both ears). Roll 1d20, on a 6+ the ear is damaged and can be mended with <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or two months of rest. Otherwise the ear is lost. A <i>Regenerate</i> spell is required to restore a lost ear.
5	Internal Bleeding. Whenever you attempt an action in combat, you must make a Con or Wis check vs DC 10 (your choice). If unsuccessful, you lose your action. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 3d6 days of rest cures the injury.
6	Broken Ribs. Whenever you suffer physical damage, you must make a Con or Wis check vs DC 10 (your choice). On a failed check, you lose your next action. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 3d6 days of rest mends the injury.
7	Nasty Scar. You gain a nasty looking scar on your head, neck, hands or other location not easily concealed. You have disadvantage on most Charisma checks (GM discretion). A <i>Regenerate</i> spell is required to remove the scar.
8	Swelling on the Brain . You suffer madness (1d6: 1-3 indefinite, 4-6 long term). The madness subsides as usual or <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> removes it.
9	Damaged Weapon . A weapon or item you are holding is damaged. Until repaired, the item cannot be used, imposes disadvantage or suffers some other penalty the DM determines. Magical items have a 50% chance to negate this effect.
10	Damaged Armour. Armour you are wearing is damaged. Until repaired, your armour provides only half the normal AC bonus (round down). Magical items have a 50% chance to negate this effect.
11	Damaged Magical Item. A randomly determined magical item (not a weapon or amour) is damaged. Until repaired, any attempt to use the item requires an Int check (DC 15). On a failure the DM improvises a setback or rolls on the <i>Wand of Wonder</i> chart.
12	Muscle Tear. Lose 1d4 Str, Dex or Con. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 1d8 days of rest mends the injury.
13	Head Injury. Lose 1d4 Int, Perc, Will or Cha. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 1d8 days of rest mends the injury.
14	Diseased Wound. Your hit point maximum is immediately reduced by 1d10, and again every morning the wound persists. If your hit point maximum reaches zero you die. <i>Cure Minor</i>

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	<i>Injury</i> mends the wound. Alternatively tending with the Medicine skill cures the wound after 1d3 days.
15	Sprained Ankle. You must make a Dex check (DC 15) if you try to charge, jump or move twice in one round. If you fail the check, you fall prone. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 1d6 days rest mends the injury.
16	System Shock. You have disadvantage on initiative checks. <i>Cure Minor Injury</i> or 1d3 days rest mends the injury.
17+	Minor Scar. A minor scar has no significant adverse effect, in fact after a few ales some folks might even be impressed by it. Some scars fade over time, others might require the <i>Regenerate</i> spell to erase completely.

Adapting to Permanent Injuries

In the absence of healing magic, an adventurer suffering permanent injuries will find ways to adapt over time (including hook hands, peg legs, adjusting to one eye, etc). The GM is encouraged reduce or eliminate penalties after one or more periods of downtime retraining.





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