

Future War Commander

Game Concepts

It's always useful when reading a new set of rules to understand some of the concepts used in the game. This section will hopefully do just that!

Overview

Players alternate between turns, with turns being broken down into three phases. Play continues until either one side reaches its objectives or it breaks and withdraws from the battlefield as a result of suffering too many casualties. The game will also end when the last turn of a scenario has been played or one side concedes defeat.

The first phase of a turn is the initiative phase and allows troops in close proximity to the enemy to respond to their immediate situation without having to wait for orders to be issued. The command phase is where command units attempt to issue orders to their troops and if successful, the troops carry out actions such as move or fire. The command system represents the core of the game and allows the unpredictable nature of combat to be simulated in a simple yet elegant way. The third phase is the final phase of a turn where troops recover from poor morale and players determine whether any scenario objectives have been achieved.

The different types of action in the game are resolved in exactly the same way, so troops firing small-arms are calculated the same as tanks firing guns which are calculated the same as artillery firing a barrage. Not only does this allow for very fluid game play, but it also allows troops to support one another by accumulating sufficient hits against enemy units in a turn to be able to knock them out of the game. No longer do the different arms of service act independently of one another, but players should use combined-arms to get the most out of their troops, and ultimately, the game.

Units, Formations & Battlegroups

Each miniature, or stand of miniatures if they are mounted on bases, is referred to as a *Unit*. A unit represents a squad of infantry, or a single vehicle or gun. This gives a realistic simulation where what you see on the table is what you get in real life. However, you can also play the game at a higher level, where each unit represents a platoon of infantry or vehicles, or a battery of guns. Whilst this is a more abstract method of play, it does allow you to fight larger battles without needing loads of miniatures. In addition, the game can be played at the skirmish level, where each miniature represents one man.

A *Formation* is a convenient term to use for all the units you will issue orders to at any one time during a turn. Formations aren't fixed as in other games, units can be in a formation one turn, then you can split them up into three different formations the next turn. There are also no restrictions on the distance each unit can be within a formation as this is built into the command system. Essentially, the further away a unit is from a command unit, the more difficult it will be to order - simple!

Finally, all the formations under your command are said to be a *Battlegroup*.

Attacks, Hits & Saves

All units in the game have three main stats: *Attacks*, *Hits* and *Saves*. Attacks indicate the offensive capability of the unit when it opens fire. This could be infantry firing small-arms, tanks firing guns, or aircraft firing rockets. Whenever you use your attacks against an enemy unit, your opponent will get to make a saving roll. Save values represent the armour of the unit. If an attack isn't saved, it causes a hit against the unit and a unit can only take a certain number of hits before it is knocked-out of the game. This is the *hits* value of the unit and shouldn't be confused with the number of hits it has taken. Incidentally, hits inflicted against a unit are removed at the end of the turn, so there is no major bookkeeping in the game except for units that are suppressed.

Suppression, Fall-Back & Knock-Out

Units that take hits in a turn are likely to keep their heads down until the firing dies down. This is called *Suppression* and it affects the morale of your troops. Should units take further hits when they are suppressed, they will *Fall Back*. They really aren't happy about coming under fire again and try to get out of the way. There is the possibility that they will run away if they fall back too far at any one time, in which case they are knocked-out.

Knocked-Out is a convenient term used to describe units that are no longer fit for battle. Units that are knocked-out of the game can either be removed from the table (recommended for infantry units) or they can be left on the table and marked with dyed cotton wool. This looks a lot better and will remind players how many units they have lost during the game!

Testing For Casualties

The rules use the same basic steps when testing for casualties, whether that be infantry firing at infantry, tanks firing at tanks, or artillery firing a barrage.

1. take the attack value of each unit attacking the same target;
2. apply any modifiers to the attack value of each unit, then roll this number of dice, grouped by the score to hit;
3. one hit is achieved for each die roll equal to or greater than the score required to hit the target;
4. the opposing player should roll one die for each hit taken in the current attack - one hit is saved for each score equal to or greater than the save value of the unit;
5. if the total number of unsaved hits against the target unit is equal to or greater than its *hits* value, it is knocked-out, otherwise place a marker next to the unit to indicate the number of unsaved hits against it;
6. roll one die for each unsaved hit taken in the current attack (unless the unit was knocked-out);
7. the unit will become suppressed if any of the die score equal to or greater than the score required to hit the unit;
8. if the unit is already suppressed, total the scores of the dice and the unit will fall-back this distance in centimetres directly away from the nearest visible attacking unit;

Optional Rules

There are several optional rules in the book that add more detail to the game - it is up to you whether you use them or not, but remember to agree with your opponent before the game if you intend to use any.

Treatise 41/A

The Correct Application of Super-Heavy Armour in Combined-Arms Offensive Operations

Most Super-Heavy vehicles, whether tracked or walking, are often the slowest element in an army, or even upon the whole battlefield. They thus require special deployment considerations lest the logistics required to mobilise these behemoths go to waste. The defined role for our Super-Heavy armour is to destroy the enemy's toughest strong-points, to break defences that he considers impenetrable, and to open the path for breakthroughs by other elements of the army.

Thus careful attention must be given to denying your opponent knowledge of where these assets will be put to use. If your adversary discovers where and when your heavy armour will strike, he will move to frustrate your efforts, from interdicting vital transit routes to even relocating his defensive focus away from the lumbering titans. The morale effect upon the rest of the army caused by the absence of promised Super-Heavy support can be considerable during an attack.

When an attack commences, Super-Heavy vehicles should become active even as the artillery and/or air bombardment is underway, engaging targets pre-selected by the army commander in a direct role. Many Super-Heavy units have specialised roles, so again, forward planning is the key to optimum utilisation of these most expensive resources.

During the advance by ground forces towards enemy lines, Super-Heavy vehicles can be used to move forwards upon the enemy positions alongside conventional troops and vehicles. Heavy walkers can be particularly effective at crossing obstacles, and manoeuvring around difficult terrain. Care must be taken not to expose them to excessive fire; canny opponents will lay traps and site hidden weaponry specifically to waylay approaching Super-Heavy vehicles. Remember that the morale effects upon both your own troops and that of the enemy can be so easily reversed by the sudden destruction of such a powerful presence on the battlefield.

Once breakthrough is achieved, most Super-Heavy Vehicles will be ill-suited to commit to a pursuit, and will be too slow to advance on to the enemy flanks and rear. Resources should instead be focused upon supplying lighter forces for exploitation. If necessary, Super Heavy vehicles can be used to consolidate the position and guard against potential counterattacks that might cut-off your units within enemy territory. See treatise 41/B- "*The Correct Application of Super-Heavy Armour in Defensive Operations.*"

Colonel Leigh Spence, Marine Corps, 29th August 2094, Retired

Visibility

Visibility in the game is based around line-of-sight (LOS). If you can trace a straight line from one unit to another unit and this line doesn't cross anything that blocks LOS, the troops can see one another. The basic rule is: if troops can see, they can be seen, although there are exceptions. Do not confuse line-of-sight with line-of-fire (see [Firing](#) on page 22).

Troop Profiles

Troop profiles are split into three categories and determine how easy it is to see troops in the game.

Profile	Troops
Low	infantry, infantry support, light vehicles (bikes, buggies, scout vehicles, etc) and towed guns
Average	all other units apart from massive units
Massive	massive units

Line-of-Sight

A line-of-sight is a straight line that extends from the base edge of one unit to the base edge of another unit. Units may trace LOS in a 180° arc from the front base edge, except those units with restricted visibility that are limited to a 90° arc from the front base edge (as indicated by 'R' in the notes column of the army lists). Command units, recce units and anti-aircraft units are the only troops in the game that have full 360° visibility. However, anti-aircraft units are limited to 180° visibility when firing at ground targets. See the picture [Visibility Arcs](#) on the opposite page.

Line-of-sight is blocked by any of the following:

- intervening linear terrain, high ground, and obscurants
- other units where the profile of the unit is the same or higher than that of the observing unit

Linear Terrain

Linear terrain is defined as walls, fences and hedges. LOS is blocked by linear terrain unless either the target or the observer are in base-contact with the terrain. The exceptions to this are massive units whose LOS is not blocked by linear terrain.

Low Area Terrain

Low area terrain is defined as crop fields, tall grasses, scrub, heath land and scree. LOS is limited to 10cm into, through, or out of low area terrain where the observer and the target both have low profiles. This distance is increased to 20cm where either the observer or the target has an average profile and the opposing unit has a low profile. The distance is unlimited for all other profile combinations.

High Area Terrain

High area terrain is defined as orchards, woods, forest, jungle and built-up areas. LOS is limited to 5cm into, through, or out of high area terrain where the observer and the target both have low profiles, or the observer or the target has an average profile and the opposing unit has a low profile. This distance is increased to 10cm for all other profile combinations.

High Ground

To determine LOS to and from high ground, calculate the crest-line as and when required during the game. Draw an imaginary line across the centre of the high ground, parallel to the front base edge of the unit on lower ground and this will be the crest line in relation to that unit. Any troops forward of this line are within LOS, those behind it are out of sight, with the exception of massive units who gain no concealment from being behind high ground. Troops that have their front base edge on the line are seen as follows:

- troops with average or massive profiles can be seen at any distance
- dug-in troops and troops with low profiles can only be seen if they open fire or an enemy unit is within 10cm

Use the same method when both the observer and the target are on high ground. Units observing from high ground can see into, through, and over, low area terrain, ignoring the normal LOS obstruction rules and the distances listed above. However, high area terrain still blocks LOS.

Aircraft & Grav

Aircraft and grav are assumed to be low-flying during the game, so LOS will be blocked by intervening high area terrain, high ground and obscurants. LOS is not affected by linear terrain or low area terrain.

Obscurants

There is no LOS inside an obscurant - troops must be on the boundary of the obscurant to see or be seen.

Dug-In

All troops apart from massive units may be dug-in at the start of the game when in defence. Dug-in troops remain out-of-sight of the enemy until they either move or open fire. Dug-in troops with a low profile will become visible once an enemy unit is within 10cm. All other dug-in troops will become visible once an enemy unit is within 20cm. Dug-in troops lose their dug-in status once they move. Troops may not dig-in during the game.

Concealed Troops

Troops with low profiles that move to the edge of cover that were previously out-of-sight can only be seen:

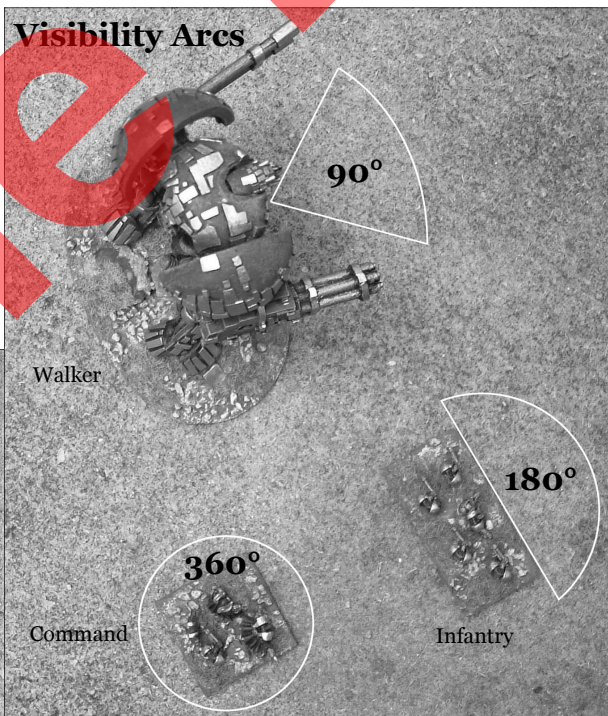
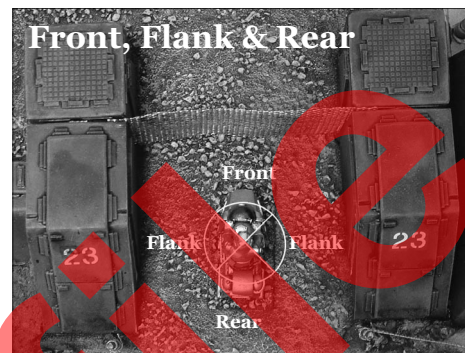
- if they open fire, or move along, or out of the cover
- an enemy unit is within 10cm
- they are the target of a recce unit (see *Reconnaissance* on page 16)

Troops with average profiles gain the same benefits as troops with low profiles, except they will be seen within 20cm. Massive units gain no concealment when they move to the edge of cover.

LOS Example

In the picture below, CUDF infantry defend an installation against an advancing Andrayadan formation. Andrayadan units B and C cannot be seen by any of the three CUDF infantry as unit C is further than 10cm through the scree (a low profile unit observing another low profile unit through low area terrain) and B is further than 20cm through the scree (a low profile unit observing an average profile unit through low area terrain).

Unit A is a massive unit and can thus be seen by all three CUDF units. Units D and E can only be seen by the CUDF infantry on the left. The CUDF infantry on the right cannot see either of these Andrayadan units as the unit is not in base contact with the linear obstacle (the pipes count as a linear obstacle). The CUDF unit inside the installation cannot see any units apart from the massive unit as it is further than 5cm from the edge of the built-up area (the installation counts as a BUA).



Centaur Battlegroup



PacFed Battlegroup



Before the Battle

Table Set-Up & Deployment

Refer to *Fighting Battles* on page 42 for details of how to set-up the table and *Deployment* on page 47 for details of how to deploy your battlegroups on the table.

Air Superiority

The side that controls the skies holds the advantage when it comes to combined-arms warfare. Test for air superiority at the beginning of each game turn for the duration of the battle. Both sides should each roll a single die and apply the air superiority modifier from the relevant army list (if any) to the score. Compare the two die rolls as follows:

Result	Description
Equal	Contested. No air support or air assaults may be requested by either side during the current game turn. Roll three attacks against each dropship or gunship unit that enters or exits the table, calculated in the same way as anti-aircraft fire (see page 31).
Greater, but not double	Partial Air Superiority. The opposing side suffers a -1 command penalty when requesting air support and air assaults throughout the turn. In addition, the player with partial air superiority should roll three attacks against each aircraft, dropship or gunship unit that enters or exits the table, calculated in the same way as anti-aircraft fire (see page 31).
Double or greater	Full Air Superiority. The opposing side suffers a -2 command penalty when requesting air support and air assaults throughout the turn. In addition, the player with full air superiority should roll six attacks against each aircraft, dropship or gunship unit that enters or exits the table, calculated in the same way as anti-aircraft fire (see page 31).

Some lists state that there is no possibility of gaining air superiority, in which case, skip the test - air superiority automatically goes to the other side. If neither side has aircraft, dropships or gunships in their battlegroups, then ignore air superiority during the game.

Preliminary Bombardment

Preliminary bombardments are available to certain army lists. They are planned before the game, after terrain and field defences have been placed on the table, but before any units have been deployed. Each artillery unit can fire at one target before the game begins. Targets can be any point on the table. Make a note of each bombardment: the target point, the artillery units firing and the type of artillery fire to be used (ie: barrage or concentration). See *Artillery Support* on page 28 for details of how to resolve preliminary bombardments.

Sequence of Play

The game begins once both players have deployed their battlegroups on the table (see *Deployment* on page 47). The first player should play one complete turn before the second player plays a turn, with the current player being referred to as the *Active Player*. Each turn is called a *Player Turn*, two of which make up a *Game Turn*. A player turn is divided into three phases: *Initiative*, *Command* and *End* phases and a player should play each of these phases in turn. Continue alternating turns between players until the game ends (see *End Of The Battle* on page 40).

Phases

The active player should play each of the following phases in turn:

Initiative

units within initiative distance of the enemy may carry out an action;
reconnaissance units may carry out a recon action;
units equipped with target designators may attempt to designate targets;
units equipped with shields may restore them to full strength;
units equipped with shield dome generators may generate shield domes;
resolve close assaults initiated during this phase;

Command

issue orders to units and carry out actions as the orders are issued;
resolve close assaults as soon as they are initiated;
move command units once all units have been ordered;

End

remove all outstanding hits (both players) and suppression markers (active player);
remove all shield domes that were generated during the previous player-turn;
remove all designated target markers and frozen markers;
remove obscurant markers from the previous game turn;
check to see if the battle should end;