

Age of Rifles Basic Rules

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1. Introduction

This is a basic version of the Napoleon's Later Campaigns variant for *Napoleon's Last Battles*, *Napoleon at Leipzig*, and similar games. It is NLB with a new combat system (providing a much more "Napoleonic" style of play) and a very simple command system (that still captures the realities of Napoleonic command better than the "on/off" model that has traditionally been used in NLB. The full version adds an interactive sequence of play and the full-blown orders system.

2. General Course of Play

Combat takes place by both sides firing at the enemy. Cavalry ignores ZOCs. Cavalry can charge and countercharge. Leaders need orders to attack or defend.

2.1 Formations. A Formation (corps or division) is a group of units that have a common leader counter. Leaders that are not assigned to a particular formation are either Overall Commanders (OC) or Wing Commanders (WC). All leader counters have a rating (given in scenario notes).

2.2 Morale and Pursuit Rating. New counters designed for these rules have three numeric ratings: Strength-Morale-Movement. For refitting existing games (most of which have no morale values printed on the counters), the morale value of all infantry, artillery and cavalry units is 4, with certain exceptions given in the individual refits. A unit that has lost a step has its morale reduced by. Likewise, a demoralized formation has morale reduced by 1 for all units.

2.3 Morale check. To check morale, roll a die. If the roll is higher than the morale, the test fails. If a group of units checks morale, use the highest infantry morale. If there is no infantry unit, use the highest cavalry morale.

3. Game Equipment

Note: Instead of their original purpose, Out of Command markers have two new uses. When placed on a unit, they mark the unit as *Disrupted*. When placed underneath a leader, they mark the leader as having Attack orders. When placed underneath a leader inverted, they mark the leader as having Defend orders. When placed on top a leader inverted, they mark the leader as having March orders. (The above rule serves to permit play with a minimum of counter assembly. Note that a set of dedicated order markers is downloadable from the system webpage.)

Unit Ratings are Strength-Movement. At the top is the Command designation (either the Division ID or the combination "Division ID/Corps ID").

4. Sequence of Play

1. Command and Reorganization Phase.
2. French player turn.
3. Prussian/Anglo-Dutch-German player turn.
4. Disruption Removal.

Each player turn has the following sequence:

- I. Bombardment.* Phasing artillery can bombard.
- II. Cavalry Charge Segment.* Phasing Cavalry can charge a target hex. Cavalry Charges can be followed by Cavalry Pursuit and Retreat.
- III. Formation Movement Segment.* All phasing units may be moved according to their formation's orders, except that foot artillery that bombarded can do nothing.
- IV. Formation Combat Segment.* All units adjacent to enemy units engage in combat according to their orders.
- V. Turn End Segment.* All disrupted units check morale and become undisrupted if they pass the check.

5. Movement

Units pay movement points normally. Only units with March orders may use road/trail movement costs. Railroads always count as trails.

5.2 Terrain. Road hexes cost ½ MP, trail hexes always cost 1 MP, bridge hexsides have no extra cost, stream hexsides cost +2 MP to cross. Leaders and command range trace always pay road or trail costs.

5.3 Stacking. Two friendly units per hex, checked at end of each Formation Movement Segment.

5.4 ZOCs. All combat units exert ZOCs, negated by non-bridge river hexsides and Chateau hexsides. Units that move through a ZOC hex can be fired on with half strength. Units that start in a ZOC can generally only leave it through advance or retreat. The last unit to move out of a ZOC hex pays 1 MP extra (except if it is cavalry). Cavalry ignores ZOCs under all circumstances.

5.5 Night and Rain. Units may not enter ZOCs on such turns, and there is no combat. Units *can* leave ZOCs.

5.6 Exiting the map. Units exiting the map are not considered eliminated for VP purposes unless they exited as part of a retreat. However, they can only reenter if permitted by game specific rules.

6. Unit Status and Step losses

6.1 Step Losses. Most units are backprinted; this means they have two steps. A hit on a two-step unit means that

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it is flipped to its reverse side and has one step remaining. A hit on a one-step unit (reversed or not backprinted) means the unit is eliminated.

6.2 Disruption. Disrupted units have their combat strength halved. To recover from disruption, a unit checks morale in the Turn End Phase. If it passes, the unit recovers. *This is the equivalent of the old “attacker effectiveness check” rule.*

7. Combat

7.1 Basic procedure. All forms of combat (assault, charge, bombardment) are conducted by each side adding the strength of its firing units to find a row on the Fire Table, rolling 2d6 and finding the number of hits. The units initiating the combat (activated units in assault and bombardment, charging cavalry in cavalry charge resolution) are called “attacking”, the opposing ones are called “defending”. The order in which hits are applied depends on the type of combat. If there are multiple target units, the owner chooses which ones take the hits except the first hit must always come from an infantry unit if possible. Also, hits must be allocated to damaged units if any are present. In certain cases modifiers may apply to the die roll and fire strengths may be reduced by a certain percentage. Always add reduced strengths, then round. If the firing strength is greater than 24, look up twice, for 24 and for the remainder, with the same die roll.

Note: The requirement to not distribute hits equally and instead kill units first is due to the fact that I wanted to retain the original reorganization rule and demoralization limits. Note that elimination means not death to the last man, but a temporary loss of cohesion.

7.2 Losses. A unit that suffers a hit is flipped to its reverse side. If already on that side, it is eliminated.

7.3 Assault. After the phasing units have moved, they can engage in one round of combat. They fire at adjacent enemy units (this is called “attacking”), and these adjacent units fire back (this is called “defending”), by rolling 2d6 on the fire table.

Attacking is voluntary for units that do not have attack orders; however units with attack orders (even cavalry) that are in the ZOC of enemy units must attack.

Multiple stacks can attack one defending stack (but see next paragraph). In this case the defending units are assumed to fire at all attacking units at once, and morale is determined over all attacking stacks.

Losses are applied simultaneously, unless any attacking units have moved adjacent out of a nonadjacent hex that was in LOS of the defending stack. Then, the defender can choose to fire at these units first, which means that losses are applied sequentially: attacker losses are applied, then attacker strength is determined and the

attacker fires. Note: If the defender chooses to instead fire at a stack that is already adjacent, apply losses simultaneously.

One stack can only attack one defending stack. Unless this restriction applies, attacking stacks with Attack orders have to distribute their attacks evenly, i.e., an attacking stack with Attack orders cannot attack a stack that is already attacked by another stack if another enemy stack is adjacent that will not be attacked this round. If multiple enemy stacks are adjacent, a stack containing infantry has to attack Chateaux before infantry before cavalry before artillery before HQs.

Cavalry involved in normal combat is halved in strength and always retreats voluntarily if defending alone.

7.4 Retreats. After a round of assault, each side that suffered at least one hit makes a morale check to see whether its units involved in that particular combat will retreat by one hex.

First the attacker, then the defender chooses whether he will voluntarily retreat. If one side retreats voluntarily, both sides halve the hits taken (round normally but 1 becomes 0).

Retreating units are disrupted. Foot Artillery cannot retreat and is destroyed instead. If an enemy unit advances into the hex as a result of the combat, the artillery is permanently eliminated.

If a stack retreats into a hex where it violates stacking, all units in that hex are disrupted. A stack that retreats into an enemy ZOC suffers passing fire.

7.5 Advancing. If the target hex of an attack is vacated and the attackers did not retreat, one attacking unit can advance into the hex. ZOCs are ignored. If a leader is in an attacking hex with two units, both units and the leader can advance.

7.6 Modifiers for assault combat.

- Armament: Units armed with rifled muskets (the default) use their normal combat value. Units armed with repeating weapons (underlined combat value) increase their combat value by 50% when firing at a stack that contains units with rifled muskets or artillery, and when firing in a situation where enemy losses are applied first (see 7.3).
- Disruption: if a unit starts the assault segment with a disrupted marker, its fire strength is halved.
- Flanking: Attacker strength is increased by 50% and Defender morale is reduced by 2 if there are two attacking units that are attacking through hexsides that have at least one hexside between them. Defenders in towns and forts cannot be flanked.

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- **Terrain:** See terrain effects table. Add all strengths with the same percentage reduction, then round normally (e.g., 4.5 is 5, 4.25 is 4).

7.6 Cavalry Charges. Phasing cavalry within two hexes of enemy units may charge those units. If they are two hexes away the intervening hex must be empty. Only clear and crest terrain can be crossed by charges.

Charging cavalry moves into the defending hex. If there is infantry in the target hex, it tests morale, if it succeeds it has formed square and the cavalry attacks at normal strength. Otherwise the cavalry attacks at double strength. Both sides have one round of fire. The side that loses more steps loses the charge combat and retreats (to its starting hex in case of a charging unit). If the target loses, the cavalry can stay, retreat to its starting hex (but still takes full losses), or pursue. A cavalry unit can only charge once per turn. Win or lose, a retreat after a charge never reduces losses.

All (non-reaction) cavalry charges in the same Charge Segment occur in parallel, i.e., all move, then all attack.

7.7. Cavalry pursuit. Victorious charging cavalry can pursue, i.e., attack the units that just retreated (which may not fire back) or any other adjacent enemy unit (in which case normal charge resolution happens). If the player does not choose to pursue, he still has to do a test against the pursuit rating – if he rolls more, the cavalry pursues anyway. After one round of pursuit it stops or retreats to its original starting hex.

7.8 Reaction charges. Cavalry within two hexes of a hex that enemy units move or charge or retreat into or through can reaction charge by standing a morale test (+1 to morale if stacked with a leader). If the enemy units win they can continue to move after the charge.

7.10 Modifiers for cavalry charges. Use all that apply.

- (underlined combat value) is not halved against a charge.
- **Form square:** if there is infantry in the target hex and all of it is undisrupted, the defenders check morale. If it succeeds, the charging strength is halved.
- **Flank charge:** double charge strength if defender is already adjacent to units friendly to the charging units and is charged from a different hex. Defenders in towns cannot be flanked.
- **Backhand blow:** double charge strength if the defender against a *reaction* charge is pursuing or retreating cavalry.

7.11 Cavalry retreat before assault. Cavalry or horse artillery being assaulted may retreat one hex if it did not start the turn in an enemy ZOC and there is no cavalry among the attackers. The attackers may advance. If one

side in an assault only consists of cavalry, the owning player may also decide to retreat after assault, in which the losses of both sides are halved (1 reduced to 0).

7.12 Passing fire. If a unit or stack moves from the ZOC of an enemy stack into another ZOC hex of the same stack, all units in the stack can fire at it at half strength. If a hit is scored, the moving unit or stack has to check for retreat as in 7.4.

8. Artillery

8.1 Bombardment Attacks. During the bombardment phase, artillery can fire at targets up to two hexes away. It needs a line of sight to the target to bombard. The target does not fire back. Artillery that bombards cannot move in the Formation Movement Phase.

The first hit caused by bombardment is always a disruption (place a Disrupted marker on the target unit). Further hits apply normally. Disruption is removed at the end of the turn. It is not possible to retreat to reduce bombardment hits.

8.2 Adjacent defense. Artillery can attack adjacent units during normal combat if it did not bombard. It can fire on the defense regardless of whether it bombards.

8.3 Line of Sight. Only blocked by Forest, Chateau and Town hexes and Crest hexsides (even when this is a hexside of the hex the unit is in) including the endpoints of Crest hexsides. Blocked if running along a Crest with blocking terrain to the right and left of Crest. Blocked if running between a Crest and other blocking terrain.

9. Reinforcements

Enter at entry hexes, potentially stacked. If entry hex is blocked or in ZOC, enter in closest non-ZOC hex.

10. Forts and entrenchments

10.1 Forts. Stacking limit is 1 unit. Units in forts are not affected by enemy ZOCs and cannot be bombarded, charged, or flanked. They are never required to attack, but have normal ZOCs and must be attacked. They ignore retreat results. Units cannot advance into forts or retreat into them if occupied. Attacker strengths against units in forts are halved. If a unit could attack a fort or another stack, it must attack the fort unless that is already being attacked by another unit.

10.2 Fortified hexsides. Fortified hexsides (such as city walls) work like forts except they are not subject to the same stacking restrictions. They have an effect regardless of the number of units behind them. Units can retreat across fortified hexsides.

11. Leaders

Leaders are not combat units, project no ZOC, count as cavalry for movement costs, do not count for stacking, may never enter a ZOC not occupied by a friendly unit, and are placed on the nearest friendly unit if an enemy unit moves into their hex while they are alone there. A leader's movement value is halved on a turn when he gives orders. A leader alone in a hex with enemy units is placed with the closest friendly unit. If a leader is left alone in a hex due to elimination or retreat he dies on a roll of 1. He comes back at the start of the next turn with a rating of 1.

There are no HQ units in the Basic rules.

12. Command

Command is exercised in two stages. First, orders are given by the OCs (Lee, Grant, Moltke) or WCs (Longstreet, Steinmetz) to their subordinate formation (corps or division) commanders. Second, the units of one formation have to be within range of the formation's leader to function normally.

12.1 Command range. To be at full effectiveness, combat units have to be within command range (4 Cav MP) of their leader, WC, or OC. Command range can be traced through ZOCs only if friendly units are in that hex. Units cannot leave command range by normal movement (but through charges, retreats, and advances). Units outside range defend normally but may not attack or move into ZOCs. If they move they must move so as to get back into range as quickly as possible

12.2 Orders. At any time, each formation leader (not OC/WC) is in a particular order state. Note that these orders differ from the definitions in the full rules. Order state is indicated by placing an appropriate marker with the leader (or not).

Note: The rules below assume that there are markers that specify whether a formation has an Attack, Defend, March, or Reserve order. You can either download and use the set of markers that are available with these rules, or use any set of markers that you have lying around. The example below shows how you can indicate orders by using markers that have an Out of Command ("OoC") side like the typical Napoleon's Last Battles command markers.

Attack – place an inverted out of command marker on top of the leader.

Defend – place an OoC marker underneath the leader.

March – place an OoC counter *underneath* (inverted if the units shall attack after the march)

Reserve – no marker.

Attack: Units must move towards the closest enemy unit (i.e., may not move away from it and must move at least one hex closer) until within artillery range, then some

must attack. Artillery bombardment is enough to define "attacking" for at most 2 turns, but once units are in enemy ZOC, some units must *enter* ZOC every turn until the target is occupied or the order is canceled. Units in ZOC cannot exit except by retreat. Cavalry charges satisfy the attack requirement for cavalry formations.

Defend: May leave ZOC but not enter ZOC unless hex entered was controlled by friendly units when the Defend order was given and may counterattack in this case.

March: The leader is placed in any hex on the map and the units must move towards the leader until back in command range. The leader counter is not assumed to be actually present in its hex and is unaffected by enemy units moving through the hex. They must move to a road or track hex in as few turns as possible. Units may not enter ZOCs (when stopped by a ZOC the leader is placed with the leading unit and the OoC counter is placed underneath it to identify the new order status). They defend normally but morale is reduced by 1 and they are flanked if attacked on a road or track hex. They pay the road or track movement rate but only if moving unstacked and if there is no unit in the hex they are entering.

Reserve: The leader cannot move. Units may not enter ZOCs or attack. They defend normally but morale is reduced by 1. Units may reorganise.

12.3 Changing orders. Leaders change orders the moment they receive a new order. Other than that, a player can change a leader's order from Defend to Reserve at any time. Finally, a leader who has Attack orders and has a unit suffer a hit must roll a die the next Command Phase and check morale against his leader rating. Add 2 to his rating if his formation is *not* demoralized. If he fails, he changes to Reserve and all his units immediately retreat 3 hexes.

12.4 Order Compliance. Add the rating of the OC or WC issuing the order and of the receiving leader. Halve the sum (round normally) and subtract it from the Order Number (4 for Attack, 3 for Defend, 2 for Reserve orders); the result cannot be less than 0. Add the distance in cavalry MP from the OC/WC to the receiving leader, divided by 6 (drop fractions). The sum is the number of turns that passes until the leader complies with the new orders. If it is greater than zero, write down the resulting turn and the order. (Or place a numeric marker scrounged from another game underneath the leader and reduce by 1 each turn).

Example: Lee (4) sends an Attack order to Ewell (2), giving a result of 1. If Ewell is 9 MP from Lee, the order will be executed 2 turns later.

12.5 Order capacity. An OC/WC can give as many new orders per turn as his rating (halved if he moves).

13. Army Demoralization

An army is demoralized when the strength of its destroyed units reaches the demoralization level (non phasing player first if it happens in the same instant).

14. Corps Demoralization

14.1 Demoralisation Level. A corps is demoralized if the full strength of its eliminated (pre- or post-reorganization) units is at least equal to its demoralization limit. **Units have their movement allowance reduced by 1.** If reorganization drops the number below the limit, demoralization is lifted. Demoralized formations have no effect on other formations.

14.2 Demoralisation and Compliance. Demoralised formations are more sluggish in operation. A demoralized formation

15 Reorganization

Eliminated units can be reorganized **starting with the first night turn after their elimination.** The formation must have Reserve orders, and the formation leader must not be in extended LOS from any enemy unit. The leader does not count as being present on the map for any other purpose for that turn. Reorganized units are placed in the leader's hex up to the stacking limit with their reduced step strength (meaning at most two per turn can be reorganized per leader). Units of a demoralized corps or army are only reorganized on a die roll of 5-6, otherwise they are eliminated permanently.

16. Night.

On night turns no units (not even cavalry) may enter ZOCs (but may still leave them if orders allow it). Artillery cannot bombard. All Attack/Probe orders that do not occupy a part of the target fail. New orders may be sent out.

17. Supply

Supply can be traced offroad for five hexes, then on roads or trails towards specified supply source hexes. ZOCs and enemy units block the line of supply. Units that cannot trace such a line at the end of a turn lose a step.

18. Victory Conditions

Victory points are awarded per scenario instructions. "Occupation" means having a unit in the hex or being the last to move a unit into or through. If the French are demoralized or either of the other two armies disintegrates in a battle game, the other side wins.

Terrain Effects on Combat

Terrain	Attack	Bomb.	Charge	Movement
Town	-25%	-75%	-50%	1
Chateau	-50%	N/A	N/A	2
Woods	-50%*	-50%	-75%	2/4
Stream	-25%	NE	-25%	+2
Crest	-25%	N/A	NE	NE
Bridge	-50%	NE	N/A	NE

Reductions apply to firing into that type of terrain.

* ... Including defender's fire *out of* woods.

Morale Modifiers

Step loss (except British and KGL)	-1
Demoralized formation	-1
Fired at by artillery in normal combat	-1
Flank attack	-2
Attacked by Old Guard infantry	-1

Order number

Attack	4
Defend	3
March	3
Reserve	2

Combat modifiers

Normal combat: Disruption/flanking/terrain

Cavalry charges: Flanking/backhand blow/not ready

Bombardment (opt.): +50% for stacked non-arty targets

Fire Table

Combat Strength	Dieroll (2d6)											
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	
4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	
5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	
6	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	
7	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	
8	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	
9	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	
10	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	
11	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	
12	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	
13	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	6	
14	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	6	
15	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	6	
16	0	1	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	5	6	
17	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	5	7	
18	0	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	6	7	
19	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	6	7	
20	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	5	6	8	
21	0	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	5	6	8	
22	0	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	6	7	8	
23	0	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	6	7	9	
24	1	1	2	3	3	4	5	5	6	7	9	