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Gå På 2nd edition

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CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	5
What's new in the second edition?	5
Scales	6
Dice	6
The Players	6
Learning the rules	6
UNITS AND COMMANDERS	7
Unit types	7
Troop quality (TQ)	8
Other Unit data	8
Unit related definitions	10
Commander stats	10
Basing	11
THE TQ-CHECK	13
The TQ Table	13
TQ grade modifiers	13
TERRAIN	14
Terrain equivalents	14
Table size	14
Placing the terrain	14
Terrain Classes	16
Terrain objectives	16
Terrain types	17
SEQUENCE OF PLAY	18
Pre battle	18
Battle	18
Post Battle	18
PRE BATTLE	19
Force Selection	19
Army command structure	19
Strategic situation	20
Tactical situation	21
Scenario rules and set up	21
Siege Relief	22
Rearguard Action	22
Set Piece Battle	23
River Crossing	23
Attack	24
Meeting Engagement	24
Amphibious Assault	25
VISIBILITY AND LINE OF SIGHT	26
Action Levels	26
Visibility Ranges (in paces)	26
Line of sight	26
RANDOM EVENTS	27
Random events table	27
COMMANDERS, ORDERS AND GROUPS	29
The role of Commanders	29
Initiative	29
In command	29
Order Executions (OE)	30
MOVEMENT AND FORMATIONS	32
Difficulty	32
Groups	32
Group formations	32
The different orders	33
March moves	33
General movement rules	33

Contents and introduction

Charges	35
Charge Reaction tables	37
UNIT FORMATIONS	38
Infantry formations	38
Cavalry formations	39
Artillery formations	40
FORMATION CHANGES	40
Unit formation changes	40
Group formation changes	41
UNCONTROLLED UNITS	43
Uncontrolled Units and Groups	43
The situations	43
The uncontrolled Groups' actions	44
Uncontrolled Units table	46
FLEEING UNITS AND RALLY	47
Flee Moves	47
Rallying	48
Contacting Fleeing enemy	48
FIRE COMBAT	49
Basics in fire combat	49
Firing Ranges	50
Artillery Fire	51
Special combat outcomes	51
Fire combat Diagrams	52
CLOSE COMBAT	53
Closing	53
Defining combats	54
The Close Combat	54
Close Combat check order	55
Attacked in Rear and/or Flank	55
Close Combat table	55
Special combat outcomes	55
Closing and Close Combat examples	56
ARMY MORALE	57
Force break level	57
Force break check	57
End of battle	59
POST BATTLE	59
Victory determination	59
GENERAL RULES	61
The use of foreign troops	61
Monarchs in battle	63
Risk to Commanders	63
Commander abilities	63
Special Advantages	64
DESIGNER'S NOTES	70
APPENDIXES	72
Appendix I - Unit data tables	72
Appendix II - The Points system	80
INDEX	81

OVERVIEW

Gå På is a miniature war game allowing you to re-fight the battles of the Great Northern War and the War of the Spanish Succession. The rules are not intended for any particular scale of miniatures. Instead you may use whatever suits your taste, whether it's 6mm, 10mm, 15mm, 28mm or something else. Basing suggestions are given for some scales, but should be seen as recommendations only. The ground scale is not fixed, nor is the man-to-figure ratio – allowing you to customize the rules for the basing you use.

Gå På allows you to fight the battles of the early 18th century using the tactical units of the time. Thus you can fight anything from the smallest battles to the really massive ones. However, if you are about to play Blenheim or Poltava you should be aware that you – just like Tallard, Marlborough or Peter the Great – are in for a grand challenge. Coordinating armies of this size in Gå På, just like in real life, is not a walk in the park.

Two main principles have been the foundation upon which these rules have been constructed. The first is Command and Control. Units that are not in control will act on their own, according to the situation. What action is taken depends on troop quality, morale, training, initiative of lower level commanders, equipment, etc. These variables are abstracted into two different ratings for each Unit. These are Troop Quality (TQ) and Unit Type. The TQ depends on training, morale, NCOs etc. The Unit Type depends mostly on training and equipment, but mentality/mind-set also plays a part in determining this.

The second main principle of rule construction is that of visibility. Or, closer to the truth, the difficulties of seeing anything at all on a battlefield where smoke from black powder, dust from moving troops, constant noise and confusion, and the lack of good means of communication makes even identifying own troops a next to impossible task.

Other important design philosophies are the ambition to allow for different basing and the idea that it is the 'feel of the period' and not the details that are important. This means that individual casualties are not counted. As a result of this the number of figures per Unit is not important, as long as the Unit looks right. More on this later.

What's new in the second edition?

The short answer is "a lot" ... But then again the basic system is the same. The major differences perhaps being that the turn is more streamlined and that the Commanders actions have been integrated with the Units within the turn. This means that a few phases have been removed. So experienced Gå På players are encouraged to take a look at the phases. Note e.g. that the Redressing of ranks phase has been removed.

Terrain section has seen some changes, with **sizes of features** being changed a bit, and the concept of **key features** that count for determining victory has been added.

Unit types has been changed to reflect those found in the old Army Lists, in addition the new Eastern Horse category has been added, to distinguish their behaviour from the of Western horse (MC in the first edition).

Formations are more defined now, and **Skirmishing** Units have received some new rules as well.

Note that the old optional rule for determining "**in command**" for Commanders now is used throughout. Speaking of Commanders, a number of "**special abilities**" have been added to create more variation. The main change is that all things involving Commanders, movement, orders etc, has been moved to the **same phase as other Units' movement**.

Units **failing to Rally** tend to disperse, as they now risk step loss.

This list could probably go on for a while, so take a few minutes to read through the rules, and get acquainted with them. But in general the game is still much the same – the TQ check is still central, as is the chaotic battlefield. Have fun!

Scales

Figure scales

These rules are not aimed at any specific scale of figures. As they are intended to be used for medium to large battles, 28mm is probably the largest scale that can be used. Going downward in scales, 15mm, 10mm and 6mm (1/300) are all good options, the latter making it possible to use more figures per unit. In 2mm and 1mm the coloured uniforms don't stand out as nicely but the terrain looks very realistic. In short, go for whatever suits your personal taste and wallet. Basing examples are given for 28, 15 and 6mm. Using these as a guideline it should be possible for you to select a basing system that suits you.

The rules do not use figure removal. Thus, the actual man-to-figure ratio is up to you as a player. The Army Lists assume you use a ration of 50:1 for infantry and 40:1 for cavalry. But if you prefer anything else just modify according to your preferences.

Ground scale

Figure scale as mentioned above is not really important with these rules (as long as both players use the same). The same really goes for ground scale. Distances given in the rules are in paces, both for different weapon ranges and for movement. Also, the Unit sizes are given in paces. This allows the players to select a ground scale that suits their miniatures. See basing examples for different scale combinations if you do want suggestions.

Time scale

Time is, as most other components in this game, treated in a rather abstract sense. A turn can represent anything from 5 or 10 minutes to an hour. On the average however, consider 2-3 turns per hour.

Dice

For the majority of the die rolls, only normal six sided dice (D6) are used. When a two dice roll is called for the scores are normally added (2D6).

The random events rule requires the use of D66 rolls (two D6, one for the first digit and one for the second). Commander selection requires the use of percentage dice. If you don't own a set of ten sided dice, you can generate a number between one and hundred in another way, use cards instead, or skip the random events rule altogether.

The Players

The players play the roles of commanding Generals. It is also possible to subjugate command to other players, playing the part of generals of a wing or line. Officers of a lower rank than this are not represented (in more than an abstract sense) and therefore cannot be played.

The players are not burdened by having to write orders on paper, instead they are free to react to situations if their Commanders are correctly placed, and their plan isn't too complex. The order system is designed to let you play the game, while still having to face some of the command problems of the period played.

Learning the rules

The rulebook may appear long and the rules somewhat complex. However, Gå På is a relatively quick and easy game to play. Some mechanics may differ from what you are used to, but they are very simple once you have tried them a few times. And the tables are very easy to use. The easiest way to learn the rules is probably to test a few of the key mechanisms before staging the first real game.

Try a fire combat between two to four Units. Then try to close with one of the sides, and read through the close combat section, trying the close combat sequence.

After this read through the order execution chapter. Stage a fight between 3-4 Units on your own side, commanded by a single Commander, and a few defending Units. Treat the defending Units as stationary unless you try the rules together with a friend.

A skirmish between 4-8 Units a side is a good way to go from here. You will need to read the chapters on Commanders, Movement, Uncontrolled Units, and the Army Morale chapters in full before you do this.

After it is probably time for a full read through of the rules, and then you should be able to start your first small battle.

UNITS AND COMMANDERS

In Gå På there are two kinds of playing pieces, Units and Commanders. The Units represent the men that fought the engagements and are moved as blocks. There are different Unit types representing the different service branches: Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery, and each may be deployed in different formations.

Commanders represent the higher levels of command, Field Marshalls, Generals, and Lieutenant generals, and in some cases Major Generals. These are used to control the Units according to your designs. In effect the Commanders can be said to be the representation of the players on the tabletop.

Note: In Gå På Commanders are critical, as Units not given orders by a Commander will decide on their own what to do. This means that in order to perform complicated actions, like co-ordinated attacks, you have to use your Commanders to the outmost – or certain failure and ensuing chaos awaits you. Moving thousands of men around an 18th century battlefield was no easy game and clockwork precision is not something generally associated with it...

Unit types

In Gå På, Infantry are represented as battalions. A battalion is an independent part of a regiment and in the early 18th century most battalions had somewhere around 6-700 men.

Cavalry also had regiments but did not have battalions. In most cases Cavalry Units are the same as cavalry regiments. In some nations the cavalry regiments were so large that they were commonly split up in smaller tactical units. Examples of the latter are Swedish and Russian cavalry regiments. Therefore Cavalry Units are represented by a number of squadrons grouped together into different sized Units.

Artillery pieces are grouped together into batteries of guns, each battery containing 2-4 guns of the same calibre.

What is the Unit Type?

All Units are classed by type in Gå På. The Unit Type defines how the Unit acts and sets the points cost. The main factor when classing a Unit as a certain type is how it actually performed on the early 18th century battlefield. Equipment is secondary, although it does affect classification somewhat.

Unit Type definitions

The following Unit Types exist with differences in battlefield behaviour, equipment and training:

Line Infantry (LI): Most 18th century European infantry, primarily armed with musket and bayonet. Usual method of fighting is wearing down the enemy with sheer firepower and then closing to melee when the opportunity presents itself.

Assault Infantry (AI): Infantry trained and equipped for offensive shock-action such as grenadiers and Swedish infantry armed with pike and musket.

Close Combat Infantry (CI): Infantry relying on a ferocious charge and melee, having few if any firearms such as Jacobite Highlanders.

Special Rules: CI is the only Infantry Unit Type that may execute a Charge.

Skirmish Infantry (SI): Infantry trained and deployed for skirmish action, making use of cover and sniping at the enemy. Uncommon in early 18th century Europe.

Special Rules: SI may only employ Skirmish Line or Column of March formation. SI does not count for army morale unless eliminated.

Light Infantry (LTI): Similar to Skirmish Infantry, but with the additional ability of being able to form up in Line formation. This type of infantry is common in Ottoman armies.

Special rules: May employ Skirmish Line formation.

Levy Infantry or Cavalry (Levy): Levy represents conscripted infantry or cavalry lacking formal military training who are in the army because of feudal or similar obligations. They are often, but not always, equipped only with close combat weapons. The major difference between Levy Infantry and Close Combat Infantry is their fighting method and zeal. While CI depend on an “all or nothing” charge, Levy will likely not engage the enemy unless someone is encouraging them forward.

Horse (Horse): Cavalry mixing firepower with charges at the trot. Most European Cavalry including most countries’ dragoons.

Shock Horse (SH): Cavalry charging home at the gallop in close formation such as Swedish cavalry, or at a fast trot without firing before closing such as English cavalry. This category also includes heavy lancers such as Polish hussar cavalry.

Units and commanders

Eastern Horse (EH): Cavalry with a variety of weapons using slightly less dense formations than their western counterparts. They have high individual skill but sometimes lack discipline. EH have a higher close combat rating in relation to their size than Horse. Most armoured cavalry in Eastern European armies are classed as EH.

Light Cavalry (LC): Cavalry operating in loose swarms, closing for melee only if conditions are favourable. Mostly irregular troops, such as Cossacks. They differ from EH in that they are more reluctant to close with the enemy – often because they lack protective armour.

Special Rules: May employ Skirmish Line formation.

Skirmish Cavalry (SC): Similar to LC but used almost exclusively as scouts or for harassing the enemy. They only voluntarily enter melee with Fleeing enemy Units. Turkish Dellis are a good example.

Special Rules: SC may only employ Skirmish Line or Column of March formation. SC does not count for army morale unless eliminated.

Very Light Artillery (VLA): Mainly 2 and 3 lb. guns.

Special Rules: VLA can move while Unlimbered.

Light Artillery (LA): 4-6 lb. guns

Special Rules: LA can move while Unlimbered.

Medium Artillery (MA): 7-12 lb. guns

Heavy Artillery (HA): 13 lb. guns and larger.

Troop quality (TQ)

Quality is a central part of the Gå På rules. A Unit's quality defines how it acts and reacts in different situations. The quality level – hereafter referred to as the Unit's TQ – reflect the training level, experience, zeal, and professionalism of officers. It is in other words not to be seen as merely a morale rating or as just the Unit's battlefield experience.

The TQ grades

The following grades are used:

Fanatic: Troops ignoring casualties, driven forward by religious or other fervour. Troops with a morale of this kind are rare to say the least.

Elite. The best of the best. Exceptionally well trained, motivated and experienced soldiers. Examples are the guards of most of the bigger nations.

Veteran. Better trained and/or experienced than the ordinary soldier. For example most Swedish and English infantry, also Russian or minor countries' guards.

Trained. Most regular troops of the time.

Green. Newly recruited units, or units that otherwise lack adequate training and confidence. Most Russian line troops.

Rabble. Untrained and poorly equipped soldiers and/or armed mobs.

Note: The TQ grade names are not to be taken literally, as explained above. A unit may actually have seen lots of action, but still being classed as "Green" due to low morale, bad leadership or a combination of the two

Other Unit data

In addition to Unit Type, and TQ grade the following characteristics are used to describe Units:

Type code

Some Units have special status, training or equipment. This is shown by a code given together with the Unit Type. The codes are as follows:

G = Guards status

Special Rules: Guards Units count differently for morale, see Army morale. Also, in the Army Lists there are limitations on the proportion of Guards Units to non-Guards Units.

hfd = High Fire Discipline.

Special Rules: Extra good at fire combat, see Fire combat rules.

D = Dragoons

Special Rules: May mount/dismount as a Unit formation change. The Unit has separate stats for mounted and dismounted use. Dismounted Dragoons count as Infantry, mounted as Cavalry.

Dismounted Dragoons that are forced to Flee may not re-mount.

mtd = Mounted Infantry

Special Rules: Mounted Infantry add 50 paces to their movement rate when march moving.

P = Pike equipped Unit.

Special Rules: Has close combat advantage against cavalry, see Close Combat rules.

L = Unit is equipped with heavy lances

Special Rules: Close Combat value halved when Disordered

M = Mortar type artillery (includes those howitzers primarily using indirect fire)

Special Rules: May use indirect fire, see Fire Combat

H = Horse Artillery.

Special Rules: +50 paces movement rate if Limbered

Steps

Each Unit also has a certain number of steps (most having 1 or 2 but some having 3). This is an abstracted measure of its strength in number of men. Units can lose steps during the course of the battle.

A one step Unit suffering a Step Loss is removed from play counting as lost, while a multi step Unit must thereafter use its reduced values (the values given after the slash(es) in the Army Lists), for the remainder of the battle or until reduced to 0 steps when it is lost and removed from play.

Size/Squadrons

A Unit's size is defined by its frontage. For Infantry and Artillery this is stated in paces in the Army Lists, while Cavalry frontage is defined by the number of squadrons in the Unit times the size of a squadron (usually 50 paces).

FP and CC

The Firepower and Close Combat values of a Unit in Line formation. Artillery Firepower is further divided into Short and Long range.

Multi step Infantry and Cavalry Units have reduced FP and CC values given after slashes, using the value after the first slash after the first Step Loss and so on. If a Unit has a FP marked with a "-", it may not fire.

Unit Status

Units can be Ordered or Disordered, Skirmishing or Fleeing.

Ordered Units have their ranks and files in good order and are ready for action.

Disordered are those that have lost some internal order due to for example enemy fire, or crossing difficult ground. The Troop Quality of Disordered Units is treated as being one lower than normal, and their Firepower (FP) is halved (round down, <1 being minimum). Lancers also have their CC values halved when Disordered.

Some Units may also have **Skirmishing** status, fighting in a loose semi-disordered formation. These Units, in Skirmish Line formation, are neither Ordered nor Disordered.

Units that are **Fleeing** have lost all semblance of order, having neither front, rear, nor flanks. They may only use Flee formation. They also have their TQ lowered by one, just like Disordered Units.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

A game of Gå På is divided into three separate parts. These are the “Pre battle”, the “Battle”, and the “Post battle”

Pre battle

During this part of the game you decide the “framework” for the battle, for example which armies to use and how the terrain is laid out. The Pre battle ends when the opposing armies are set up and ready to engage each other. The following phases make up the Pre battle.

Force selection: The first thing to do for the players is to agree on the size of the battle in army points to use and set a year for the battle. Thereafter each player spends points to purchase the army to use.

Army command structure and marching order: The players then divide their armies into commands and set the order of march.

Strategic situation: This determines in which player’s territory the battle is fought.

Tactical situation: This step defines who is attacking who, and the circumstances of the battle.

Terrain placement: The board is laid out, and all terrain is placed.

Purchase of Special Advantages: Army points not used to purchase Commanders or Units may now be used to gain other advantages.

Set up: The armies are placed on the table in accordance with the scenario rules. With the Set up finished, the Pre battle part of the game is over. The battle is ready to begin...

Battle

The battle part is a cycle that is repeated until the end of game criteria are met. These depend on the scenario played, and are checked in the Army Morale Phase.

Visibility Phase: In the Visibility Phase the players check if the activity during the turn caused the battlefield visibility to change.

Random Events Phase: Events out of the players’ control may affect the game.

Initiative Determination Phase: Both sides roll a die to see who has the initiative during the current turn.

Orders Phase: This phase is where all Units and Commanders move. Commanders race across the battlefield to get in command and to get into a position where they can try to get their orders through. Units move and attempt to rally. Reaction Fire and Charges are resolved.

Fire Phase: All Units that are in range and have valid targets fire in this phase. Fire is generally simultaneous. Fire effects are worked out immediately.

Closing Phase: Units that are at close range may attempt to attack enemy in hand to hand combat.

Close Combat Phase: If some Units manage to close with their opponents Close Combat will start. Defenders may fall back before the attackers or hold their ground and test the resolve of the attackers.

Army Morale Phase: In this phase the players check if their armies, or parts of them, are breaking, or if the battle ends for other reasons.

Post Battle

The Post battle part only contains one phase, except in a campaign battles.

Victory determination: In this phase the victor is determined. The victory determination varies between scenarios. The magnitude of the victory is also calculated.

Pursuit: in a campaign game there will also be post battle pursuit, where the winning Cavalry Units will do their best to hunt down the losing side’s Units.

DESIGNER'S NOTES

It's more than 10 years since I started working on the first version of Gå På. I have had a number of great games with the rules, and I know several others out there have as well. I have also, through this project gotten to know a number of very nice people – and that is perhaps one of the best parts of it all. The 2nd edition of Gå På is very much a complete re-write of the rulebook, but the core mechanics are the same. I have, however tried to make it a little more streamlined, reducing complexity in some areas and possibly increasing it a little in some where I felt that it was needed. But in general I have tried to speed up the game a bit by introducing a quicker start – both by starting the battle at a closer range, and by introducing the new march move. Again, the march move allowed me to tidy up the movement rates, just having one for each troop type.

I have included the Designer's notes from the first edition below, as most of it is still valid.

Designer's notes from the first edition

The Great Northern War period has always been one of my favourite eras in history, and it was also what made me start painting miniatures. However the lack of, in my opinion, good rule sets made me convert to other periods. Several years later, a discussion with professor Jan Lindegren in Uppsala about what war in the early modern times really was about, and a re-read of an essay by Peter Englund provided the inspiration to make an attempt to produce a set of rules that took into account the factors that I believe really matter. The players should not be able to control every detail of the battle. A lot of things happened in a battle that the commanding generals had little or no knowledge about. This was why the Uncontrolled Units table was created.

Another thing I wanted to simulate in some way was the effect of the decreasing visibility. This was a real problem for the generals of the time and there are several occasions where poor visibility had a serious effect on the outcome of a battle. Lützen, Narva, Poltava and Gadebusch are just a few examples of such battles from Swedish military history. Combined with the order system the battles tend to degenerate into more and more chaos as time progresses, which was just what I wanted to simulate.

The Swedish tactics of the time were rather extreme and I wanted to produce a set of rules that could handle this. That was the thought behind Assault Infantry and Line Infantry. Classing the Swedes as Assault takes into account both armament and training/doctrine. The fact that so many of them only had close combat weapons really forced the soldiers forward. The only way to stop the deadly fire was by attacking, since they knew they were out-shot. Of course this would not have worked unless they had been given the correct training, and fatalistic protestant belief also helped to some extent.

I have focused rather a lot on the Great Northern War so far in these notes, and that is because that was how this project began. But from the start of the project I really wanted to cover all conflict and armies of the period, at least the European ones. The key for me, however, was in getting the Great Northern War armies right, because this conflict involved all kinds of armies and tactics. The Swedish aggressive cavalry and infantry tactics had to contrast with the more traditional Saxon tactics. Both Russians and Swedes used pikes, but rather differently. While the Russian pikes seem to have been mostly a cavalry deterrent, the Swedes used theirs as a weapon of attack. These two variants had to work alongside the non-pike using Saxons and Danes. And if I could find a way to simulate the Cossack or Polish fighting style I could probably extend the system to include the Ottomans as well...

Finding the differences between the British/Dutch and the French was another key element. The British battalions are calculated from a 3 rank standard and with a slightly higher Firepower per man than the French 4 rank battalions. The Shock Horse category defined to handle Swedish cavalry tactics works fine for the British as well. For those wanting more cavalry detail and more decisive effects of the platoon fire system (High Fire Discipline) two optional rules exist. I recommend playing without them a few times at least since they tend to make the game run slower. But the choice is certainly up to you. That goes for everything in the rules of course. They are not laws. Try to find a mix that suits your playing group. The abstract format of the rules makes it likely that even small changes alter the feel and play greatly. I therefore recommend that you do not change too much at once, because it might then be hard to tell which change did what. Anyway, I only hope you can have as fun playing with these rules as I have had while creating them.

How to win

Well, you tell me... I have tried to create a set of rules that reward linear tactics in order to keep them as "historical" as possible. Therefore looking at historical battles should hopefully provide a clue on how to set-up.

If you are using the Swedish Main Army your units will do what you expect of them most of the time, at least if you expect them to attack. Try to get them where they will do the most damage without being blown to pieces. That is, plan where you want to break the enemy. If the enemy is fortified you need to be extra careful with what to attack. It is possible to storm redoubts, but it might cost you a battalion or two, so be sure that it is worth the effort. The Swedish cavalry is a real killer, but be aware that once you have engaged the enemy it will almost certainly be out of control.

If you are using a low quality army, such as Russians, you really have to make use of terrain and defensive equipment. But above all make sure you deploy your troops in linear formations (in order to be able to control them) and with multiple lines. Using multiple lines gives your troops a much higher chance to rally, thus hopefully giving you more time to wear down the enemy. Try not to be lured into total inactivity, a good defence requires you to act in order to channel attacks into where you can handle them and when the attacks begin to waver you have to have troops ready to counterattack. Otherwise the enemy will just regroup and have at you again.

The more standard European armies, like the French or the Danes, will have the option to either attack or defend depending on the circumstances. Use firepower to soften the enemy line up and then close in if and when you have the advantage. Lead the assault with grenadiers and/or attached commanders, in order to increase the chances of a successful close. Dragoons are good for softening up enemy cavalry from a distance, or for clearing out forward terrain, but should not be involved too heavily in cavalry melees.

In general, use your troops in the way they are/were intended, but make sure you use them!



Appendixes

APPENDIXES

Here you find some info on how to create your own Units and/or army lists. All necessary calculations etc are already done in the Army List books, these tables are mainly included for those who wish to know more of the system, or create variant lists, or lists for armies not yet covered.

Appendix I – Unit data tables

Following are the lists that have been used to create the Army Lists. Use them by locating the description that best matches the type of Unit you are creating, and then use the “size” column (either number of men for infantry, or number of Squadrons/companies of roughly 80-125 men for cavalry) to find the data for the Unit. Note that in some cases an exact match cannot be made, but then a mix of two tables can often be used instead. In general 100 men deployed in four ranks equals a FP of 1 and a CC of 1.

Heavy lancers

Cavalry equipped with heavy lances employed to charge enemy head on and no firearms. Always SH. Squadrons of roughly 80-100 men each.

<i>Size</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>FP</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Frontage</i>
1	1	-	4	-	1*50p
2	1	-	7	-	2*50p
3	1	-	11	-	3*50p
4	2	-	14/9	-	4*50p
5	2	-	18/12	-	5*50p
6	2	-	21/14	-	6*50p
7	2	-	25/16	-	7*50p
8	3	-	28/19/14	-	8*50p
9	3	-	32/21/16	-	9*50p
10	3	-	35/24/18	-	10*50p
11	3	-	39/26/19	-	11*50p

Heavy Eastern Horse, with light lances and firearms

E.g. the guard cavalry of the Ottoman Empire, and more heavily armoured non-hussar Polish cavalry. Almost exclusively classed as EH, but can also be classed as Levy Horse. Squadrons of roughly 80-100 men each.

<i>Size</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>FP</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Frontage</i>
1	1	<1	3	50p	1*50p
2	1	1	6	50p	2*50p
3	1	1	9	50p	3*50p
4	2	2/1	12/8	50p	4*50p
5	2	2/1	15/10	50p	5*50p
6	2	2/2	18/12	50p	6*50p
7	2	3/2	21/14	50p	7*50p
8	3	3/2/2	24/16/12	50p	8*50p
9	3	4/2/2	27/18/14	50p	9*50p
10	3	4/3/2	30/20/15	50p	10*50p
11	3	4/3/2	33/22/17	50p	11*50p
12	4	5/4/3/2	36/27/24/18	50p	12*50p