

# WAR | MAKER



TABLETOP WAR GAMING ENGINE  
SECOND EDITION

Runehammer Games Presents

**WAR | MAKER**  
**Second Edition**  
**Core Rules**

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**WAR | MAKER**  
CORE RULES

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# FOREWORD

## THE NEXT LEVEL

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This book is a companion to the *essential* WAR | MAKER BATTLEFIELD DECK. It contains all the core rules you need to build and play all kinds of war gaming scenarios. WAR | MAKER is inspired by the numerous wargaming titans that have defined our times. In an ongoing effort to embrace the creative wargamer, newcomer, or DIY player, WAR | MAKER seeks simplified common ground for all war games... to bring more people together and break the 'insider' feel that the hobby can sometimes portray. It's Wednesday night, let's all hit the table and roll some dice.

Before you begin, if you are a wargaming veteran, We WAR | MAKERS humbly ask that you set your assumptions and vast knowledge aside. See WAR | MAKER in its own light, not as a mere shadow of other games. Embrace the spirit, and fight on!



# THE PITCH

## COMMON GROUND

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There are many options for the enthusiastic wargamer. Of these, there are dominant brands we have all heard of and some we have totally mastered. WAR | MAKER does not deny these titans of our hobby, but offers an alternative to open new doors, not only between war game players, but between wargamers and role players of all kinds. A lofty goal achieved by *common ground*.

Common ground is a phrase we hear often, but here it is a core principle. One player might be entirely new to wargaming, while another may be a seasoned veteran of a world-famous rules system. By agreeing to play WAR | MAKER together, they give this phrase its powerful, focused meaning... that is to say, they come to the table and find *common ground* in the rules herein.



**WAR | MAKER provides a ruleset to offer many kinds of players common ground**

To some readers, WAR | MAKER might feel simple. To others, it may feel vast and complex with possibility. Either way, the foundational aspects of miniature making, placement, movement, and attacking with dice rolls are all here. The veteran should feel at home, the newcomer quickly comprehending why this hobby has such an evergreen quality, and brings us all back for more.

This core rules book may seem compact. It is! These are the essential rules that give WAR | MAKER its basic functions. Everything herein should be read with a spirit of imagination... seeing examples in your mind, or at your hobby table, that breathe life into the rules, battles and wars YOU invent.

Whatever form your hobby takes, WAR | MAKER simply asks to find common ground with others, and have fun!

## MAKING WARS

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There is a large elephant in this room to address right away: Where are *the specific battles and wars to be played?*

WAR | MAKER presents itself as a rules system, but where are the scenarios and setups? How is the reader to begin? Here is where the game gets its title: you, dear strategist, dedicated hobbyist, will CREATE these wars with your opponent(s) and plenty of imagination. This means setting up TERRAIN, designating OBJECTIVES, discussing victory conditions, and deciding on battle size. Here are three solid ways to ensure this creative process gives the best results:

**1: Clear Story** - Start every battle with a clear, simple statement of what's to happen. *"The Romans invade a Pictish village"* or *"The Outriders defend a base from a Ravager attack force."* This decisive statement will inform every other decision.

**2: Build FORCES with Purpose** - Using point budgets and your BATTLEFIELD DECK, build your armies with your opponent(s) to fit the battle at hand. Be creative, have fun, try new things!

**3: Next Chapter** - A war is two or more connected battles. Winning and losing a single battle is less interesting than the evolving story between! The orcs lose terribly in the opening battle, so give them a slight advantage as they counter attack in the next! The commandos fail to escape in the first battle, so dig them in to a base in the second, and so on! Let each battle be small, fast, and clear... the WAR is the larger scene, connecting battles into a continuous story that ebbs and flows with advantages and disadvantages. Let the story go where it may in the form of strategic setups and, sometimes, near-impossible goals or all-too easy clashes. You're not just a player, you're a WAR | MAKER!

# THE WAR GAME HOST

## CREATURE COMFORTS

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The most overlooked of all tabletop hobby aspects is hospitality. Before one rule, battle story, or attack mechanic is discussed, we must highlight the absolute need for good hosting in a war game session.



**Good hosting comes before good gaming**

As you consider WAR | MAKER and the legendary action ahead for your table, game night, or local shop, take time to consider the statement above. All too often have all gamers experienced awkward vibes, bad lighting, or off-putting players. Not you. You will be a host for the ages. Cover these bases to get started.... Every. Single. Session.

- **A Goodly Welcome:** So often is this simple step missed! Players **MUST** be welcomed to the environment with good manners and bright cheer. Be boisterous, make them feel at home, be the leader when it comes to energy and excitement.
- **Names, and Names Again:** Ensuring that all present know each others' names is absolutely crucial to any quality of play. Triple-check that every player knows every other, to the point of comedy.
- **Ushering and Space:** As the host, do not abandon your arriving player until they are settled and happy. Walk them to their spot, wave your arms, make the space theirs by your presence.
- **The Setting:** Life is not lived in fluorescent lights and terrible colors. A good gaming space is like a good dining space... elegant, comfortable, timeless, cozy. Make it so.
- **5 Second Tour:** Even if a player has been here before, remind them of the location of snacks, drinks, bathrooms, pens and paper, and the like. Ensure that they feel at home.



# THE WAR GAME HOST

## GAME MASTER

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With your hosting acumen at its appropriate peak, you can turn your eye to the game. It is common knowledge in our hobby that a general familiarity with rules and flow of any game are key for player, game master, host, and referee. What is mentioned far less is the art of social cues and 'reading the room' that make for memorable sessions and exuberant role play.

Although wargaming, as it is commonly known, does not have a gamemaster in the mainstream sense, there is always one player who fills this role. This is the person who prompts rolls, helps with resolving mechanics, enjoys pondering options aloud, celebrates table events, and shines spotlights on all those in attendance with kind words and eye contact.

As a keeper of an exciting table, YOU will be this player. You will embody the fundamental precept below:



**Energetic, supportive participation is the cornerstone of tabletop play in all forms**

Revel in your time, wargamer! Be excited for game night, roll out the red carpet, clean the bathroom, light a few candles, be sure music is playing! Enjoy your models, celebrate your terrain builds, make eye contact with your courageous opponents, ask about their day, call to the gods of war and honor!

All too often do we see these foundational social rules broken, neglected, or unnoticed. All too often is the welcome cold, the environment hostile, the mood strange. No more! Embrace, celebrate, and care for everyone at the table. Be your best self in battle! Enough introduction. Let's begin.

# THE GAME

## RULES BASICS

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Hail, commander! If you're reading these pages, you're one of many seekers out there looking for the rules engine that will bring your war games to life, without the friction of more complex, expensive, or prescriptive systems available. You're not just a warrior, not just a commander, not just a painter, builder, strategist... you, dear reader, are a WAR | MAKER.



**WAR | MAKER is a simple but flexible war gaming system built for creative play**

Wargaming has myriad forms, with even more styles of play. They are unified by two things: the fun of a large-scale, strategic battle clash and the visual, tactile experience of models and terrain. These two elements keep us playing, building, researching, spending, and rolling dice.

Like all tabletop gaming, there is no right way to do things here. The company of friends is our common goal, so let's enjoy an afternoon of bullets and blades!

WAR | MAKER's design offers a rules engine to emphasize the following types of commander. If this sounds like you, you're in the right place.

- **Creative Types:** You crave creative freedom in your hobby, and feel confined by some systems or styles. You want to scratch build things, customize, and kitbash.
- **Narrative Warriors:** You seek battles with story, gravity, and continuity. You want to upgrade and grow named heroes over time, building the story and, by extension, the stakes!
- **Book-Free Players:** You want to play at the table without referencing a book, or looking up stat tables and rules.

# USING HIT DICE

## A SIMPLER WAY TO ROLL

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Like many war games, WAR | MAKER uses dice to add excitement, luck, and chance to battles and attacks. The dice used here are generally called 'binary dice' in that they only have two possible results: HIT or MISS. These are simply D6's with 3 HIT faces and 3 MISS faces (1,2,3 being a MISS, 4,5,6 being a HIT on conventional dice). You can use standard six sided dice, craft or 3D print your own HIT DICE, or choose from many options found in the hobby.

HIT DICE are great in battle because they remove a great deal of cognitive load on the player. Especially when using skull-style HIT DICE (like the one shown below), the absence of numbers makes every roll faster, simpler, and more emotionally impactful. This makes play go faster, keeping energy high at the table.

Throughout WAR | MAKER, you will see terms like '1D' and '6D,' which indicate the rolling of 1 or 6 dice. Count HITS and deliver! Looking for a random number between 1 and 4? Roll 4D and count HITS. This simple system is the foundation of WAR | MAKER.

WAR | MAKER's most common rolls are 3 to 6 dice, so the standard set is 6. Some players roll multiple attacks at once to save time, necessitating a larger set. After a few games, you'll quickly get a feel for how many you prefer. Load up.

The feeling of 'letting go' of numbers in the use of HIT DICE is the first of many methods in WAR | MAKER to speed up and simplify play. Next, let's cover all the basics of setting up a battle.



# BATTLE SETUP

## THE 3 AGREEMENTS

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With your opponent(s) settled in and ready to play, setup your battle by making three agreements as follows:

### 1: THE BATTLE STORY

The most important agreement or idea in any war game is the story or concept of the conflict to be played. Is this an invasion? An escape? A last stand? A surgical strike? An attempt to contact reinforcements? A fight to launch a transport in time? Come up with something simple, powerful, and clear. Draw from your favorite world lore, movies, and books. Live in the worlds and scenes you know and love. Revel in the idea and make it exciting!

### 2: THE BATTLE SIZE

Agree with your opponent(s) on battle size. Is this a fast, small rescue mission, a brief encounter with specialists, a recon operation gone wrong, or a massive engagement with artillery, seas of soldiers, and total chaos? There are three possible sizes, measured in the points you'll each use to deploy your FORCES and buy their ABILITIES, as follows:



**Battles come in 3 possible sizes:  
Skirmish: 50pts | Battle: 100pts | Clash 150pts**

### 3: THE BATTLE SCENERY

Finally, review your size and story agreements and lay out a table for play. This could be a blasted wasteland, a fortified base, a huge crater, a dense jungle or crumbling city.

In time, you'll be giving your battles more flavor with OBJECTIVES and other special features, but all you really need is a cool scene with some cover here and there. A few cool landmarks are always good, especially if they fit or enhance your battle story idea.

# CHOOSING MODELS

## PLAYING THE HITS

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Before you dive into using your point budget to deploy FORCES for the battle to come, get a sense for what miniatures you'll be using. There's likely to be a colorful debate with other players here as you consider what models best fit the story. You may have a new army recently completed, only 'these guys' in your backpack, or old favorites you just love to play.

Preparing models for combat is a core part of what we all love in the wargaming hobby: our handiwork! Use a side table to get everything out in tidy rows, organized by color schemes, matching themes, or squads. You've put a lot of work into all these little warriors, so enjoy them!

When you have a rough idea of who you're playing, and how it fits the BATTLE STORY, you're ready for the nuts and bolts.



# DEPLOYING FORCES

## REGULARS, HEROES, AND ELITES

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First, let's look at REGULARS. These are the standard soldiers of your armies. REGULARS are the least expensive FORCE type, but they can be formidable when used with skill and strategy. Next up you have HEROES. These are your mighty warriors, specialists, or leaders. Each HERO is a one-unit FORCE. Finally, ELITES are the heaviest of hitters. Your titans, commanders, monstrosities, and behemoths. Here are the details you need...

### REGULARS DEBRIEF

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- **Cost:** 1 point per member, up to 6 per squad
- **Dice:** Roll as many dice in an attack as they have surviving members, ie: 1-6
- **Abilities:** REGULARS can be equipped with 1 ABILITY. You can also elect to give a FORCE of REGULARS no ABILITY.
- **Attacks:** Ranged *or* Melee attacks must be selected, usually based on model appearance

### HEROES DEBRIEF

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- **Cost:** 3 points, one member
- **Dice:** Roll 3 dice on all attacks
- **Abilities:** HEROES can be equipped with 1-2 ABILITIES. You can also elect to give a HERO no ABILITY.
- **Attacks:** Ranged *or* Melee attacks must be selected, usually based on model appearance

### ELITES DEBRIEF

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- **Cost:** 6 points, one member
- **Dice:** Roll 6 dice on all attacks
- **Abilities:** ELITES can be equipped with 1-3 ABILITIES. You can also elect to give an ELITE no ABILITY.
- **Attacks:** Ranged *or* Melee attacks must be selected, usually based on model appearance

# DEPLOYING FORCES

## REGULARS, HEROES, AND ELITES

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Before we get into ABILITIES, let's take a moment to consider the potential uses of FORCE types in their basic form. Each has a few details and costs to consider.

### REGULARS

If a specialized function is needed, a REGULAR squad can be the cheapest way to deploy that ABILITY or role... even opting for a 1 or 2 member unit. ABILITIES that replenish REGULARS members also give these FORCES potency and utility. Let's face it, it's undeniably cool to flood a battle with dozens of models.

### HEROES

Most armies will include 1-3 HEROES to serve special high damage functions, often supported by REGULARS. Heroes should be deployed to ensure key objectives are taken, even at the expense of REGULARS.

### ELITES

Since their cost is high, armies seldom have more than 2 ELITES in their ranks. You may find that 2 opposing ELITES can be fighting one-on-one at battle's end. If this occurs, the best of 3 attack rolls vanquishes the other, rather than trying to roll 6 HITS in a single attack, which can be time consuming.

In addition to their uses, selection of FORCE types will be driven by your ever-growing collection of models. You'll be building FORCE-to-miniature or miniature-to-FORCE in no time.



**Pay 1-6 pts for REGULARS (1 per member),  
pay 3 pts for a HERO, and 6 pts for an ELITE**

# ARMY SETUP

## BUILDING AN ARMY

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It's one thing to discuss FORCE costs and ABILITIES, but a specific army (commonly called a list), can be challenging to visualize. The player should be curious about what is possible, what is allowed, and how to decide on FORCES.

Armies come in three sizes: skirmish, battle, and clash. These are at 50, 100, and 150 points respectively. Both sides are allowed the same budget in an engagement, assuring a numeric balance in FORCES. For some missions, certain FORCES will be required for inclusion, but let's start simple.

When playing a battle, either from a WAR | MAKER book or your imagination, the size will be listed (skirmish, battle, or clash). With this decided, you and your opponent(s) grab some scratch paper and get to work building an army for that specific battle.

### STEP 1: MODELS AND IDEA

First, there is simple accounting. Mark down the budget. Then, start laying out models you want to deploy. Designate them as REGULARS, HEROES, or ELITES as needed, and get a rough idea of your cost. In time, this will be second nature!

Take a second look at the battle you are playing. What details about it might inform your choices with creating this army? Do you need fast-moving FORCES? Long-range capability? Maybe stealth or special functions are needed for a certain scenario. Maybe you just have cool new models you want to play! Sketch freely, getting a feel for how much it might 'cost' to deploy your FORCES.

In many cases, just the visual cues from your models will also be helpful as you get a rough idea of army cost and composition. Trust the plastic! With this first step done, you can focus in.



## BUILDING AN ARMY

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### STEP 2: ADDING ABILITIES

With a handful of models out, you're feeling good. *"These guys look great."* Now, you can take another strategic look, and grant FORCES ABILITIES. Use the BATTLEFIELD DECK, and start considering ABILITIES that might fit your army's purpose and theme. Put selected ABILITY cards under their respective models. Go back to pages 12-23 to keep clear on ABILITIES rules. Keep it simple, and keep an eye on the battle being played (and your opponent(s)) for ideas.

### STEP 3: FITTING THE BUDGET

Almost every time, you'll be over budget at first. To finish your army for combat, make the tough choices needed to balance that budget to its exact target or below. Yes, it's painful!

### ARMY BUILDING TIPS

- Start with a mixture of REGULARS, HEROES, and at least 1 ELITE. Specialize choices more as you learn the system.
- Using model details as cues, be sure to note and mention ranged vs. melee FORCES in your army. Models should visually self-identify here as either/or... **never both!**
- Consider the TERRAIN and OBJECTIVES of the battle to come. Be sure to include a few FORCES that are specifically included to accomplish or assist in the goals and challenges of the scenario.
- Use a BATTLEFIELD DECK, and draw the ABILITY cards for your FORCES. Place them near or beneath the models, moving the card(s) with them, for an easy reference of ABILITIES and discard-to-use powers.
- If in advanced play, be sure to note and include any effects or upgrades on FORCES with BATTLE EXPERIENCE from previous engagements! Level 'em up, and be sure your opponent notices these improvements.

# MAKING ATTACKS

## ROUND DAMAGE

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All combat in WAR | MAKER is resolved by a rule called 'round damage' or 'damage per round.' A round, like in all games, is one set of player turns. Damage against REGULARS is simplest:



**Killed REGULARS are removed instantly, 1 member killed per 1 HIT inflicted**

HITS inflicted on HEROES and ELITES are slightly different: they never carry over beyond the end of the round. So, for example, if an ELITE has taken less than 6 HITS in a round, in total, it is at 'full strength' thereafter. This rule relieves players of tracking HITS over time on ELITES and HEROES and rewards more punctuated attacks.



**If a HERO or ELITE is alive at the end of a round, it clears damage against it**

There are a myriad of possible things that can happen in a turn. The player will be moving FORCES and making attacks, assessing the battlefield, resolving ABILITIES and discussing details with their opponent(s) throughout. The damage-per-round rule will inform this process! Here are a few examples of events to expect as players exploit this foundational rule...

- **Pivot FORCES to finish a kill:** If a turn starts with an attack, but FORCES fall short of a kill, players will change their plans to bring more damage on that target
- **Over-Commit FORCES to ensure a kill:** To avoid a case of changing plans or missing a kill, players will send double the needed FORCES to deliver damage in a single round
- **Abandon a target:** With bad odds to muster the necessary HITS in a single round, a player may simply move off

## MOVEMENT AND DISTANCE

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What is quite complex in many war games is very simple here. All movement and distance is measured with a simple pencil. Generally speaking, you'll be using a standard, single pencil to check move, attack, and lines of sight every single turn. Keep one handy at all times! Let's look at all possible cases when it comes to distance and movement.

## MOVE A FORCE 1 PENCIL

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- **FORCES move as a unit.** Touch the eraser of your pencil to the lead-most model in your FORCE (or the only model if HERO or ELITE). Move that model the length of the pencil, with its rear edge touching the sharp point of the pencil. Now, simply move remaining models in that FORCE (if any) to cluster/contact with the movement leader. This means they are all touching.
- **TERRAIN will block or lengthen movements**, slowing a FORCE with go-arounds or climb-overs.
- **To ascend TERRAIN, a full movement is used**, even if less than 1 pencil in height. If TERRAIN is over a pencil in height, or designated as unclimbable by players before battle, only the CLIMB ABILITY can allow such ascent. Ascent can only be used if models can be perched atop the ascended TERRAIN.
- **DASH to move 2 pencils**, on any turn, a FORCE may move 2 pencils distance by foregoing its attack.

## MOVE FURTHER WITH ABILITIES

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FAST, FLIGHT, HIDDEN PASSAGE, and ESCAPE may offer more options for movement. Apply as needed, working with your opponent(s) to accurately measure longer moves or check in on the exact wording of an ABILITY. Read further for rules on ranged and melee FORCES, and their movement specifics.

# MELEE OR RANGED?

## TRADE OFFS OF TYPE

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All FORCES in WAR | MAKER are either ranged or melee. Each type has advantages and restrictions, which push the commander to employ them with wisdom, avoiding traps or out-maneuvering. These rules and limits will come into play most when pursuit or distance is used as a weapon. Use the following rules.



**MELEE FORCES must be in contact with their target to attack, and may CHARGE**

Melee FORCES are distinguished by their ability to CHARGE... that is, to MOVE THEN ATTACK. This is their strength, whereas their clear limitation is reach.



**RANGED FORCES can attack at 1 pencil distance, or point blank, but cannot CHARGE**

On the opposite side, ranged FORCES have strong reach (1 pencil distance, clear line of fire, or closer, up to point blank), but cannot attack after a movement. This makes ranged FORCES most useful for predictive attacks or defensive duties.

**Contact and Disengage:** Whether ranged or melee, FORCES can freely break away when contacting or engaging foes.

**Line of Fire:** If REGULARS are checking for a clear line of fire, and some models in their FORCE have a line while others do not, the models that are blocked cannot make that ranged attack. Use your pencil(s) to check. TERRAIN and FORCES can also block a clear line of fire. *"Get out of the way!"*

## A DETAILED LOOK

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TERRAIN is a term that refers to significant landmarks on a battlefield. TERRAIN objects block ranged attacks and ground movement (use a pencil to check for a clear line of fire for any model attempting a shot). If REGULARS are hit by fire, but some are safely behind TERRAIN, they are not hit, even if some of their members are (FORCES also block clear shots). Employ one of two rules when setting up a battlefield:

### ARRANGE BY MISSION

- When playing a mission or battle from this book (or other source material you use), simply follow the TERRAIN arrangement provided. This acumen in wargaming leans on the assumed work of the designer, or historical analyst, to provide all you need for a good and lively layout of elements. Confer with your opponent(s) every step of the way, and enjoy the setup process.

### ARRANGE IN TURNS

- If building a more freeform battlefield, agree to such with your opponent(s) then take turns placing elements. Place no more than 10 elements total, with at least 1 special element or story piece. Conclude this process by placing army STARTING POINTS at the corners and at least two OBJECTIVES in central locations, equidistant from STARTING POINTS.

Above all, TERRAIN should serve to accentuate the story of the battle at hand, not simply clutter the field or provide symmetrical cover or routing options. This often means asymmetrical scenes are built... a desperate escape, a fortified last stand, a clash in narrow canyons, or race to a high value target.



**TERRAIN's primary functions are to emphasize story and offer options**

# ADDING OBJECTIVES

## MAKE BATTLES MORE DYNAMIC

In WAR | MAKER battles, OBJECTIVES are essential for the story at hand. FORCES move and clash to claim and occupy these special locations, but how do the rules bring those concepts to life?

First, all OBJECTIVES follow this basic rule:



**OBJECTIVES are counted any time they are 'landed on' or occupied at turn start**

- Landing on an OBJECTIVE simply means a FORCE ends a movement there. This counts as one point, and can be tracked with a die, token, or other means. Also, as mentioned above, if a FORCE starts a subsequent turn standing on the OBJECTIVE, another point is earned.
- Even if killed, FORCES earn OBJECTIVE POINTS for their army, which persist beyond their individual demise.
- If opposing FORCES are occupying, or standing on, an OBJECTIVE, neither side earns points. For this reason, it can be useful to note the exact SIZE of the OBJECTIVE on custom TERRAIN. That is, large OBJECTIVE areas can be very, very difficult to claim! A small OBJECTIVE area, though, such as a platform the size of a single model, can greatly hasten OBJECTIVE occupation.
- OBJECTIVES in WAR | MAKER are claimed with either 3 or 6 points. These values will be specified in a battle listing, or agreed to by opponents before battle start.
- No battlefield should feature more than 3 OBJECTIVES.

With these rules mastered, the commander is burdened with the attacking, guarding, and retention of OBJECTIVES during battle, often at the cost of FORCES. This, in an essential sense, is the nature of war.

# ADDING OBJECTIVES

## EXAMPLES

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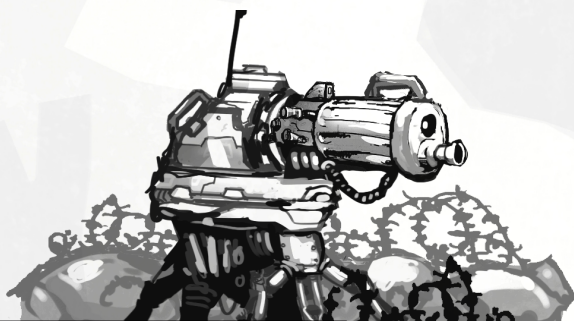
Beyond specific OBJECTIVES listed in battles and their particular details, there are common types to consider in DIY battlefields or bespoke conflicts. This is not an exhaustive list, but a starting point for creative WAR | MAKERS to consider.

**LOCATION:** An area of the battlefield. These simplest OBJECTIVES are often in 'take 3 for victory' scenarios, which basically equate to territory wars.

**WEAPON:** By claiming a WEAPON or HEAVY WEAPON OBJECTIVE, FORCES acquire an offensive capability after earning 3 or 6 points there. This exact capability is often a 3D or 6D ranged attack, for instance, usable by an occupying FORCE.

**BASE:** A BASE is an OBJECTIVE that includes defenses and supplies for use in repelling attackers. A BASE is always a 6 point OBJECTIVE. Once taken, FORCES there earn the ARMOR ABILITY while occupying the location. Additionally, if REGULARS claim this location, their ranks are replenished to full membership.

**TERMINAL:** A 3 or 6 point TERMINAL acts as an activation point for some other element of the battle. TERMINALS offer no benefits to those who claim them, and are no longer active after use. A simple switch, computer unit, or lever.



# BUILD YOUR SKILLS

## THE BUILDER STRATEGIST

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Now that you have the nuts and bolts at your disposal, take a wider look at the implication of WAR | MAKER's systems. This is a war game designed not to tell you 'how it's done' or 'what can be,' but offers a framework for YOU to create your unique FORCES and armies to meet the challenges at hand.

Much like a good role-player creates his character, you'll be creating your war fighters here. This creative hobby-work has two aspects: the game-making, and the model-making. Of course you'll be spending points before a battle to field your army, choosing FORCES and ABILITIES in accord with a strategy or scenario. The true hobbyist, realizes there is a creative effort deeper within: to actually build and paint models as preparation for creating armies and FORCES!



**Build custom models with intended FORCE and ABILITY combinations in mind**

I knew my xenomorphic army would be going up against Alex's 'Planetary Rangers.' The Ryll Uplink, a notoriously deadly king-of-the-hill battle, specifies that *'beasts, monsters, and xenomorphs cannot operate electronics.'* Intent on building a better counter-strategy to this battle than just bum-rushing the uplink tower, I custom-built two xenomorph HEROES, each with the DECKER ABILITY. I checked in with my opponent. "Is this ok?" "Ok? It's awesome! Looka those guys. Cool kit bashing!"

This kind of hobby mindset makes for a vast realm of build, paint, and configure options for every battle. Unleash your creativity and bring it to the table!



# BUILD YOUR SKILLS

## RETREAT OR WITHDRAWAL

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An easy way to ensure massive loads of BATTLE EXPERIENCE for your FORCES would be to retreat from a battle. That is, to cede the victory and run away, ensuring massive survival and handing the victory to your opponent.

In WAR | MAKER, this is considered bad sportsmanship, thus no retreat or withdrawal is allowed. FORCES deployed are fully committed to their goal. Do or die. Not all battles end in eradication, though, either, depending on victory conditions, thus survivors endure, earning precious BATTLE EXPERIENCE.

Depending on the war and/or battles you're about to play, much will become clear about these aspects of strategy, but in short: *there is no retreat or withdrawal.*

Get in the fight, stay in the fight.



# MAKING WARS

## BATTLES AND WARS

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A battle is a single engagement. Much of this book is devoted to the concepts and mechanics of a single battle. This isn't BATTLE | MAKER, though! The next level of play is a *war*. Here are two rules of thumb to keep in mind for both levels of play:



**A battle consists of 2 or more armies, an agreed FORCE budget, and win conditions**



**A war consists of 18 battles, played in order, with persistent themes and lore**

The average night of wargaming can easily host 3 battles. With this in mind, you'll have a handful of sessions to complete a war, depending on your pace. The ruling of 'a war is 18 battles' may seem a bit arbitrary, but the reader is invited to embrace this specification, even if inventing your own wars or themes. It is a sweet spot between too big and too small.

To give a war the feel, the lore, the gravity it deserves, you'll need the concept of *persistence*. Persistence is the carrying-over of details, themes, grudges and goads from battle to battle. To do this, you'll need a notebook, journal, or other agreed-to means of keeping records with your opponent(s).

As you master the art of the war journal, you'll develop all kinds of new hobby habits including the modifying of models and the keeping of notes. Most of all, you'll need to track *experience*.

# LEVELING UP FORCES

## BATTLE EXPERIENCE

---

As a war plays out in its many battles, your FORCES will undergo all manner of destructive struggle. Few will survive. Those who do carry their scars as grim reminders. This is the essence of BATTLE EXPERIENCE, a rules system for the full 'narrative' experience of WAR | MAKER. After a battle is completed, work with your opponent(s) to record the following...

**SURVIVOR:** FORCES that are still alive at the end of a battle receive 1 experience point.

**DEATH DEALER:** Any FORCE that kills 3 or more enemy FORCES unassisted (if counting REGULARS killed, an entire FORCE of REGULARS counts as a single kill here) receives 1 experience point. DEATH DEALER can be awarded to FORCES that do not survive.

**COMMENDATION:** An Iron Star Medal is awarded for mighty deeds in battle. Choose any 1 FORCE in a battle, surviving or not, and award them 3 experience points.

Right away, you'll notice that experience points will need to be recorded over time, across many battles, to be effective. Use an agreed-to method here, naming your FORCES or models, recording their ABILITIES (if any) and experience gained. This is much like keeping a character sheet in any other tabletop game, also matching those records to a miniature.

Before the next battle explodes into action, check experience totals on your FORCES and consider the awards on the following pages. Purchase and note these awards, and bring them into play with your opponent(s) approval. War makes skulls of most, and heroes of few.

# LEVELING UP FORCES

## EXPERIENCE AWARDS

---

Expend a FORCE's battle experience to purchase any of the following awards between battles. Note the award(s) on your FORCES list.

### 6 point awards...

---

**HEROIC PROMOTION:** Purchase this award to promote 1 member of a REGULAR FORCE to a HERO. This unit still costs only 1 point to field, as any REGULAR, and remains a part of his native FORCE. Modify the model with a gold base ring to note this award.

**HEALING FACTOR:** A medical kit or innate regeneration element is added to this FORCE. When a single-use ABILITY is deployed, it remains in play with one more use, rather than being discarded. Consider marking this award with a green base ring.

**POWER SURGE:** This FORCE receives the POWER SURGE ABILITY henceforth, even if at maximum number of ABILITIES.

### 9 point awards...

---

**WEAPON REQUISITION:** This FORCE receives a weapon upgrade. When attacking, 6's rolled are tallied and rolled again. If using HIT DICE, a 6 is indicated by a variant crossbone-skull.

**GUARD REQUISITION:** For HERO or ELITE FORCES only, grant a single REGULAR bodyguard model. This model cannot be hit as long as the ELITE/HERO master is alive. The bodyguard fires 1D at any enemy FORCE that harms its master unit, as a reaction, no matter when that may occur in the turn cycle. The guard should feature a visible color match or fit to its master unit.

# LEVELING UP FORCES

## EXPERIENCE AWARDS

---

**ARMOR REQUISITION:** This FORCE receives heavily reinforced armor. Modify the model with a visible addition. Any time damage is absorbed, this FORCE rolls 3D and ignores the amount of HITS rolled.

**JUMPER:** This FORCE is awarded a single-use propulsion surge or dash property. Modify the model. This property allows a single use of the HIDDEN PASSAGE ABILITY, even if already at maximum number of ABILITIES.

### 12 point awards...

---

**ELITE PROMOTION:** Purchase this award to promote 1 HERO to an ELITE. This unit still costs only 3 points to field, as any HERO. This promotion also includes an ABILITY, even if already at maximum number of ABILITIES. Modify the model with a double-thick base ring or war banner to note this award.

**BOMBARDMENT:** Once this award is purchased, the destruction of this FORCE triggers a single instance, at that location of AIR STRIKE and RIGGED. These two ABILITIES occur simultaneously when the FORCE is destroyed, decimating an area. BOMBARDMENT models should be modified with a white base ring or cross-hair themed addition.

**RESERVE:** This FORCE is unique in its aspect of second-wind. This allows the regeneration of the FORCE to full membership, when destroyed, relocating to the STARTING POINT. This property is usable once per battle, and marked on the model(s) with a wreath, battle laurel, or halo type addition.

# ABILITIES

## THE KEY TO VICTORY

If you have played any war game at all, you know that FORCES are differentiated and made interesting not just by numbers, but by special traits and capabilities. In WAR | MAKER, this specialization is handled by ABILITIES.



Use your WAR | MAKER Battlefield Deck to keep ABILITIES at hand during play

ABILITIES are simple rule-bending aspects assigned to your FORCES for a small point cost. WAR | MAKER is unique in that it employs a deck of cards to keep ABILITIES front and center in play. Place ABILITY cards beneath FORCES, or at the table edge for easy reminders. Some ABILITIES even call for a 'discard-to-use' activation method. For these reasons, your WAR | MAKER Battlefield Deck, included with this book, is essential.

No ABILITY is 'best' here! Exactly which ABILITIES you choose, for which FORCES, creates boundless strategic combinations and approaches. Every battle is different. You could even agree on a BATTLE STORY that requires certain ABILITIES. Read on...



## ABILITIES LIST

---

There are 51 ABILITIES in the base Battlefield Deck. Let's give each a look. For faster table reference and use, remember to have your BATTLEFIELD DECK handy!

### ACID

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *If killing this FORCE with melee, enemy FORCES in contact are inflicted with 3D instantly.*

A classic for xenomorphic FORCES. Also useful for any FORCES assigned to capture or hold objectives... even if destroyed, ACID can prevent the assailants from claiming that objective.

### AIR STRIKE

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *Discard this ABILITY to inflict a 6D attack anywhere on the battlefield.*

Expensive for a single-use action, AIR STRIKE can be an effective failsafe or backup measure, offering a brutal attack in case of strategic disaster. This ABILITY will make its host FORCE a high-value target for attentive foes.

### ARMOR

---

3 pt cost. *Re-roll HITS made against this FORCE.*

Possibly the most foundational ABILITY in WAR | MAKER. ARMOR adds simple, fast durability to a FORCE no matter the degree of attack. Get used to rolling a lot of ARMOR re-rolls in any game.

### AUTOGUN

---

3 pt cost. *Deploy this ABILITY in melee range. The AUTOGUN will fire a 3D attack once per round. Destroy with 3 HITS.*

Use the card or an autogun model for this emplacement-style ABILITY. The attack follows normal ranged limits. Activate its attack any time during the player's turn who deployed it. An essential strategy for guarding objectives, high ground, or pinch points.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### BANNER

---

3 pt cost. *If moving toward this FORCE, allied FORCES move 2 pencils.*

This ABILITY offers the FAST ABILITY to multiple FORCES at once, if engaged in a rally, regroup, or “to me!” type maneuver. Can prove highly effective when coupled with FAST on its host FORCE.

### BARRAGE

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *Discard to use. As an attack, roll 6D. For each HIT, inflict 3D on an enemy in range.*

More powerful than an AIR STRIKE, but limited by conventional range, and volatile in effect. Best used for a blitz or tip-of-the-spear FORCE built to break opening lines of defense.

### BARRICADED

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *This FORCE cannot be hit by melee attacks.*

The counterpoint to EVASIVE, this ability is best used when FORCES are facing a harrowing melee opponent. Also useful for FORCES assigned to hold objectives.

### BEAM STRIKE

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *When attacking, this FORCE's HITS impact any 2 enemy FORCES in range.*

In melee, this ABILITY acts as a cleave or sweep attack. At range, a spray or piercing shot. Simple. Formidable.

### BERZERK

---

3 pt cost. *When using CHARGE to attack, this FORCE adds 1D to its attack.*

Essential for the forward melee lines of an assault.



# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### BLADES

---

3 pt cost. *When using melee attacks, this FORCE re-rolls all misses.*  
A natural compliment or alternative to BERZERK for FORCES spearheading a ground rush or objective attack.

### BLINK MODULE

---

3 pt cost. *Discard this ABILITY to use. Move the FORCE with this ABILITY back to its starting point instantly.*  
Unstable tech enables an instant and total retreat to safety. Deploying this ABILITY at a key moment in a turn can greatly frustrate a foe, but it only has one use. An ELITE with TWO BLINK MODULES? Infuriating.

### BOLSTER

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *This FORCE grants 1D to all allied FORCES in contact with it.*  
One of the ultimate ELITE ABILITIES for those using squad movement or large battle lines. Also handy with a companion SNIPER or HOWITZER unit.

### BUILDERS

---

3 pt cost. *In place of an attack, roll 3 HITS to construct simple, blocking TERRAIN. The TERRAIN must be 1 pencil or less in size.*  
A non-combat ABILITY used to clutter the battlefield, provide access to unreachable objectives, or improvise cover for large ranged FORCES.

### BULLSEYE

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *Discard this ABILITY to make a ranged attack of 6D.*  
Simple! A brutal aimed shot, saved for a key moment.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### CARNIVORE

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *When making a melee kill, this FORCE may recover 3D lost members.*

This ABILITY is a good demonstration of the regenerative power of REGULARS in combat. Is it a bit grotesque to devour the enemy? Maybe so.

### CLIMB

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE may ascend TERRAIN as part of its normal move.*

The delay caused by ascending buildings or rock outcrops can give ranged fighters a heavy advantage on high ground. This FORCE is inserted specifically to break that advantage.

### COMMENDATION

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE has been decorated for valor. Enemies attacking it use 1D less than normal.*

Intimidation can be powerful armor. Consider reserving this ABILITY as an experience award for FORCES who survive battles, show distinction, or persist through your campaign or war.

### DECKER

---

3 pt cost. *FORCES with this ABILITY may use electronic items or objectives when within 2 pencils.*

Using a datapad or uplink often means leaping in harm's way. With a DECKER, that problem is solved from a safe distance.

### DEMOLISH

---

3 pt cost. *If in range of a TERRAIN feature, roll 3 HITS to destroy that feature. Not usable on victory-critical TERRAIN.*

The best way to counter overactive BUILDERS or deny enemy cover.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### DUELIST

---

3 pt cost. *If fighting a single enemy, this FORCE adds 1D to any attacks rolled.*

It can be hard to predict a one-on-one fight being critical to a battle, but when it is... this ABILITY suddenly seems masterfully selected.

### ENERGY PYLON

---

3 pt cost. *REGULAR FORCES in contact with this FORCE recover 3D of lost members at the end of the round.*

REGULARS are noted for their unique property of recovery. TO make the most of this, a back-line FORCE with ENERGY PYLON is a staple of any large-scale assault squad.

### ESCAPE

---

3 pt cost. *If killing a foe, this FORCE may move after its attack, even if using RANGED or CHARGE to do so.*

Moving AFTER a kill is a unique value-add to a surgical attack unit. This can alleviate a need for backup forces, cover, or defensive ABILITY spending.

### EVASIVE

---

3 pt cost. *RANGED attacks cannot hit this FORCE.*

A hugely useful ABILITY that persuades your opponent to diversify their army. This annoyance can, however, paint a target on these FORCES for a melee assault.

### FAST

---

3 pt cost. *When moving this FORCE, always move 2 pencils distance, even in a CHARGE.*

For melee-focused armies, this ability is critical. The fast-moving FORCE, however, seldom survives long on its own.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### FLARE

---

3 pt cost. *Allies attacking the same foe, in the same round, as this FORCE, gain 1D.*

Leadership is a concept that can be hard to capture in a chaotic battle. Along with BOLSTER, this ABILITY brings that flavor to any FORCE, commanding others focus fire.

### FLIGHT

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE can leap or fly over any TERRAIN in its path, even if using CHARGE to attack.*

If a battlefield is cluttered with BUILDERS or opponent-placed blockades, a few FLIGHT units can help to break enemy defenses. Coupled with FAST, this can make a terrible offensive power.

### FURY

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *If this FORCE makes at least 1 HIT with an attack, it may attack once more.*

Perhaps the most effective ELITE ABILITY. This 'bonus attack' effect can only trigger once, even if more HITS are scored. FURY is often role played as multiple limbs or numerous guns.

### GUN PROTOTYPE

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *If attacking REGULAR FORCES at range, this FORCE gains an extra 3D.*

A very specific tactical selection is made with this ABILITY, which specializes in neutralizing REGULARS. Useful against hordes.

### GUNSLINGER

---

3 pt cost. *If this FORCE rolls all HITS with a ranged attack, it may attack once more.* This bonus effect only triggers once, even if the bonus attack is max.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### HIDDEN PASSAGE

---

3 pt cost. *Discard this ABILITY to move 3 pencils, ignoring TERRAIN in between.*

Many battlefields have unseen tunnels. This single-use ABILITY exploits such detail, but only once per conflict. Ambush? Escape?

### HINDER

---

3 pt cost. *Enemy FORCES in contact with this FORCE must roll a HIT on 1D to move away.*

This ABILITY is similar to TAUNT in that it limits enemy options. Use with resilient FORCES to create a time-consuming engagement for your opponent, slowing them with 'sticky' fighting.

### HOWITZER

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE may only attack every other round, but can attack up to 4 pencils range. Cannot attack at point blank.*

A very slow FORCE, spending time in reload, can be concealed behind front lines and still attack with this ABILITY. Note that with this ABILITY, sight lines must still be established to fire.

### MARKSMAN

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE re-rolls all misses when using ranged attacks.* Likely the most foundational ABILITY in WAR | MAKER, along with ARMOR. A single re-roll on all ranged misses can be a huge 'swing' from failure to victory.

### MASSIVE

---

9 pt cost. Elite ABILITY Only. *This FORCE functions as TERRAIN, blocking sight lines, but immune to DEMOLISH.*

If an ELITE is to be used as a spearhead FORCE, this ABILITY ensures that all those in tow are safe from enemy fire.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### MEDAL

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *If reduced to 1 member, this REGULAR FORCE becomes a single HERO.*

As shown in the Experience section, this card makes an excellent reward for FORCES surviving a battle. The craft hobbyist is encouraged to upgrade one model to reflect this ABILITY.

### MEDICAL

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *This FORCE recovers 1 member at the end of any round it is attacked and not destroyed.*

Use MEDICAL to keep REGULARS replenished. This ABILITY cannot fill a REGULAR FORCE beyond its normal 6 member limit.

### NECRO AGENT

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *Discard this ABILITY to resurrect 6D members of this FORCE.*

When discarding NECRO AGENT, glowing green gas brings the fallen back to life! Roll 6D. For each HIT, replenish 1 member.

### PHASE FIELD

---

3 pt cost. Regular Ability Only. *This FORCE cannot be attacked until it attacks or interacts with TERRAIN.*

This ABILITY is used for stealthy incursions, demolitions, or objectives. Discard once the field has been compromised by interaction with objects or an attack.

### POWER CORE

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *This FORCE may spread its HITS on an attack, in any array, between available targets.*

Sprays of gunfire or sweeping melee attacks are delivered via this powerful ABILITY. The player is allowed to roll HIT DICE before deciding on the dispersal of damage rolled.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### POWER SURGE

---

3 pt cost. *Discard this ABILITY to add 3D to an attack roll. This may be executed before or after the attack is rolled.*

An inexpensive but potent single-use damage burst for lower grade units hitting high value targets.

### RALLY BANNER

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *Discard this ABILITY to grant 3D to any FORCE that can see this HERO.*

This ABILITY offers the same damage boost as POWER SURGE, but as a leadership element. Keep this HERO in view!

### RAVAGER

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *This FORCE gains 1D for any kills made by allies within 1 pencil that round. Cleared at round end.*

Using this ABILITY, a HERO should go at round's end, building power from allied kills to a crescendo of terrible focus.

### REVENGE

---

3 pt cost. *If attacking a FORCE that attacked this FORCE in the previous round, gain 1D.*

REVENGE is a constant element in battle. This ABILITY simply codifies and encourages it. Never forgive. Never forget.

### RIGGED

---

3 pt cost. *When destroyed, this FORCE explodes, inflicting a 3D attack on all those within 1 pencil distance.*

Explosions do not tell friend from foe. If explosive or volatile TERRAIN is in the blast, consider adding a chain reaction explosion with that TERRAIN as the secondary center-of-radius. The definition of 'volatile' or 'explosive' TERRAIN should be discussed before battle start, if in play.

# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### SHIELD

---

9 pt cost. Elite Ability Only. *Discard this ABILITY to ignore one entire round of attacks. Execute AFTER those attacks are rolled.*

An ideal choice for a COMMANDER who will inevitably be pursued or embroiled in combat. This ABILITY is a true life saver.

### SNIPER

---

3 pt cost. *This FORCE can make ranged attacks at up to 2 pencils distance.*

Without proper overwatch, your advance lines will be vulnerable to rush or CHARGE attacks. The SNIPER is your solution, able to pick off enemy HEROES before melee in engaged.

### SOLOIST

---

6 pt cost. Hero Ability Only. *If fighting with no allies within 1 pencil, grant this FORCE an extra 1D on all attacks.*

Getting caught alone isn't always by design, but when it happens, this ABILITY is critical for deep planning or assassin type strikes.

### STEALTH

---

3 pt cost. *Discard this ABILITY to vanish for 1 round. After use of STEALTH, the FORCE may move, not attack, that round.*

'Vanish' is a powerful word in combat. As long as a passable route is available, this ABILITY can be used to escape many tight spots or certain deaths. Warning: may cause enemy rage.

### TAUNT

---

3 pt cost. *If enemies are in contact with this and other allied FORCES, they must attack this FORCE first.*

Often, the best way to protect an ally is simply to take a beating. This ABILITY gives the foe no choice but to oblige.



# ABILITIES

## ABILITIES LIST

---

### UNLOAD

---

3 pt cost. *Discard this ABILITY to inflict a 6D ranged attack against a REGULAR FORCE.*

The old street-sweeper. This ABILITY is the worst fear of all REGULARS, able to decimate a full squad with one roll, even from a depleted or weaker foe.

### WEAPON ORB

---

3 pt cost. *This alien relic amplifies weaponry, adding 1D to all attacks made by this FORCE.*

Possibly the simplest, most straightforward ABILITY in WAR | MAKER, and as reliable as they come.

*\*Reminder: The WAR | MAKER **BATTLEFIELD DECK** is key to using, deploying, memorizing, and tracking ABILITIES during battle! Be sure to keep it in your combat kit!*



# SOLO VARIANT

## I WORK ALONE

---

It's no easy thing to wage battles and even wars alone. Not because of the complexity of the hobby, but because you become your own opponent, and can get mired in introspection. Like all solo gamers, if you are undertaking such an endeavor, you know that a simplistic set of 'artificial intelligence' rules can alleviate this problem... posing an automated challenge for the solo gamer.

Many modern tabletop games have made innovative strides in this area. In WAR | MAKER, the simple system below is employed, but still places the burden of army creation squarely on the player. Also ensure that win conditions, OBJECTIVES and special TERRAIN are clearly defined before a battle begins.

A: Always place STARTING POINTS at opposite corners.

B: When battle begins, on each enemy turn, roll a D8 for your enemies, abiding by the table below to their greatest benefit.

- 
- 1: Enemies attack/charge all available targets with all ABILITIES
  - 2: Enemies attack/charge all available targets with all ABILITIES
  - 3: Enemies make all attacks/CHARGE, but preserve discard ABILITIES
  - 4: Enemies make all attacks/CHARGE, but preserve discard ABILITIES
  - 5: Enemies attack if ranged or in contact, but do not use CHARGE
  - 6: Enemies move toward nearest targets, staying in cover
  - 7: Enemies regroup, moving toward each other or cover
  - 8: Enemies move according to rolled directional dice, scattering
- 

C: Once the enemy is resolved, take your turn to the best of your ability, exploiting, or being harrowed by, results of the D8 roll.

# CO-OP VARIANT

## US VS. THEM

---

One of the most exciting ways to play a full fledged war is not as opponents, but as allies. Up to 4 players can play against a vast enemy army, controlling subsets or squads of their side in the conflict and using the foundational D8 roll on the previous page to guide enemy actions.

This play style is straight forward if all players are collaborative and communicative, working through each set of moves and rolls with delight and suspense as things unfold, and tracking battle experience.

For a truly ‘next level’ war experience, one player may even volunteer as the WAR MAKER. This player acts as a referee, enemy dice roller, and, most notably, creator of the war’s 18 battles, lore, experience awards, special TERRAIN and other key details. For experienced gamemasters, this will be familiar territory, and can lead to some of the best hybrid wargaming/role play there is.

## FALL IN

---

No matter how you and your friends use or play WAR | MAKER at your game table, the rules and methods here, coupled with the essential WAR | MAKER BATTLEFIELD DECK, will innovate and evolve your war games.

Good luck, and may your dice be kind.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Alex and Scotty are playing a WAR | MAKER session in the basement, surrounded by models, paints, and yard tools. Some heavy cinematic war drums murmur in the background, and an overhead light casts stark shadows under a field of miniatures and moss trees. Let's listen in.

A: "You're really going to send your marksmen around the boulders? They'll be massacred! I have all these praetorian heroes right here waiting."

S: "Maybe so, but you'll have to contend with them, they will die glorious deaths to split your hold on the catapults." Scotty gets his pencil, touching the eraser to his Pictish spear-throwers, then the sharpened tip to his destination. The measurement gets just beyond a group of large rocks, offering a shot on his next turn. "I'm moving this round, so they can't fire yet, but your guards are in my sights." Panning over to the open field at center, Scotty has regular forces of 3, 5, and 6 all in contact with Roman shield fighters. He rolls each in turn.

A: "My shield wall all have the armor ability, so go ahead and re-roll all the hits you scored there! Ha!"

S: "Yep. Ok, after the armor re-roll, 2, 4, and 4. Great! Your front line is dwindling, old man! Get those guys outta here! Your turn."

A: "Ok, first I need to close on these marksmen ambushers. These 3 hero units are headed that way, but... nope, can't reach for melee this turn. I'm a sitting duck for your spears, but I have to halt that advance. Fire catapults! Let's see, 3 elite snipers... 18 dice at long range, bombarding your 2 heroes back there."

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

---

S: "18 dice against 2 heroes? It's ridiculous! Scandalous!"

A: "I need them off the field with that fast ability. Ok, here we go-what? only 4 hits on 18 freaking dice? Cruel fate! Ok, fine, wipe one hero off. What a waste."

S: "Rognok leaps to the side, laughing at your cowardly machine weapons! Death to Rome! Is that your turn? Ok. Let's start with my marksmen! They unleash on your hero detachment! Let's see... I have two squads of 6 Pictish spearmen. Need 9 hits here to slaughter your heroes outright, but doesn't feel likely. I'll fire the first six on your first hero." Scotty rolls six dice. "Only 2 hits, and re-rolling my misses for the marksman ability. No additional hits? Brutal. Ok, with that horrible roll, I'll direct the second squad on that first, hero, too. They only need 1 hit, but i need to guarantee the kill."

A: "One roman eagle taking on all 12 spearmen! What a beast!"

S: "Ok, got 3 more hits, so more than needed, but this force attacks as one, so your hero is shredded by a hail of spears. Tough go with cold dice there. Ok back at the front line, my fighters will all expend their power surge ability. I've had enough of this shield wall! Ok rolling. 3, 5 and 5 across the line there. Re-rolling for your armor. All hits hold! Adding power surges now, three dice per force. Dude."

A: "How did you just roll eight hits on nine power surge dice?"

S: "The pagan gods are older than your silly Roman planets! The Picts break through! Two of your shield regulars are decimated!"

A: "Recalibrate catapults! Down fire height 20 degrees! Fire! 18 dice against your men at center field! To hell with the few shield stragglers! Fire and destruction!"

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

---

S: “You’ve lost your Roman mind! Your own troops!”

A: “Look at that! 14 hits! Your fighter line, and these two shield stragglers are all obliterated in tar and flame! Behold the brutal power of Roman might! Meanwhile, on the flank, I have two heroes left to stop your spearmen. Well look there, my first hero roll is squat. Change of plan, this last hero will cut and run.” Alex measures a move, seeking cover.

S: “An impressive display of strategy, sir. My commander, Merlin Bluetooth, gives a strange order in ancient druidish. I’m going to use the hidden passage ability on these berzerkers at last. Been waiting to enact Merlin’s plan.”

A: “Oh, boy, here we go.”

S: “Yes! 4 berzerker heroes, all dashing through a secret tunnel 3 pencils.” Scotty measures it out. “Right under your wall of spikes! They appear inside your fort, shirtless and mad with fury! By that measurement, I have contact on your catapults with 3 of the 4 ‘zerkers!”

A: “Hidden passage! MERLINNN!!”

S: “These guys roll, 3 each. Ok only one hit on the first roll. I need six to destroy a catapult, so the next two, three dice each, all on that catapult! I can only get one miss here! Yes! Right on the nose! My ‘zerkers smash your diabolical war machine!”

A: “Devious barbarians!”

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

---

S: "That was epic, but can they survive your counterattack. They're behind enemy lines! Fight, bearskins! Fight!"

A: "Can't use the catapults, but I have my commander and one squad of regulars back here. 4 berzerker heroes? 12 hits to slaughter them all? Well, my commander has the blades ability, let's start there! Captain Gladius leaps into the battle, single-handedly attacking the 4 berzerkers! 6 dice here, re-rolling misses. Bam! All six are hits! The berzerkers are cut in half! My commander also has shield, so even if you fight back, I'll block them all!"

S: "GLADDIUUSSS!!"

A: "Ok my regulars move in, but, oof no hits rolled."

S: "The 'zerkers attack the catapult again! Uh... nope not good enough. Ok, well, if the catapults are in place at the end of the battle, no matter our forces, I lose, so I will break off my spearmen and sweep over- here."

A: "You'll never make it across the field!"

S: "Foolish imperial! Merlin has yet to use his next strategem... I'll discard my air strike ability here..."

A: "No. No you do not, young man."

S: "Still mostly invisible in his phase field, Merlin the lord of all wizards raises his twisted oaken staff, calling out to pagan gods, as storm clouds gather above the roman war machines! As the lightning gathers, Captain Gladius feels a strange tingle in the air."

A: "You wouldn't!"

S: "Death to the imperialists! Come forth, oh storm!"







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