

# ***THE UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO DBA***

**Updated for v2.2+**



**A WADBAG PRODUCTION**

November 2013



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# Table of Contents

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INTRODUCTION .....	1
GAME MATERIALS .....	2
PLAYING SCALE.....	3
ELEMENTS .....	4
ARMY LISTS.....	7
TERRAIN PIECES.....	9
CAMPS .....	11
RIVERS .....	12
SETTING UP A GAME .....	13
TERRAIN PLACEMENT.....	15
DISMOUNTING .....	17
SEQUENCE OF PLAY.....	18
TACTICAL MOVEMENT .....	19
PIPS.....	20
MOVEMENT DISTANCE .....	21
SINGLE ELEMENT MOVES.....	23
GROUP MOVES.....	24
LITTORAL LANDINGS .....	28
SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT MOVEMENT.....	29
MOVING THROUGH FRIENDLY ELEMENTS.....	30
BREAKING OFF FROM FULL FRONT CONTACT .....	31
ZONE OF CONTROL.....	32
FULL FRONT, FLANK, AND REAR CONTACT .....	35
MOVING INTO CONTACT.....	36
DISTANT SHOOTING .....	39
CLOSE COMBAT .....	43
COMBAT RESOLUTION .....	46
COMBAT RESOLUTION FACTORS .....	47
COMBAT RESULTS TABLE .....	48
OUTCOME MOVEMENT .....	50
EXAMPLES: DISTANT SHOOTING .....	55
EXAMPLES: CLOSE COMBAT.....	56
WINNING AND LOSING .....	57
PRINT AND ON-LINE RESOURCES .....	58
OTHER STUFF.....	59
GLOSSARY.....	60
INDEX.....	62



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# Introduction

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How simple can a set of miniatures rules be and still hold your interest over time?

How short can a game be and still give you the satisfaction of a good contest?

How few figures can you put on the table and still feel like a general?

The experience of a large group of gamers over the last twenty years has shown that the rules can be pretty darn simple, the games very quick, and the armies downright diminutive. Simple enough for new gamers to learn enough to get started in five minutes and feel a reasonable mastery after two or three games. But with enough depth of play to keep players involved for more than a decade. Quick enough to get three or more games in over the space of an evening. And armies small enough for many gamers to collect dozens.

*De Bellis Antiquitatis* (a.k.a. DBA) broke onto the miniature wargaming scene in 1990 and the community of dedicated followers has grown steadily since then. The ideas were new, the game mechanics worked, and it filled a big empty space in the wargaming world.

Unfortunately, the spread of DBA has always been hampered by a cryptic writing style and its lack of clear diagrams and examples. In addition, the ambiguity of the language used has meant that a common understanding of what the rules really mean has been elusive.

*The Unofficial Guide to DBA* attempts to tackle both of these problems. First, the authors hope that newcomers to DBA will find it a bit easier to jump in. While there is no substitute for sitting

down and playing a game with an experienced player, having an accessible explanation available can only serve to broaden the reach of DBA.

Second, we also hope to capture what we see as the mainstream of how DBA is actually played. It is written by a group of active players and written with the community of active players in mind. If it makes it a little easier for gamers with different backgrounds to play with a common understanding of the rules, then we have been successful in our aim.

## v2.2+

In September 2012, a group of DBA tournament organizers released the v2.2+ amendments for DBA. The amendments provide a number of improvements to DBA 2.2, while maintaining the overall feel of play and maintaining consistency with DBA 2.2 armies. Since that time, v2.2+ has seen widespread adoption and is being played worldwide.



3<sup>rd</sup> C. BC Spanish Mercenaries (4Ax)

*The Unofficial Guide to DBA* is based on the DBA version 2.2 rulebook with the v2.2+ amendments applied. All explanations presented here are consistent with the text of that rulebook as amended. The Big Battle DBA, Giant DBA, and campaign rules are not covered.

See Print and Online Resources (page 58) for information on purchasing a copy of the DBA 2.2 rulebook and downloading the v2.2+ amendments.

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# Game Materials

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What do you need in order to play? The basics are:

- Two players
- A game board
- An army for each player
- A six-sided die for each player
- A measuring device
- A number of terrain pieces

Kibitzers, snacks, and a tasty beverage are optional.

## Game Board

The game board is a square surface, typically made of cloth, felt, or wood. All action takes place on the game board. The standard game board is 30" by 30" for 15mm figures and 48" by 48" for 25mm figures.

## Armies

Each army consists of twelve troop elements, an optional camp, and an optional Camp Followers element. One of the twelve troop elements must be designated as the army's general.

So what's an element? An element is the basic building block of your army. It represents a group of soldiers (or camp followers) that move and fight as a single unit.

Physically, an element consists of a rectangular base with one or more figures or models attached.

## Dice

DBA uses normal six-sided dice.

## Measuring Devices

You'll need some way to measure distances on the game board. You can make do with a tape measure or use specialized playing aids. A couple of these (a move stick and ZOC marker) are described on the next page.

## The Terrain Pieces

The surface of the game board is by default clear and open terrain. To get anything else, you need to put down a terrain piece. Possible terrain types include:

- Woods
- Gentle Hill
- Steep Hill
- Marsh
- Rough
- Waterway
- River
- Road

These may be represented by a simple piece of felt (inexpensive and functional), or by a carefully built model (visually appealing, but often a bit of trouble to carry about), or anything in between.

While the standard game board is now 30" by 30" for 15mm figures, some gamers prefer to continue playing on the original 24" by 24" board. The smaller board may be more convenient in some circumstances, but comes at the cost of more "edge-of-the-world" affects. Gamers and tournament organizers are free to use whatever size game board fits their preferences.



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# Playing Scale

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## Figure Scale

DBA is played in two basic scales. The first is intended for 15mm figures and the second is intended for 25mm figures. The two differ in element sizes and the ground scale, but the rules are the same.

## Ground Scale

Most distances are specified in movement units (MU).

1 MU =  $\frac{1}{2}$  base width.

<i>15mm Figures</i>
---------------------

1 MU = 20mm
-------------

<i>25mm Figures</i>
---------------------

1 MU = 30mm
-------------

## Measuring Distances

Players may measure distances at any time during the game. (Pre-measuring is okay.)

To make measuring distances easier, most players use a couple of specialized playing aids:

**Move Stick.** A small stick marked in 1 MU increments is helpful for measuring movement.

**ZOC Marker.** A square piece of wood or metal, one base width on a side, is used to determine if an element is within the ZOC of another element. A handle simplifies moving it around on a crowded battlefield.

## Time and Numbers

Nominally, each turn in DBA simulates approximately 15 minutes of time on the battlefield and each figure represents somewhere around 250 to 300 men.

But given that DBA is a highly abstract game, it's best not to place much emphasis on these numbers. After all, every DBA army has twelve elements, regardless of the size of the corresponding historical army. So it's probably best to just think of a turn as a turn and an element as an element and leave it at that.



*ZOC Marker*

DBA will work with figures of any scale. For simplicity, the rules explicitly address 15mm figures on 40mm wide bases and 25mm figures on 60mm wide bases. But because the number of figures actually mounted on the base has no affect on the game mechanics, you're free to substitute any scale figure for either of these nominal scales. So, whether you like 10mm figures on 60mm wide bases, 6mm figures on 40mm wide bases, or any other combination, the rules can be used unchanged.
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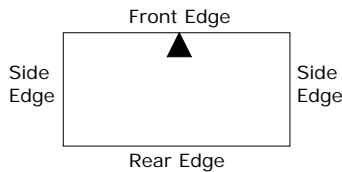
In practice, 25mm is commonly used as a shorthand for all figures of roughly the same size, including 20mm plastic figures as well as the 28mm and larger figures that have become common.
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# Elements

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We'll start with a few definitions. Not surprisingly, every element has a front edge, two side edges, and a rear edge. An element also has two front corners and two rear corners.



When using 15mm figures the standard element width is 40mm; with 25mm figures the standard element width is 60mm. The depth depends on the element type and subtype (see the table on page 6).

## Element Categories

There are two broad categories of elements: Mounted and Foot. The Element Table shows which category each element type belongs to.

## Element Types

Every element is of a particular type that reflects the historical behavior of the troops being represented. While the name of the element type often matches the weapons and armor of the historical troops, it's the behavior that's important.

There are twenty-four different element types:

**Elephants.** Big and clumsy. Dangerous to enemy and friend alike.

**Knights.** Big horses. Lots of armor. Lots of attitude. Not known to show a lot of restraint.

**Heavy Chariots.** Knights with wheels.

**Cataphracts.** Armored men on armored horses. Slow but very tough.

**Cavalry.** Ordinary mounted. More cautious than Knights, less flighty than light horse.

**Light Chariots.** Cavalry with wheels.

**Scythed Chariots.** Freaking Psychotic Cuisinart Scythed Chariots of DOOM!

**Camelry.** They smell bad and they spit a lot. What's not to like?

**Light Horse.** Quick and agile. Float like a butterfly, sting like a butterfly.

**Light Camelry.** Float like a butterfly, sting like a butterfly. A butterfly that likes sand.

**Blades.** Well armed and well armored, top dog of the foot troops.

**Raiders.** The top dog's feisty little brother.

**Spears.** Big shields and long pointy sticks.

**Pikes.** Like a big porcupine in a bad mood.

**Light Spears.** The big porcupine's prickly little brother.

**Bows.** Bows, crossbows, and longbows en-masse.

**Pavises.** Bowmen with the good sense to stand behind men with shields and spears.

**Warband.** Heavy on the woad, light on the discipline.

**Auxilia.** Good in the bad.

**Psiloi.** Your basic skirmishers. Catch-em if you can.

**Hordes.** They don't want to be there. Really.

**Artillery.** Some lob big rocks, some shoot big arrows. Don't get hit.

**War Wagons.** Big slow wagons. Like a fortress on wheels.

**Camp Followers.** Tramps and harlots. Our kind of people.

## Litters

A few army lists include a special Litter element for the general, specified with the code "Lit". These elements should be based as indicated in the Element Table, but act in all other ways as one of the standard element types as specified here:

Army List		Element Type
I/2a	Early Egyptian	Blades
III/72ab	Communal Italian	Spears
IV/3	Anglo-Norman	Spears
IV/10	Mound Builder	Blades
IV/70	Chanca	Light Spear
IV/81	Inca	Auxilia

## Element Subtypes

Each element type has one or more subtypes. All of the subtypes within a type are treated exactly the same except for the base depth and the nominal number of figures.

For example, 3Cv and 6Cv are both subtypes of Cavalry and they both follow the rules for Cavalry elements. The only difference is that 3Cv elements have three figures mounted on a 30mm deep base and 6Cv have six figures mounted on a 60mm deep base (for 15mm figures; they would have 40mm and 80mm deep bases if they were 25mm figures).

Similarly, 3Ax and 4Ax are both types of Auxilia and follow the rules for Auxilia elements. In this case, the base sizes are identical, the only difference being the number of figures on the base.

On the other hand, 4Sp and 3Sp are distinct types: Spears and Light Spears. The rules for these two types are somewhat different.

Fortunately, this isn't something you need to worry about much when you're playing. The rules refer to Cavalry and Auxilia, Spears and Light Spears, not any of the subtype codes. Once you have your army made up, you can focus on the element types and just play.



*5<sup>th</sup> C. Goths (4Wb) facing Patrician Romans (4Bd)*

## Element Table

Category	Element Type	Subtype	Base Depth (15mm Figures)	Base Depth (25mm Figures)
Mounted	Camelry	3Cm	30mm	40mm
	Cataphract	4Kn	30mm	40mm
	Cavalry	3Cv	30mm	40mm
		6Cv	60mm	80mm
	Elephants	El	40mm	80mm
	Heavy Chariots	HCh	40mm	80mm
	Knights	3Kn	30mm	40mm
		6Kn	60mm	80mm
	Light Camelry	2Cm	30mm	40mm
	Light Chariots	LCh	40mm	80mm
	Light Horse	2LH	30mm	40mm
Scythed Chariots	SCh	40mm	80mm	
Foot	Artillery	Art	40mm	80mm
	Auxilia	3Ax, 4Ax	20mm	30mm
	Blades	4Bd	15mm	20mm
		6Bd	40mm	60mm
	Bows	4Bw <sup>†</sup>	20mm	30mm
	Camp Followers	CF	20mm**	30mm**
	Hordes	7Hd	30mm	40mm
	Light Spears	3Sp	20mm	30mm
	Litters	Lit	80mm	120mm
	Pavises	8Bw <sup>‡</sup>	40mm	60mm
	Pikes	4Pk	15mm	20mm
	Psiloi	2Ps	20mm	30mm
	Raiders	3Bd	20mm	30mm
	Spears	4Sp	15mm	20mm
	War Wagons	WWg	40mm	60mm
	Warband	4Wb	15mm	20mm
3Wb		20mm	30mm	
5Wb		30mm	40mm	

† The 4Bw subtype includes 4Bw, 4Lb, 4Cb, 3Bw, 3Lb, and 3Cb.

‡ The 8Bw subtype includes 8Bw, 8Lb, 8Cb, and 6Bw.

\*\* The base depth of a camp follower element has no affect on play, so a certain amount of flexibility is allowed. The camp follower element may also be modeled as a fixed part of a camp instead of as a separately based element.

The nominal number of figures to be mounted on a base is included in the element subtype code. For example, 3Kn would have three knight figures and 7Hd would have seven horde figures, while LCh would have a single light chariot model. However, this number is only directly applicable for 15mm and 25mm figures. When using figures of a different scale, the number of figures on a base should be adjusted appropriately.

It is important for players to note that the number of figures mounted on a base has no affect on game play.

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# Army Lists

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Army lists designate what types of elements are allowed in an army. They're intended to be historically accurate, at least to the extent possible given the historical evidence and the state of current scholarship.

In addition to historical accuracy, army lists also serve to enhance playability. They do this by limiting the extent to which a player can tailor an army; instead of choosing exactly the right mix of elements, a player has to make effective use of those elements provided by the army list.

The DBA rulebook comes with a set of 310 army lists, covering armies from Ancient Sumer to Late Medieval Burgundy and everything in between. There are also quite a few variant army lists available on the Internet. These variant army lists provide an alternate analysis of armies that are already in the DBA rulebook, plus fill in the few gaps that remain.

Playing at home or at a local club, you're free to choose army lists from any source you like, whether from the DBA rulebook, published on the Internet, or based on your own research. Tournament organizers generally specify the army lists that may be used in their tournaments, almost always drawing on those from the DBA rulebook.

## Reading an Army List

The army lists in the DBA rulebook are in a very concise format that takes a little bit of experience to read. Each army list includes the following information:

**Book/Army Number.** Uniquely identifies the army list. Derived from the corresponding DBM army list.

**Army Name.** Name of the army. Ok, that was kind of obvious.

**Start and End Dates.** The start date is the first year that this army list may be used. The end date is the last year the army list may be used.

**List of Enemies.** This is a list of armies that this army is historically attested to have fought.

**List of Allies.** List of armies that may be taken as allies in Big Battle DBA.

- Allies separated by "or" are mutually exclusive choices.
- Allies separated by "and" must both be taken (if either is taken).
- Allies separated by "and/or" may be taken individually or together.

**Reference Book.** Citation to one or more books that provide additional information on this army. The DBA rulebook contains a complete reference to the cited books at the start of the army list section.

**Home Topography.** Home topography of this army, used in setting up the terrain.

**Aggression.** General measure of how likely this army was to attack outside of its home territory. Used in determining the invader.

**Element Types Allowed.** The key part of the army list that specifies exactly what element types may be used in this army. It also specifies which elements may be designated to be the general.

## Sublists

Some army lists provide a single set of element types allowed, while others provide two or more. These are called sublists and allow an army list to be tailored to a specific time period, region, or state. Each sublist has its own start and end dates, list of enemies, and list of allies.

## Sample Army List

Here's a sample of an army list that touches on a lot of what you'll encounter. It describes the armies of the Hyksos dynasties of ancient Egypt. It includes two sublists, the first for the period 1645-1591BC and the second for the period 1590-1537BC. The entire army list is usually

referred to as I/17 Hyksos, while the sublists are referred to as I/17a and I/17b.

A lot of the information is straightforward, such as the book/army number, the army name, the start and end dates, home topography, and aggression.

The list of enemies and the list of allies are a little more complicated. They're divided into the enemies (or allies) of the first sublist following the "(a)" and the enemies (or allies) of the second sublist following the "(b)".

The toughest part is deciphering the list of element types allowed. This list is made up of a number of entries, each giving a number of elements and a subtype (see the subtype codes in the Element Table, page 6), separated by an "x". So the entry 4x3Bd means that the list includes four elements of 3Bd.

An entry marked "(Gen)" means that element can be designated as the general. For both Hyksos sublists, the general must be a LCh element.

Sometimes you'll get a choice of elements. So the entry 1x7Hd or 2Ps means that you get one element that may be either 7Hd or 2Ps. If the entry was 2x7Hd or 2Ps, you would be

allowed to take two elements in any combination of 7Hd and 2Ps. So you could take two Psiloi, one Psiloi and one Horde, or two Horde.

### Other Types of Entries

Though not illustrated in the Hyksos list, a choice of element subtypes can also be specified. The entry 2x3/4Ax means that you can take two elements in any combination of 3Ax or 4Ax.

There are a few entries that designate rather complicated combinations. For example, the entry ( 2x6Cv + 2x2LH ) or ( 2x4Bd + 2x2Ps ) means that you have the choice of taking either two elements of 6Cv along with two elements of 2LH, or two elements of 4Bd along with two elements of 2Ps.

Finally, there are entries that designate elements that may dismount. Dismounting elements are specified by two element types separated by double slashes "/ /". So the entry 4x3Kn // 4Bd means that you can take four elements of 3Kn that may dismount as 4Bd.

Note that regardless of the choices and combinations that are specified by the list, you'll always end up with twelve elements in total.

Book/Army Number	Army Name	Start and End Dates	List of Enemies	List of Allies	Reference Book
I/17.	Hyksos.	1645BC-1537BC.			
Littoral. Ag:2. E = (a) I/2a, 6a, 7a, 15. (b) I/2a, 6a, 7a, 20b, 22a. A = (a) 1/2ab. (b) I/2b. Ref: AANE.					
(a) 1645-1591BC: 1xLCh (Gen), 4x3Bd, 1x4Ax, 4x3Ax, 2x2Ps.					
(b) 1590-1537BC: 1xLCh (Gen), 3xLCh, 4x3Bd, 1x4Ax, 2x2Ps, 1x7Hd or 2Ps.					
Home Topography	Aggression	Element Types Allowed			

# Terrain Pieces

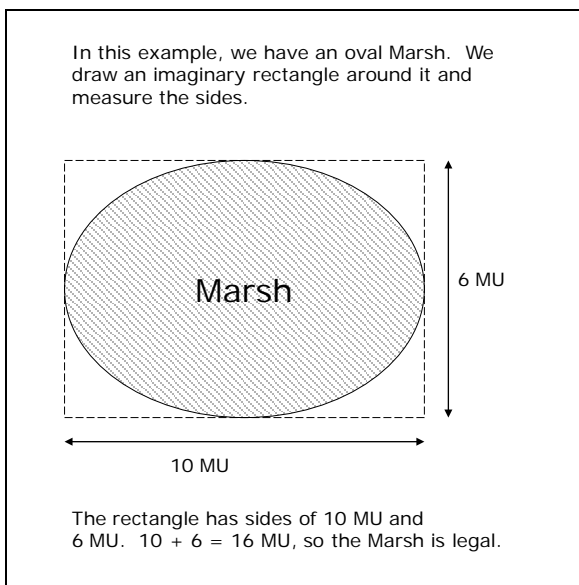
An empty board is pretty boring. You've got to have some scenery to spice things up. In DBA, scenery is represented by terrain pieces. There are two kinds: area terrain pieces and linear terrain pieces. See the table on the next page for a complete list of terrain types.

## Area Terrain Pieces

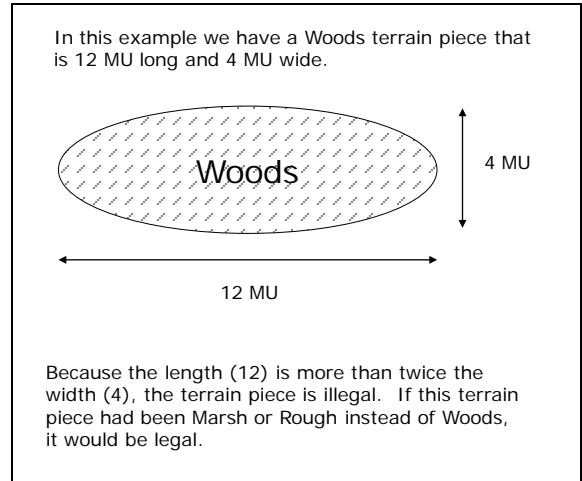
An area terrain piece represents a contiguous area of uniform terrain. So it's a single area of woods or marshy ground or what have you.

To be legal, an area terrain piece must obey the following rules:

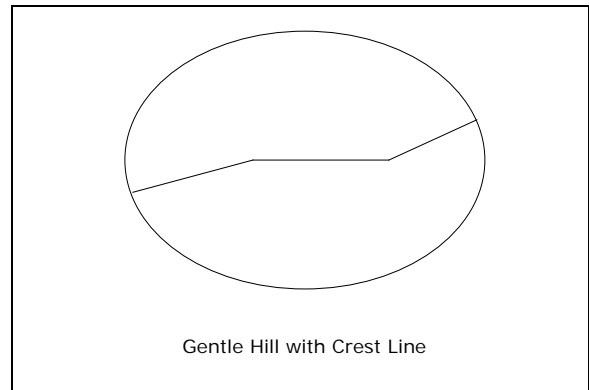
- Rough terrain pieces in Arable represent ploughed fields and may be oval, rectangular, or trapezoidal. All other area terrain pieces must be roughly oval.
- It must be at least 2 MU across in all directions.
- The terrain piece must be able to fit inside an imaginary rectangle whose length plus width is no greater than 18 MU.



- Woods, gentle hills, steep hills, dunes, and oases may not be longer than twice their width.



- Gentle hills and steep hills must slope up to a crest line. The crest line is important because it blocks line-of-sight.



If the crest line is not explicitly marked and is not obvious from the shape of the hill, players should agree at the beginning of the game where the crest line will run.

## Linear Terrain Pieces

A linear terrain piece represents a feature that runs from one edge of the game board to the opposite edge.

To be legal, a waterway must obey the following rules:

- It must be between one and six MU in depth.
- No more than half may be greater than three MU in depth.

To be legal, a river or road must obey the following rules:

- It cannot be more than two MU across.
- It cannot be longer than 1½ times the distance between its ends. This limits the amount of “wiggle” that can be put in the course of the river or road.

## Terrain Placement

Terrain pieces are also restricted in how they may be placed on the game board. See page 15 for a complete description of the rules governing terrain placement.

## Terrain Affects

Each terrain type is classed as good going, bad going, impassable, or special. (Note that any part of the game board that doesn't have a terrain piece on it is considered good going.)

The affects of the different terrain types are covered in detail where appropriate (for example, the affect on distant shooting is covered in the distant shooting section).

## Roads

Roads affect movement, including:

- Road moves (see page 21)
- Crossing a river (see page 12)
- Second and subsequent movement (see page 29)

For all other purposes, including distant shooting and close combat, treat a road as the underlying terrain type.

## Terrain Table

Category	Terrain Type	Class
Area	Woods	Bad Going
	Gentle Hill	Good Going
	Steep Hill	Bad Going
	Marsh	Bad Going
	Rough	Bad Going
	Dunes	Bad Going*
	Oasis	Bad Going*
Linear	Waterway	Impassable
	River	Special (see page 12)
	Road	Special (see above)

\* Camelry and Light Camelry treat Dunes and Oasis as Good Going.



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# Camps

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Every army must have a camp unless the army has more than one element of War Wagons.

A camp may be occupied by one and only one element, or it may be unoccupied. An element occupying a camp may be placed anywhere within the boundaries of the camp; the exact location has no affect on play. An element may not be partly in and partly out of a camp.

## Shape and Size

A camp may be of any shape. It must meet the following requirements for minimum and maximum size:

- It must be large enough to hold a troop or camp follower element.
- It must be able to fit inside an imaginary rectangle whose length plus width is no greater than 8 MU.

## Camp Followers

Each army that has a camp may also have a camp follower element, but is not required to. The camp follower element is not a troop element and does not count against the twelve elements allowed to each army. If used, a camp follower element must begin the game occupying its camp.

A camp follower element may not leave a camp as a tactical move. (Though it may be removed from play if destroyed in combat or replaced by a friendly troop element moving into the camp.)

A camp follower element doesn't have to be represented by a separately based element.

Many players model them as a fixed part of the camp.

If necessary, the actual camp follower element can be left out altogether. Unless the player notes otherwise, the empty camp is still treated as if it was occupied by an element of camp followers.

## Modeling a Camp

There are really no restrictions on what a camp may look like and the modeling of a camp has no impact on play. Many players build finely detailed models of fortifications, complete with palisades or towers. Others opt for camp scenes with tents and fires. On the other end of the scale, it's not unusual for a beer mat or something similar to be pressed into service on occasion. (Though be warned, your friends may mock you for resorting to this kind of measure.)



*15<sup>th</sup> C. BC Nubian Camp*

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# Rivers

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Rivers in DBA represent medium sized rivers that are likely to present an obstacle while still leaving open the possibility of being forded. The Granicus makes a great example. In May 334 BC, the Persians faced the Macedonians at the Granicus river. The Persians, believing that the Macedonians would have difficulty getting across, formed up on the northern bank of the river. But Alexander's troops were able to ford the river in the face of the Persian troops and still maintain enough momentum to drive their attack home. This is a good match for the DBA river rules. The river can be crossed, but only with some difficulty.

Really big rivers like the Nile and the Rhine are considered waterways and are impassable.

See page 10 for the rules governing the shape and size of rivers, and page 16 for rules governing the placement of a river on the game board.

## Good Going or Bad Going?

Technically, rivers aren't considered either good going or bad going. But since they don't have any of the normal affects of bad going, you can safely treat them as good going with the special conditions described in this section.

## Crossing a River on a Road

Elements crossing a river while moving on a road ignore all of the river's affects on movement.

## Entering a River Off Road

An element entering a river (off road) during its tactical movement phase must do so while facing within 45 degrees of perpendicular to the river at that point.

## Movement Restrictions

Once an element enters a river (off road), it is limited in how it may move during the tactical movement phase. If any part of an element is in a river, it may only:

- Move directly forward or directly backward
- Move to contact or line up with an enemy element
- Pivot to maintain a legal alignment with the river and continue its move

Elements may only start in or move into a river if moving as single elements or as part of a column.

## Movement Distance

Elements moving across a river are slowed. A single element or a column whose front edge starts in or enters a river may only move 2 MU during that tactical move.

## Defending the Bank of a River

An element defending the bank of a river receives a +1 tactical factor in close combat.

An element is considered to be defending the bank of a river if all of the following apply:

- No part of the element is in the river
- The element is not on a road which crosses the river
- The element is facing the river and its entire front edge is within 1 MU of the river
- The enemy element is at least partly in the river.

Warning: Rivers can make it difficult to complete a game of DBA in a timely fashion. A river between two armies slows movement down and may encourage defensive play. This can substantially lengthen a game.

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# Setting Up a Game

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Before you can start playing, you need to set things up. There are six steps to this:

1. Select Armies
2. Roll For Invader
3. Set Up Terrain
4. Roll For Board Orientation
5. Place Camps
6. Deploy Armies

## Selecting Your Armies

First, you and your opponent need to choose the armies that you're going to play with (i.e., which army list or sublist you're going to use). Playing at home or your local club, this is usually an informal process, based mostly on what armies you have available and what you consider to be a good match up.

Next you'll choose the 12 troop elements that you're going to use from your army list or sublist. This includes selecting the element that will be the general. In informal play this is usually done after you know which army your opponent will be using, but before you roll for invader.

In most tournaments, you choose the army list and the exact combination of elements that you're going to use before the tournament begins. No changes are allowed to either during the tournament. This can vary though, so check with your tournament organizer for the rules specific to that tournament.

## Rolling for Invader

Each army list has an aggression rating, ranging from 0 to 4. To roll for invader, each player rolls one die and adds their army's aggression rating to their die roll. The player with the higher total is the invader. The player with the lower total is the defender. Re-roll ties.

Note that the invader and defender designations are only meaningful in a strategic

sense, not a tactical sense. They're important for setting up the game and determining who goes first, but have no further affect on the game.

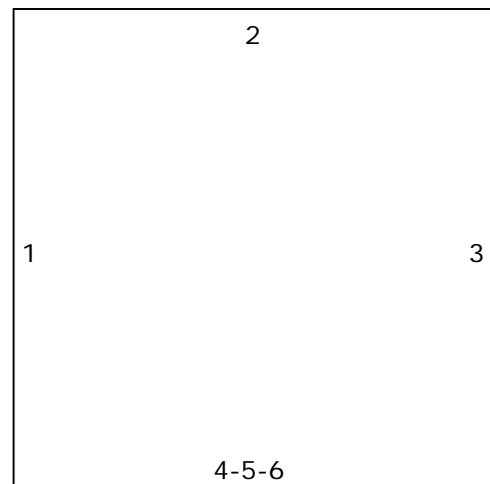
## Setting Up Terrain

The defender then places terrain and the invader modifies the terrain following the rules for terrain placement (see page 15).

## Rolling for Board Orientation

Next, the invader rolls to see which edge of the game board is his army's base edge. To do this, the invader designates any three edges to be 1, 2, and 3, and the remaining edge to be 4-5-6. The invader then rolls one die and the result determines invader's base edge. The opposite edge is the defender's base edge. You may need to rotate the game board or switch seats so that both players are sitting in front of their own base edge.

Example showing the designation of numbers to the edges of the game board.



## Placing Camps

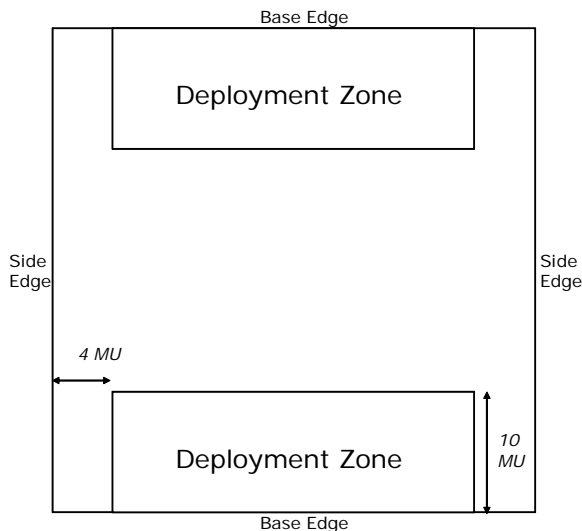
The defender places his camp, then the invader his camp. The camp must be placed in contact with the army's base edge. (Exception: If a Waterway runs along an army's base edge, then the camp must be placed in contact with the waterway.) An army does not have a camp if it has more than 1 war wagon element. Camps must be placed in good going.

## Deploying your Armies

Finally, the players deploy their armies in the following sequence:

1. The defender places his army
2. The invader places his army
3. The defender may swap up to two pairs of elements

Elements must be placed within 10 MU of the army's base edge. (Exception: If a waterway runs along an army's base edge, then the elements must be placed within 10 MU of the waterway.) Elements must be placed at least 4 MU from the side edges. The area where the elements may be deployed is referred to as the deployment zone.



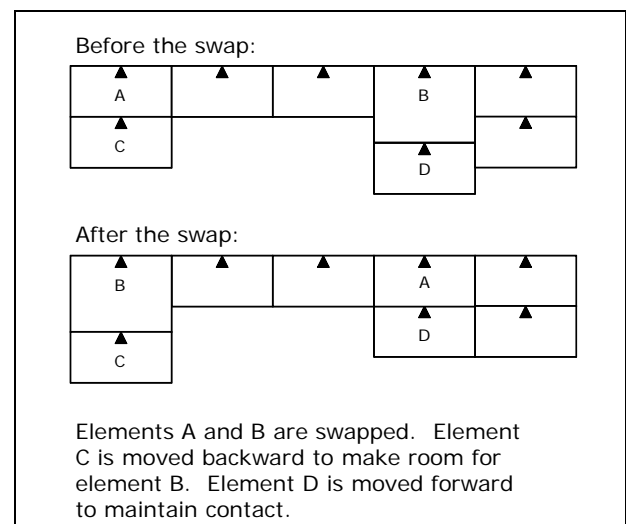
If an army's home topography is Littoral and a waterway has been placed on the game board (by either player), then that army is eligible for a littoral landing. Eligible armies may hold back 0

to 4 elements for a littoral landing. These elements are not placed on the game board during the set up. They will be placed as part of their army's first turn.

If used, the camp follower element must be deployed occupying the camp. If the camp follower element is not used, then a troop element may be deployed occupying the camp or the camp may be left unoccupied. The rule on side edge placement is waived for an element deployed occupying a camp.

Elements that are allowed to dismount may be deployed as either their mounted or foot element type (see page 17). If the element is set aside for a littoral landing, the element must be designated as the mounted or foot element type at the time it is set aside.

Swapping a pair of elements consists of choosing two elements and exchanging their positions. The elements must be placed such that their front edge of each is in the exact position of the other element's original front edge. If the swapped elements are not the same depth, the position of the elements around them may be adjusted to make room or maintain contact, as a required. Elements that have been held back for a littoral landing may not be swapped. Note that the defender is not obligated to swap any elements. He may choose to swap zero, one, or two pairs. An element may be included in both swaps (e.g., a player may swap A with B, and then B with C).



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# Terrain Placement

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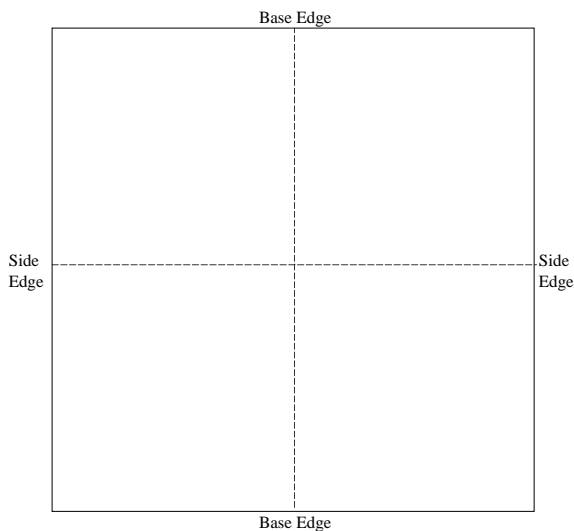
## Home Topography

Each army list has a home topography, that is the basic type of terrain that's found in that army's home region. This is something of a generalization, especially for those armies whose home region covers a broad geographic area.

The home topography determines what terrain types can be placed by the defender when setting up the game board. See the table on the next page for the list of compulsory and optional terrain types for each topography.

## Game Board Quarters

For the purpose of placing terrain pieces, the game board is divided into four equal quarters. The quarters are delimited by two lines, each line perpendicular to and bisecting opposite edges of the game board.



*11<sup>th</sup> C. Armenian Bow (2Ps)*

## Terrain Placement: Defender

The first step in terrain placement is for the defender to choose terrain pieces from those allowed for his army's home topography and place them on the board. The terrain must meet the restrictions specified below.

## Terrain Placement: Invader

After the defender chooses the terrain and places it on the board, the invader gets the opportunity to modify the terrain that's been placed.

If the game board has no bad going within 8 MU of the center, the invader rolls one die. On a 1 or 2, the invader *may*:

- Move the smallest bad going terrain piece such that it is within 8 MU of the center, OR
- Choose and place a new bad going terrain piece such that it is within 8 MU of the center. The new piece must be no larger than 4 MU x 4 MU in size.

The game board must be legal after the move or addition.

The invader then rolls a die for each area terrain piece. On a 1 or 2, the invader *may* shift the terrain piece up to 4 MU in any direction or rotate it around its center up to 45 degrees. The invader must roll for and move each terrain piece before proceeding to the next. The game board must be legal after each terrain piece is moved.

### Terrain Placement Restrictions

To be legal, the game board must meet all of the following conditions:

- Must have between three and five terrain pieces.
- Between one and three of the terrain pieces must be of a compulsory type.
- Between zero and three of the terrain pieces must be of an optional type.
- At least three of the quarters must include some part of a terrain piece.
- At least two of the quarters must include some part of a waterway, a river, or a bad going terrain piece.
- No more than one each of waterway, river, or oasis may be placed.
- No more than three of any compulsory type of terrain piece may be placed.
- No more than two of any optional type of terrain piece may be placed.
- Area terrain pieces must be at least one base width apart.

In addition, waterways, rivers, and roads have these additional restrictions on their placement:

**Road.** A road must run from one edge of the game board to either a different edge or another road.

**Waterway.** A waterway must be placed flush with one edge of the game board and extend the entire length of that edge.

**River.** If no waterway is present, a river must run from one edge of the game board to the opposite edge. If a waterway is also placed on the game board, then the river must extend from the waterway to the opposite board edge. In either case, the river must be placed at least eight MU from the two edges of the game board that it parallels.

Of course, all the terrain pieces must be legal. See page 9 for what makes a legal terrain piece.

### Overlaying Terrain Pieces

**Road.** A road may pass through (overlay) any area terrain piece. A road may also be placed crossing a river or another road.

**River.** A river may not pass through (overlay) a gentle or steep hill, but may pass through any other area terrain piece.

Otherwise, no terrain piece may be placed on top of another terrain piece.

## Topography Table

Home Topography	Compulsory Terrain	Optional Terrain
Arable	Road	River, Steep Hill, Gentle Hill, Woods, Waterway, Rough*
Forest	Woods	River, Marsh, Gentle Hill
Hilly	Steep Hill	River, Woods, Road
Steppe	Gentle Hill	River, Rough
Dry	Rough	Dunes, Steep Hill, Oasis
Tropical	Woods	River, Marsh, Rough, Road
Littoral	Waterway	Either Steep Hill or Marsh, either Woods or Dunes, River

\* A Rough terrain piece in Arable topography represents ploughed fields.

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# Dismounting

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In a few cases, an army list will designate that certain elements may dismount. Dismounting is simply changing an element from a mounted type to a foot type. This simulates the soldiers getting off their horses and fighting on foot.

In the army lists, dismounting elements are specified by two element types separated by double slashes “//”. So the entry 4x3Kn//4Bd means that you can take four elements of 3Kn that may dismount as 4Bd.

During the deployment phase, elements that are designated as being eligible to dismount may be placed on the board as either their mounted or foot element type. Elements may not dismount at any other time. Elements that are set aside for a littoral landing must be designated as the mounted or foot element type at the time they are set aside.

An element that has been placed as its foot type may not change back to its mounted type during the game.



*13<sup>th</sup> C. BC Trojans (4xLCh//4Bd).*

*Two elements are deployed as Light Chariots. Two elements are deployed dismounted as Blades.*

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# Sequence of Play

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Now that you have the game set up, you're ready to start playing. The game proceeds with the players alternating turns, the invader going first. Each turn follows this sequence:

1. PIP Phase
2. Tactical Movement Phase
3. Distant Shooting Phase
4. Close Combat Phase

Continue alternating turns until one player has won the game.

## PIP Phase

The active player starts his turn by rolling one die for Player Initiative Points or PIPs.

During the tactical movement part of the turn, the player will need to spend one PIP (sometimes more) to move an element or a group of elements. This simulates the command and control limitations of pre-gunpowder armies and encourages players to maintain organized groups of elements that work together in unison rather than as individuals.

## Tactical Movement Phase

Tactical movement is the voluntary movement of the active player's elements. Tactical movement is described in detail starting on page 19.

## Distant Shooting Phase

During the distant shooting phase, both armies are given the opportunity to shoot at the opposition. Distant shooting is limited to Bows, Pavises, War Wagons, and Artillery. Distant shooting is described in detail starting on page 39.

## Close Combat Phase

During the close combat phase, elements that are in full front contact with the enemy engage in combat. Close combat is described in detail starting on page 43.



*5th C. Ostrogoths fighting Patrician Romans*



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# Tactical Movement

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Those elements aren't glued to the game board, they're made for moving around. Charge your knights into the enemy! Attempt a daring flanking maneuver with your light horse! Pull your psiloi back in a desperate attempt to escape almost certain doom!

During the tactical movement part of the turn the active player moves his troop elements. This movement is voluntary; the player isn't obligated to move his elements and gets a choice of which elements to move and how to move them. (This is contrasted with outcome movement that comes as the result of combat, where the player doesn't have any choice in how the elements are moved.)

Tactical movement includes movement into contact with the enemy; there is no separate charge move.

Most of the time an element may only make one tactical move per turn. Exceptions to this rule are described on page 29.

There are three types of tactical moves:

**Single Element Move.** A single element move allows you to move just one element, but you can move that element in a very flexible way.

**Group Move.** A group move allows you to move multiple elements but imposes constraints on how the elements may maneuver.

**Littoral Landing.** A littoral landing is a specialized move that take place in the first turn of the game.

Each of these moves will be described in their own topic.



*3<sup>rd</sup> C. BC Campanian Spear (4x4Sp)*

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# PIPs

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Each tactical move, whether of a single element or a group of elements, requires the player to expend at least one PIP.

- A player may not spend more PIPs than were rolled.
- A player is not obligated to spend any or all of his PIPs.
- PIPs may not be saved from one turn to the next. Any PIPs not used in the current turn are lost.

Some moves require the player to expend one or more extra PIPs. Extra PIPs are not required in the player's first turn. In subsequent turns, the following extra PIPs are required:

Category 1. + 1 PIP if this condition applies:

- The move includes Elephants, Hordes, War Wagons or Artillery.

Category 2. + 1 PIP if either of these conditions apply:

- If all of the moving element or group is outside of the general's command distance.
- The general has been destroyed.

Category 3. + 1 PIP if this condition applies:

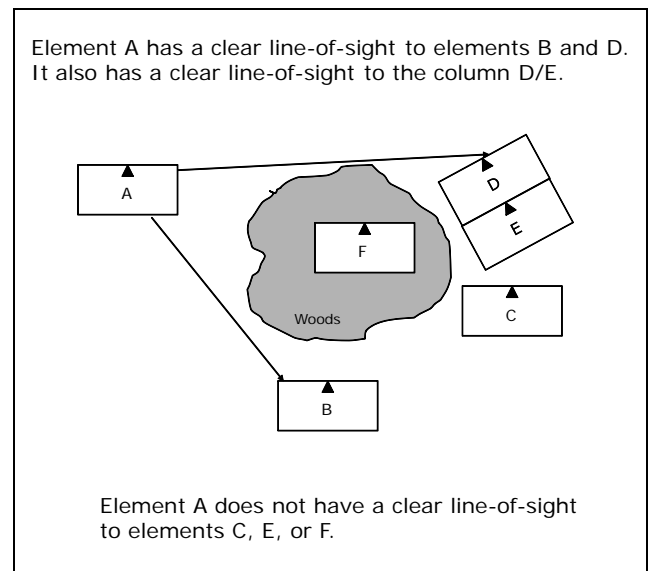
- The general's element is entirely in a camp, woods, oasis or marsh (doesn't apply when making a single element move with the general's element).

Only apply one extra PIP per category, even if the move qualifies multiple times. For example, if a group move includes both an Elephants element and a Hordes element, the move qualifies in category 1 twice, but still only costs one extra PIP (costing a total of two for the tactical move).

## Command Distance

The general's command distance is 16 MU if there is a clear line-of-sight between any part of the general's element and any part of the moving element or group. The general's command distance is 8 MU if the line-of-sight is blocked.

The line-of-sight is blocked by the crest of a hill, or the edge of a camp, woods, oasis, or dunes. The line-of-sight is also blocked if the moving element is entirely inside a wood, oasis, or dune.



Measure the command distance between the closest points of the general's element and the moving element or group.

# Movement Distance

Each type of element has a maximum movement distance in good going, bad going, and while making a road move. An element is considered to be making a road move if the entire move is along a road. An element is considered to be making a bad going move if it is not a road move and at any point during the move any part of the element enters bad going. Otherwise, it is considered a good going move.

The movement table lists the maximum movement distances for each of the element types.

**Movement Table**

Element Types	Good Going (MU)	Bad Going (MU)
Light Horse Light Camelry	8	3
Cavalry Light Chariots Scythed Chariots	6	3
Camelry Knights	5	3
Cataphracts Elephants	4	3
Auxilia Psiloi	5	5
Light Spears Raiders	4	4
Blades Bows Hordes Spears Pavisés Pikes Warband	3	3
Artillery War Wagons	3	None
Camp Followers	None	None

The road movement distance is 8 MU for Light Horse and Light Camelry and 6 MU for all other element types.

Artillery and War Wagon elements may not make a bad going move.

Camelry and Light Camelry treat oasis and dune terrain pieces as good going for tactical movement.

Elements moving across a river have their movement distance reduced. A single element or a column whose front edge starts in or enters a river may only move 2 MU during that tactical move.

A camp follower element may not make a tactical move.

## Measuring Movement Distance

Distance is measured using the element's front corner that moves the farthest. Measure from the corner's starting position to its ending position.

Example of measuring movement distance.

Element A moves from position 1 to position 2.

Left Front 3 MU  
Right Front 2 ½ MU

If Element A were an element of Spears, no corner would be allowed to move farther than 3 MU. In this case, the left front corner moves the farthest (3 MU) and its movement is equal to the maximum movement distance for Spears. The move is allowed.

## Bad Going

An element may not treat part of its move as a good going move and part as a bad going move. If the element enters bad going (off road) during any part of the move, then the entire move is considered a bad going move and is restricted to the bad going movement distance.

This may lead to a situation where the element may move up to a bad-going terrain piece, but not be allowed to enter during this move. For example, if an element of Light Horse is 5 MU away from a woods terrain piece, it may move up to the woods but not enter during a single tactical move. As long as it stays in good going, the Light Horse may move up to 8 MU. But if it were to enter the bad going, the maximum distance it may move is reduced to 3 MU, which doesn't even reach the woods. So in this situation the Light Horse may only move up to the woods, without entering.

An artillery or war wagon element may only enter or move through bad going during a tactical move by making a road move. If such an element ends up in a position where it is in bad going but cannot make a road move, then it is not allowed to make any tactical move. The only time this is likely to occur is if an artillery element is forced to recoil into bad going.

### *Totally Useless Fact #1*

The DBA army requiring the fewest number of figures for all options is Early Libyan (I/7c), which only requires 22 foot figures and 1 chariot model (1xLCh, 11x2Ps).



15<sup>th</sup> C. BC New Kingdom Egyptian Pharaoh (1xLCh Gen.) facing Nubian Warriors (1x3Wb)

# Single Element Moves

In a single element move you only get to move one element, but you have a great deal of flexibility in how you move that element. You don't need to worry about wheeling, or making an about face or anything like that. You just move the element to where you want it to go.

Well, that's not entirely true; there are a couple of constraints on the move:

- The element may not exceed its maximum movement distance.
- If the element starts in or enters another element's zone-of-control (ZOC) it will be limited in how it may move (see page 32).
- The element may not pass through a gap that is narrower than the element's leading edge.

In addition, a single element move must be taken as a series of intermediate moves if any of the following apply:

- More than one corner of the element would pass through a friendly element and the element is not otherwise allowed to move through that friendly element.
- Any corner of the element would need to pass through an enemy element.
- Any corner of the element would need to pass through a ZOC that is being avoided.
- Any corner of the element would pass through impassable terrain.
- Any corner of the element would pass through bad going that is being avoided.

Example of intermediate moves.

Element B moves from position 1 to position 3.

Left Front Corner	
First Part	4 MU
Second Part	4 MU
Total	8 MU

If Element B were an element of Light Horse, no front corner would be allowed to move farther than 8 MU. It can't move directly from position 1 to position 3 because the right front corner would pass through the woods (which would limit its move to 3 MU). So it uses two intermediate moves to avoid the bad going. In this case, the left corner moves 4 MU in the first intermediate move and another 4 MU in the second intermediate move for a total of 8 MU.

The distance of each of the intermediate moves are summed to get the total movement distance. Any number of intermediate moves may be made in one single element move, as long as the total movement distance does not exceed the element's maximum movement distance.

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# Group Moves

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The game would move pretty slowly if you could only move single elements. Fortunately, you can also move groups of elements. But unlike a single element move, the amount of maneuver allowed to a group is very limited. In fact, about all a group can do is move straight ahead and wheel on its front corners.

Two or more elements may make a group move observing the following restrictions:

- No element of the group may exceed its maximum movement distance.
- The elements must begin and end in group contact.
- No element in the group may change position relative to any other element in the group.
- The group may move directly forward, wheel, or perform some combination of these, including multiple wheels.
- The group may move up to one-half base width directly left or right to line up opposite an enemy element, but only if that enemy element is within one base width of at least one element in the group.
- No element of the group may start in or enter bad going unless moving as a column. A group of Psiloi are an exception to this rule (see below).
- No element of the group may start in or enter a river unless moving as a column.

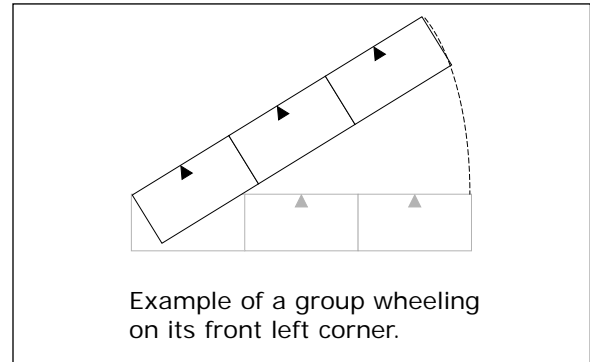
## Psiloi in Bad Going

Normally, a group isn't allowed to move into or through bad going except as a column. But there is an exception to this rule:

- A group composed entirely of Psiloi may enter and/or move through bad going. The group may not include elements of any other type, even if those elements remain outside the bad going.

## Wheeling

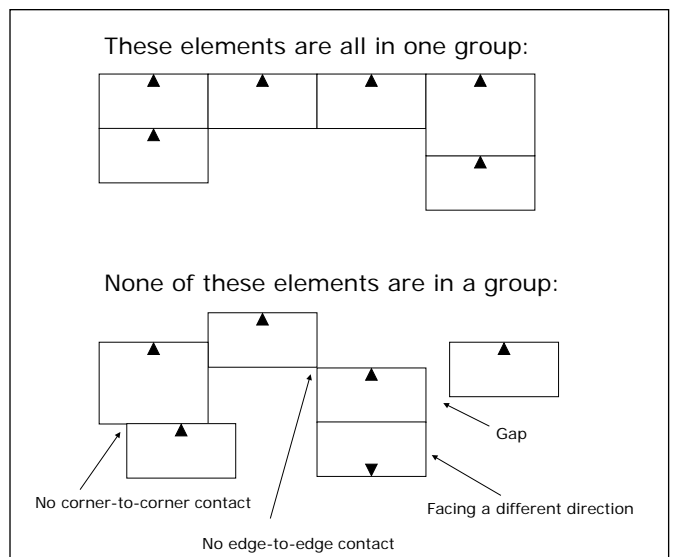
Wheeling occurs on the outside front corner of the leftmost or rightmost element of the front rank. If the move is composed of combination of wheels and forward moves, the distance moved is the sum of the individual moves.



## Group Contact

Two or more elements are in group contact if all of the following apply:

- All of the elements must be facing the same direction.
- Every element must be in edge-to-edge and corner-to-corner contact with at least one other element in the group.
- The group must be contiguous; there cannot be a gap separating some members of the group from others.



## Reducing Frontage

A group may reduce its frontage in order to pass through a gap. The group may not reduce its frontage by more than the minimum necessary to pass through the gap.

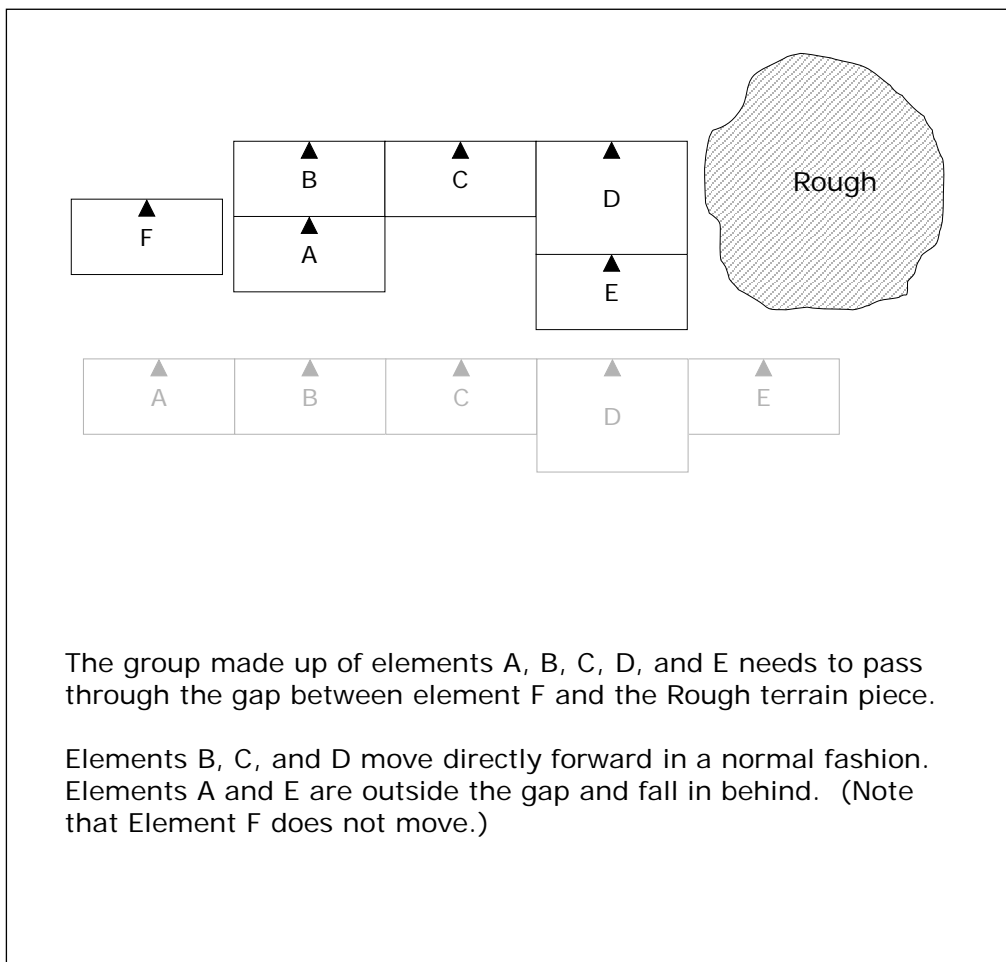
When reducing frontage, elements that fit within the gap must make a normal group move. Elements that are outside the gap will then fall in behind the other elements.

All elements must start and end the move in group contact. No element may exceed its maximum movement distance.

A gap is defined as the space between any two of the following:

- Element (friendly or enemy)
- Camp
- Terrain piece
- Edge of the game board

The gap must be at least one element wide.



## Column Moves

Two or more elements may move as a column, observing the following restrictions:

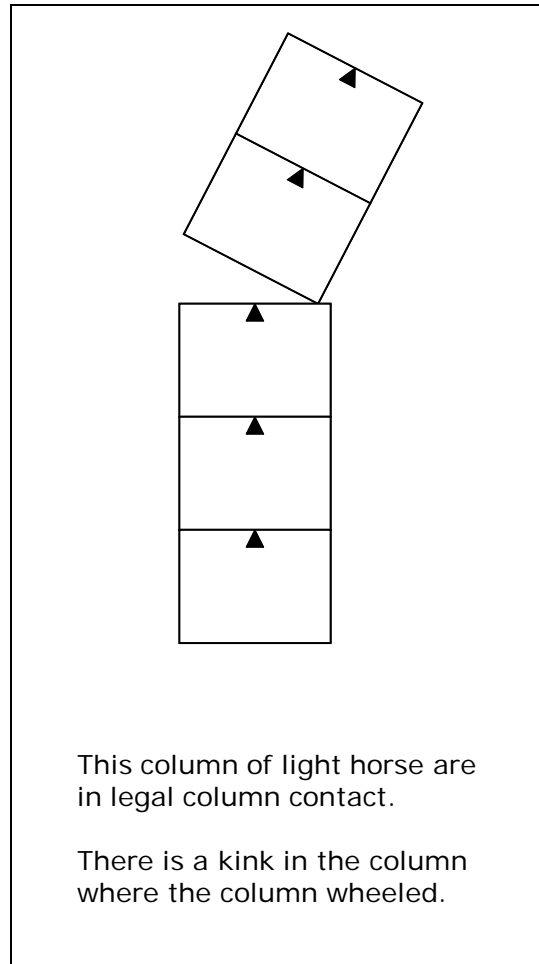
- The elements must begin in column contact.
- No element in the column may change order relative to any other element in the column.
- No element of the column may exceed its maximum movement distance.
- The column may move directly forward, or the lead element may wheel on a front corner with all other elements also wheeling when their front edge reaches the same position, or perform some combination of these. The column may end its move with one or more kinks due to wheeling.

Wheeling may occur on either of the front corners of the lead element.

## Column Contact

Two or more elements are in column contact if all of the following apply:

- The elements must be in a one element wide column.
- Every element must be in front edge-to-rear edge contact and corner-to-corner contact with the next element in the column OR front edge-to-rear corner contact with the next element when the column wheels or follows a road.
- The column must be contiguous; there cannot be a gap separating some members of the column from others.



### *Totally Useless Fact #2*

The largest DBA army in terms of figures required to field all options is the Medieval French (IV/64b), which requires 29 elements (including six elements of dismounting Knights, 5x5Wb and 2x7Hd) for a grand total of 116 figures.



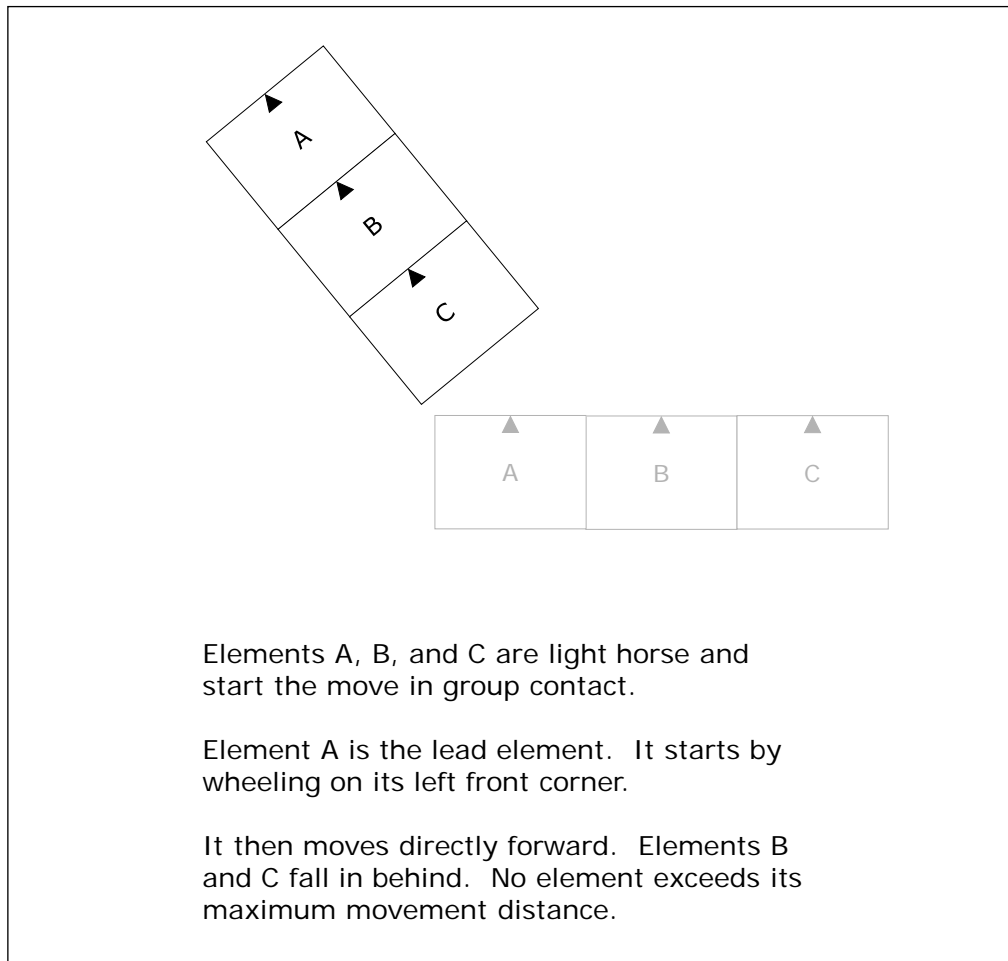
## Forming Column

Elements beginning their move in group contact may form a column as a column move. This is similar to reducing frontage to pass a gap, except that it must be into a one element wide column and it can be done at any time, not just when passing through a gap.

To form column, designate one element as the lead element of the column. That element then makes a normal column move (that is, it may move directly forward, wheel on a front corner, or some combination of these). Any other

element starting the move in group contact with the lead element may then move freely to fall in behind the lead element. The following restrictions apply:

- No element forming the column may exceed its maximum movement distance.
- No element may move backwards to join the column.
- All elements moving as part of the column move must end the move as part of the one element wide column.



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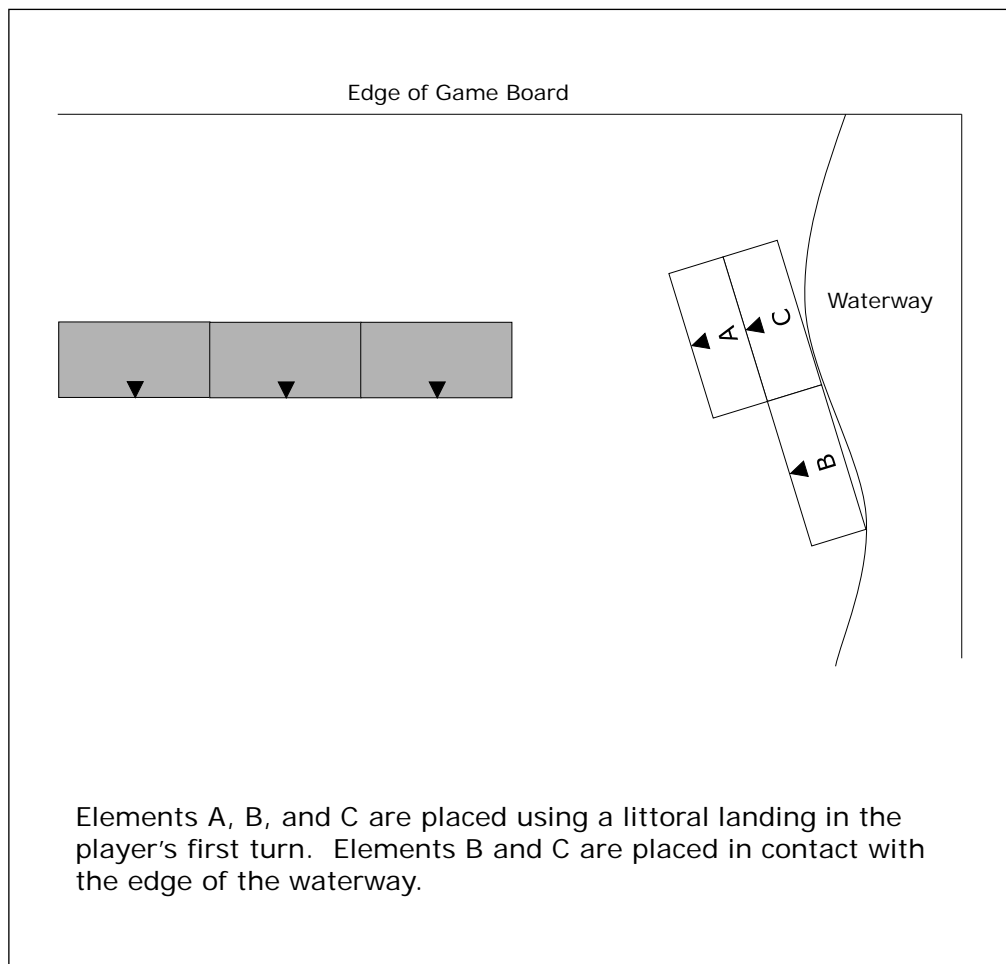
# Littoral Landings

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A player who has reserved elements for a littoral landing may, in his first turn, place any or all of the reserved elements onto the game board. The elements must be placed in group contact (see page 24). If only one element is placed, that element must be in contact with a edge of the waterway. If more than one element is placed, at least two of those elements must be in contact with the edge of the waterway.

The player may choose not to place any or all of the reserved elements in his first turn, in which case the elements may not be used at all during the game. The elements that are not placed on the board do not count as destroyed.

Placing a littoral landing costs one PIP.



# Second and Subsequent Movement

Most of the time elements are only allowed to make one tactical move in a turn. Under certain circumstances however, elements may move twice or even more.

Elements may make second and subsequent tactical moves as either single elements or as part of a group or column. Eligible elements

may even make second or subsequent tactical moves after a littoral landing.

Each second or subsequent move costs PIPs in the normal way (see page 20).

Element Type	How Many Moves	Conditions
Psiloi	Unlimited	Only in the player's first turn.
Warband	1 additional move	Must end its second move: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In full front, full flank, or full rear contact with an enemy element, or</li> <li>• Eligible to provide rear support in close combat, or</li> <li>• Eligible to provide an overlap in close combat.</li> </ul>
Light Horse Light Camelry	Unlimited	May not start its move, move, or end its move within one base width of an enemy element or an enemy occupied camp during a second or subsequent move.
All	Unlimited	Second and subsequent moves must be road moves and may not end in contact with an enemy element or an enemy occupied camp.



*13<sup>th</sup> C. Turkoman Light Horse (5x2LH)*

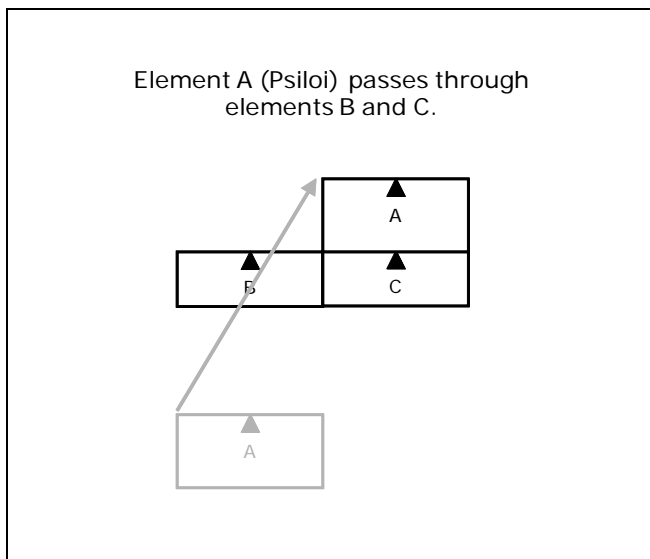
# Moving Through Friendly Elements

## Passing Through a Friendly Element

An element may pass through one or more friendly elements during its tactical move (or when making the equivalent of a tactical move while fleeing) if it meets the following conditions:

- Every met element is facing the same or opposite direction as the moving element.
- There is clear space immediately beyond the farthest met element that is large enough to hold the moving element AND the moving element may move far enough to reach this space.
- Mounted elements may move through psiloi and psiloi may move through any friendly element. Other elements may not pass through friendly elements.

The move may be in any direction (including straight ahead, straight back, sideways, or on a diagonal).

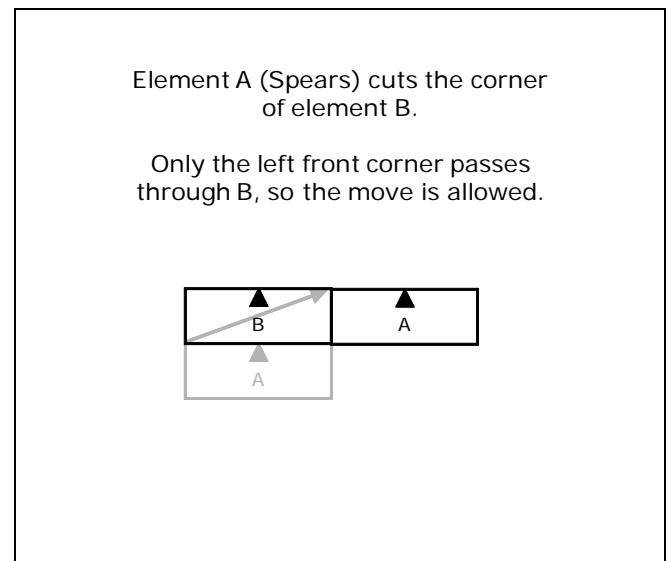


Elements may not pass through enemy elements.

Elements may also pass through friendly elements when recoiling (see page 50).

## Cutting the Corner

It's a little quirky, but an element can also move through a friendly element if it's just "cutting the corner". That is, if you were to draw a line between the starting and ending positions of each corner of the moving element and only one of those lines goes through a friendly element, then the move is allowed. Unlike the pass through move described in the previous subsection, this kind of move is open to all element types.



The most common use of this move is for an element to go from directly behind a friendly element to a position directly beside that element.

### *Totally Useless Fact #3*

The fastest and most mobile DBA armies are the Kimmerian, Skythian or Early Hu (I/43a), Alan (II/58), Hunnic (II/80d), and Emishi (III/6). Each of these armies can be fielded as twelve elements of light horse, including the general.

# Breaking Off from Full Front Contact

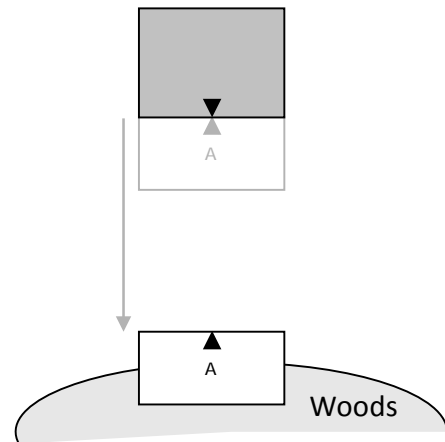
An element in full front contact with an enemy element or an enemy occupied camp may only move by breaking off. A break off is always a single element move. To break off, an element must meet the following restrictions:

- Its tactical move distance must be greater than the enemy element's in the terrain it ends its move in.
- It may only move directly to its rear. No change of direction is allowed.
- It may not change its facing.
- It must move at least 3 MU.
- It may not start with an enemy element in full flank or full rear contact with it.
- It may not pass through a friendly element unless the pass through is normally allowed (see page 30).
- It may not pass through an enemy element or enemy controlled camp.

If an element breaks off from an element of Knights, Scythed Chariots, Warband, or Elephants, the element that was broken off

from immediately pursues as an outcome move (see page 54).

Element A (Auxilia) breaks off from the enemy element (Cavalry) by moving 3 MU directly to its rear, ending its move partly in bad going. Its tactical move distance in bad going is greater than that of the Cavalry, so the move is allowed.



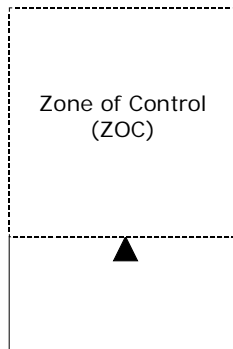
Since an element in full front contact with an enemy element or enemy occupied camp can only move by breaking off, if an element is in such a position and cannot meet these restrictions then it cannot make a tactical move.



*1<sup>st</sup> C. BC Gallic Warriors (3x3Wb)*

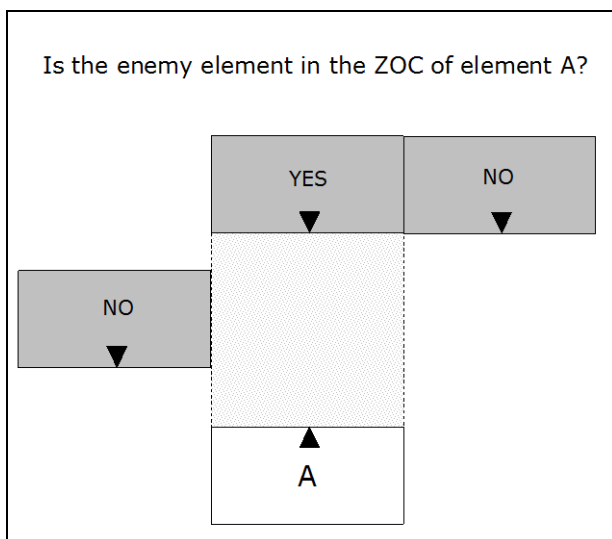
# Zone of Control

Every element exerts a zone of control (ZOC) that restricts the movement of enemy elements.



The ZOC extends out one base width directly in front of the element, or until the point where it is blocked by another element, whichever is less. Note that an element that blocks a ZOC is itself considered to be within the ZOC.

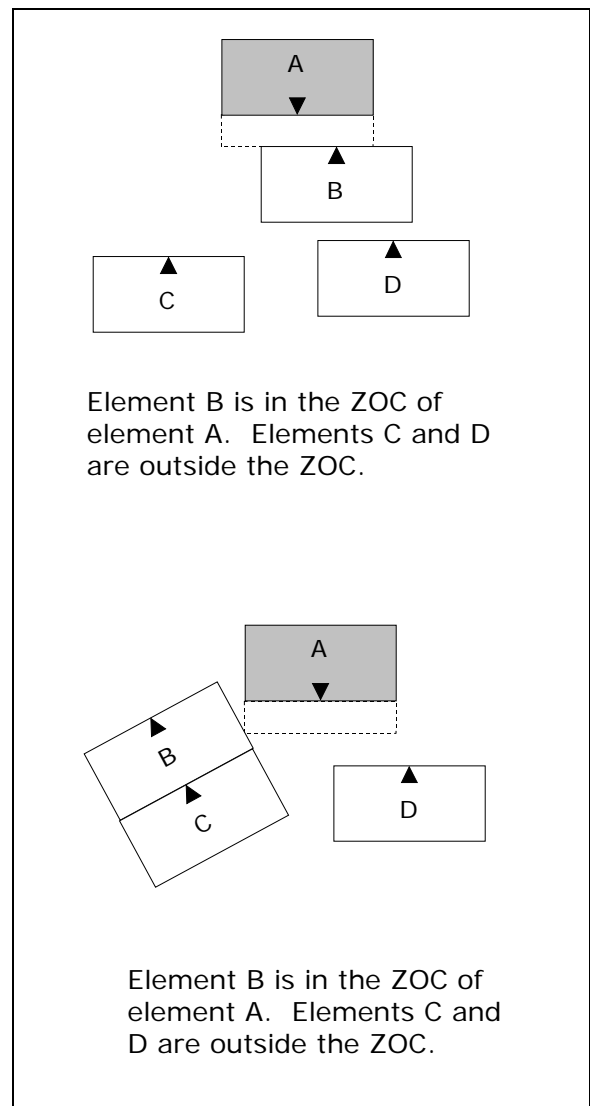
Unless blocked, the ZOC includes the front edge of the ZOC region (i.e., unless the ZOC is blocked, an element exactly one base width away is considered to be in the ZOC). The ZOC does not include the side edges or the front corners of the ZOC region.



## Blocking a ZOC

You can determine if the ZOC is blocked by using the "rolling carpet" method. Imagine a rolled up carpet. When you roll the carpet out, it rolls until it hits something, and then the whole thing stops.

The ZOC works the same way. The ZOC extends out from the element until it hits another element or an occupied camp, and it stops at that point across its whole width.



### Starting a Tactical Move Within an Enemy Element's ZOC

An element that starts a tactical move within the ZOC of one or more enemy elements is restricted in how it may move:

The element may retire, meeting the following restrictions:

- It may only move directly to its rear. No change of direction is allowed.
- It may not change its facing.

Or it may move to full front contact with any one of the controlling enemy elements<sup>†</sup>.

Or it may move to square itself with any one of the controlling enemy elements<sup>†</sup>, meeting the following restrictions:

- At no point in the move may the front corners of the element move further away from the corresponding front corners of the enemy element.
- At no point in the move may the front corners of the element move away from an imaginary line extending directly out from the corresponding front corners of the enemy element.
- At no point in the move may the angle between the front edge of the element and the front edge of the enemy element increase.

<sup>†</sup> The *controlling enemy elements* are those enemy elements whose ZOC the element started in. They do not include enemy elements whose ZOC may have been entered during the move. An element starting within the ZOC of two or more enemy elements has a choice of which element to contact or square itself with.

### Entering an Enemy Element's ZOC During a Tactical Move

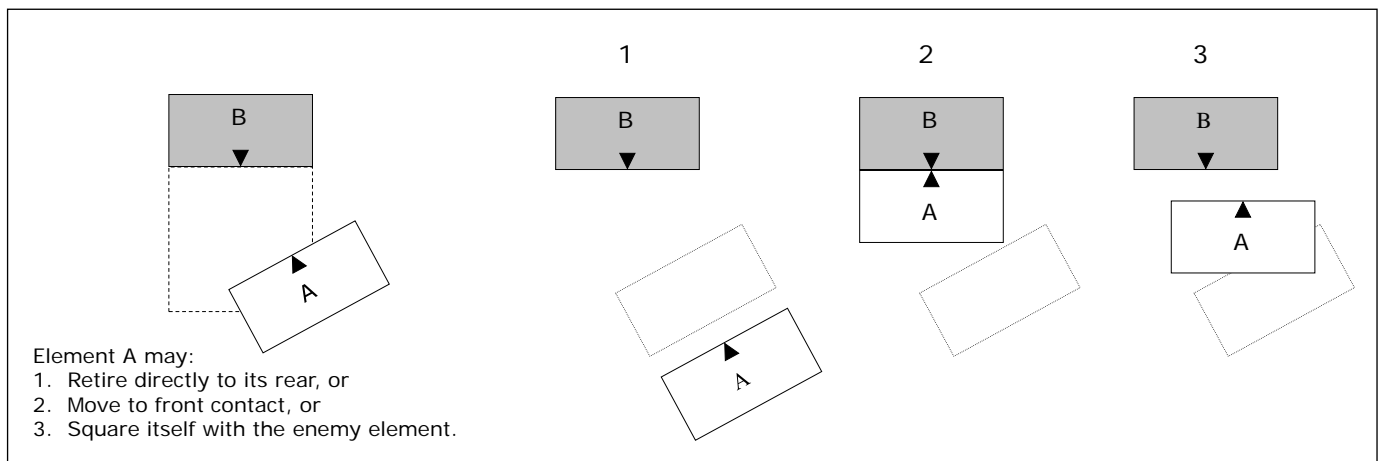
An element that does not start its tactical move within the ZOC of an enemy element, but that enters the ZOC of an enemy element while moving is also restricted in how it may move.

The element may move normally until it first touches the ZOC of an enemy element. Once it touches the ZOC:

The element may move to full front contact with any one of the controlling enemy elements<sup>‡</sup>.

Or it may move to square itself with any one of the controlling enemy elements<sup>‡</sup>, following the rules specified above.

<sup>‡</sup> The *controlling enemy elements* are those enemy elements whose ZOC the element first enters. They do not include enemy elements whose ZOC may be entered subsequently. An element entering the ZOC of two or more enemy elements simultaneously has a choice of which element to contact or square itself with.



## War Wagons and ZOC

Compared to the other element types, War Wagons are a very different kind of fighting force. Instead of being a formed body of men and horses, War Wagons represent a formation of protected wagons and the accompanying soldiers. These formations were slow and ponderous, but had the capability of fighting effectively in any direction.

This capability is represented with the following special rules:

- War Wagon elements normally exert a ZOC from all four edges.
- However, if an enemy element is in full front contact with a War Wagon element, then that War Wagon element does not exert a ZOC from any edge.



*15<sup>th</sup> C. Hungarian War Wagons (3xWWg)*



# Full Front, Flank, and Rear Contact

When we use the terms full front contact, full flank contact, and full rear contact, here's what we mean:

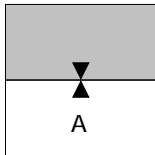
**Full Front Contact.** An element is in full front contact with an enemy element if the elements are in mutual front edge to front edge and front corner to front corner contact. An element is in full front contact with an enemy occupied camp if any part of its front edge is in contact with any edge of the camp.

**Full Flank Contact.** An element is in full flank contact with an enemy element if its front edge is in contact with the enemy element's side edge AND the elements are in mutual left-to-left or

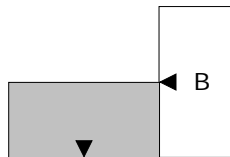
right-to-right front corner contact. An element cannot be in full flank contact with a camp.

**Full Rear Contact.** An element is in full rear contact with an enemy element if its front edge is in contact with the enemy element's rear edge AND the elements are in front corner-to-rear corner contact. An element cannot be in full rear contact with a camp.

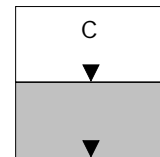
Note that these contacts are described as "full" to distinguish them from other incidental contacts that do not affect game play in the same way.



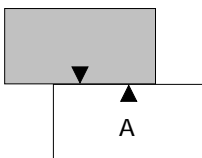
Element A is in full front contact with the enemy element.



Element B is in full flank contact with the enemy element.



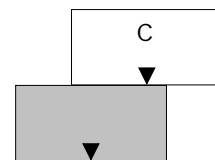
Element C is in full rear contact with the enemy element.



Element A is not in full front contact because it's not in front corner to front corner contact with the enemy element.



Element B is not in full flank contact because it's not in front corner to front corner contact with the enemy element.



Element C is not in full rear contact because it's not in front corner to rear corner contact with the enemy element.

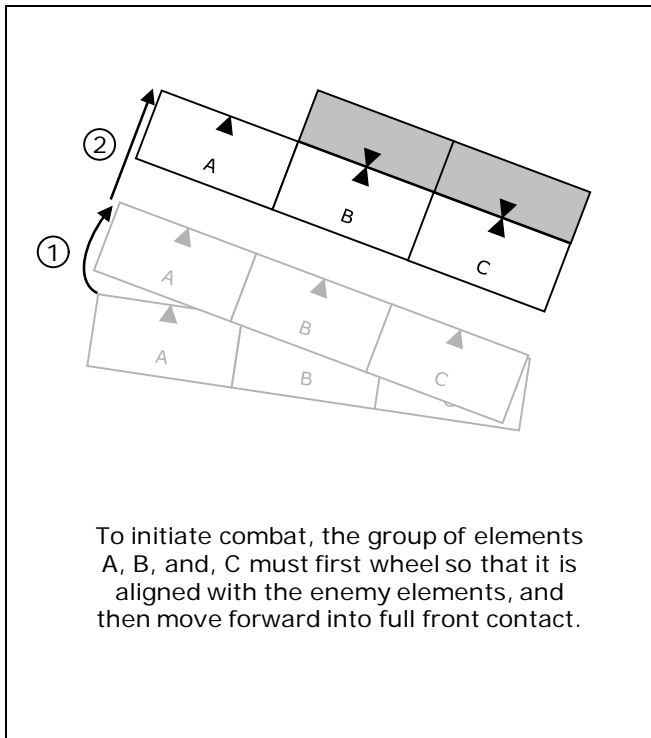
# Moving into Contact

Artillery and War Wagons may not move into contact with an enemy element or an enemy occupied camp. This restriction includes all contact, including corner-to-corner. Therefore these element types may not move into an overlap position.

All other element types may move into contact with an enemy element or an enemy occupied camp.

## Contact to Initiate Close Combat

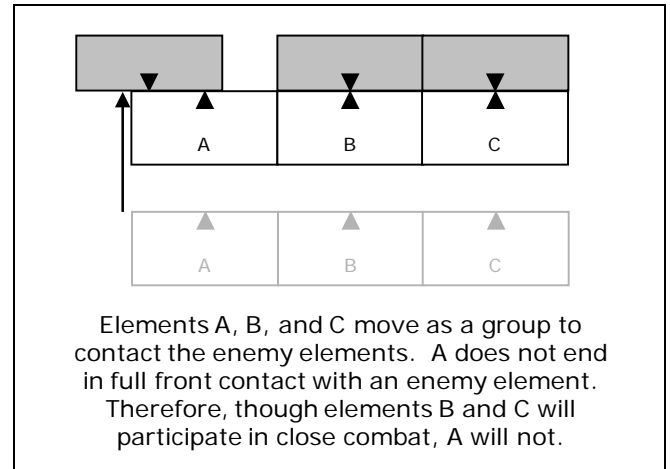
Unless the contacted element is forced to conform (see next page), the moving element or group of elements must maneuver to reach a full contact position in order to initiate close combat.



Remember that a group may move up to one-half base width directly left or right to line up opposite an enemy element (see page 24). This makes it easier for groups to make contact correctly.

## Non-Combat Contact

Usually movement to contact is done in order to initiate close combat. However, other contact is allowed as long as the move conforms to all other movement rules.



## Flank and Rear Contact

**Flank Contact.** An element may not make a tactical move that ends in full flank contact with an enemy element unless it starts entirely either:

- Beyond a line prolonging the enemy element's side edge, or
- Partly beyond the enemy element's side edge and partly behind the enemy element's rear edge.

**Rear Contact.** An element may not make a tactical move that ends in full rear contact with an enemy element unless it starts entirely behind a line prolonging the enemy element's rear edge.

Note that making contact with just a corner of the enemy element or side edge-to-side edge contact is not restricted. For example, moving to an overlapping position is allowed regardless of the element's starting position.

## Conforming to a Group

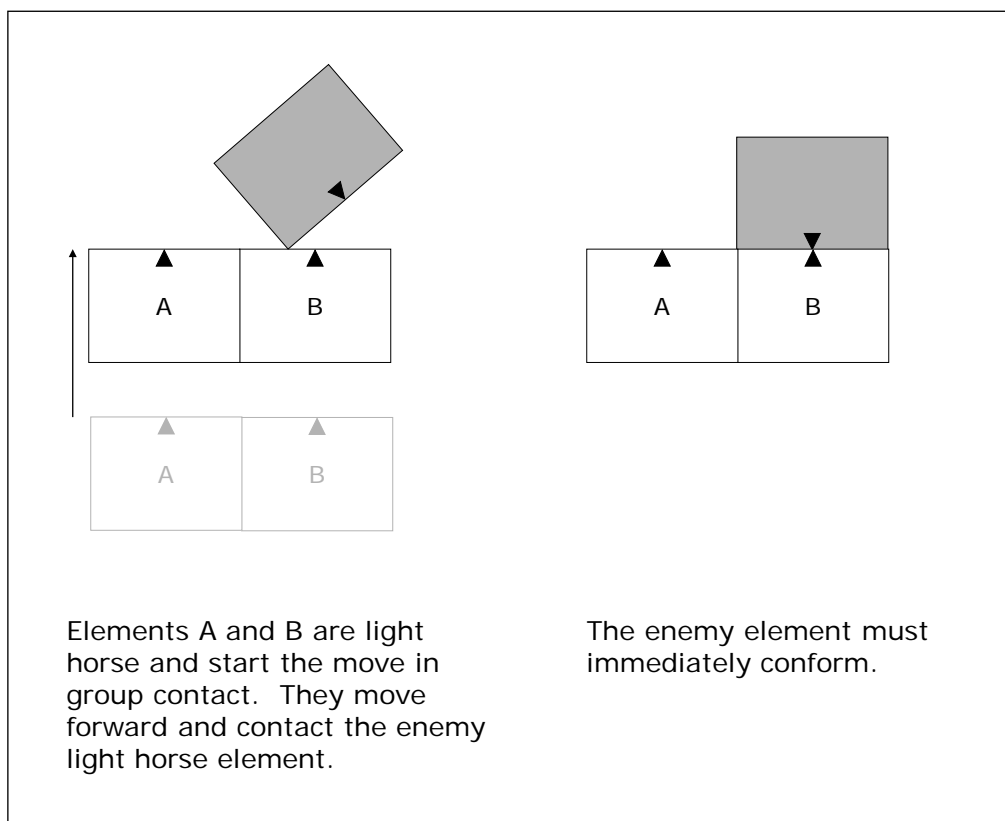
Any single element contacted by an enemy element must conform to that element if all of the following apply:

- The enemy element is moving as part of a group move, or is part of a littoral landing which has two or more elements.
- The contacted element is not in group contact with one or more friendly elements.
- There is sufficient clear space for the contacted element to conform.
- There will be at least one base depth of unoccupied space behind the element after it conforms. (This applies even if the element would not recoil from an adverse close combat result.)

To conform, the element immediately turns to face the contacting element, ending in full front contact.

If two or more elements make contact at the same time, the contacted element conforms to the moving element that made the most contact. If the amount of contact is equal, the player with the contacted element chooses which of the contacting elements to conform to.

The elements in the moving group, column, or littoral landing may move without restriction through the ZOC of an element that must conform to them. This is because the conforming element ends the move in full front contact with one of the moving elements, satisfying the ZOC requirements.



## Turning to Face

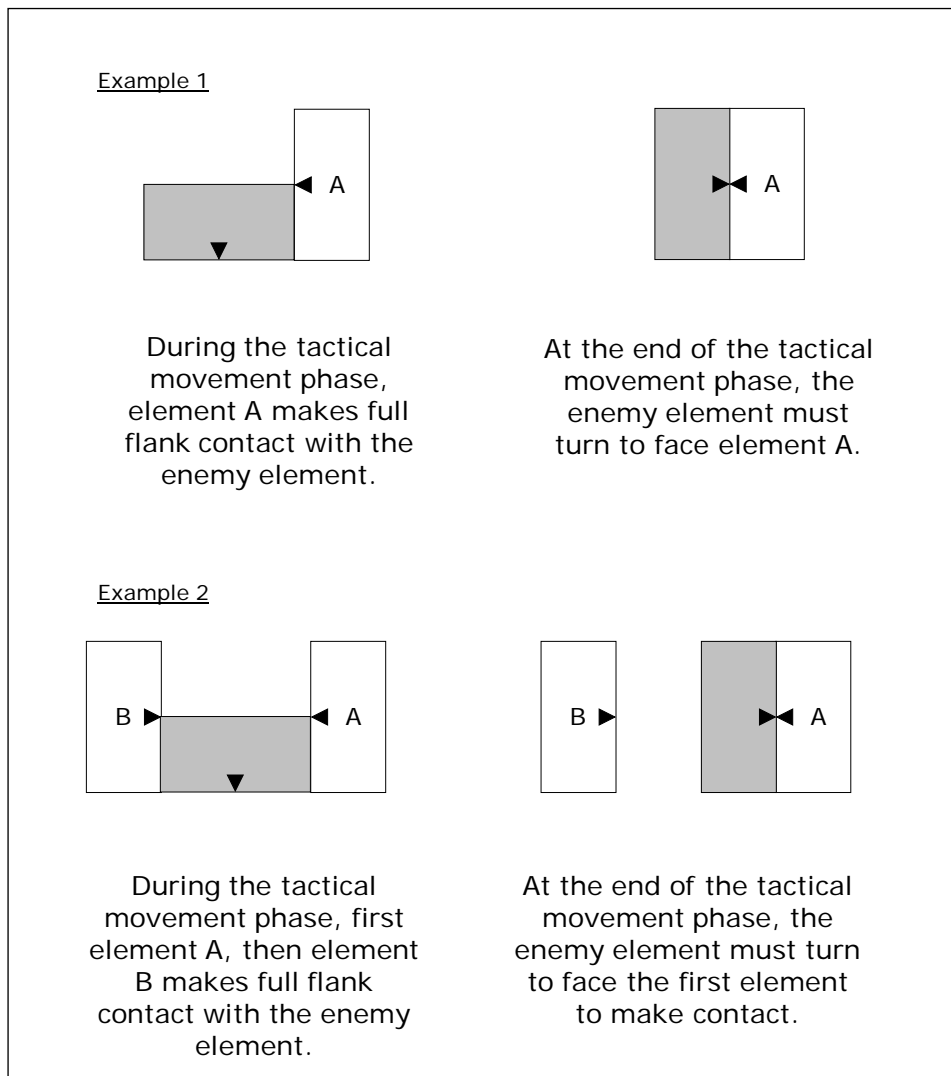
At the end of the tactical movement phase, any element that has an enemy element in full flank or full rear contact with it, but no element in full front contact with it, immediately turns to face the contacting element, ending in full front contact. If there are two or more elements in full flank or full rear contact, the element turns to face the first to make contact.

This doesn't affect the way they move—for purposes of movement they still have a front edge that never changes. But the first edge contacted by an enemy element is considered the front edge for anything related to close combat.

Note that this designation as the front edge is not permanent. A change in contact results in a reevaluation of the edge that is treated as the front edge for close combat.

## Contact with War Wagons

War Wagons do not turn to face. Instead, an element of War Wagons treats the first edge contacted as the front edge for purposes of close combat.



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# Distant Shooting

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In DBA, distant shooting represents the long range shooting of massed bowmen, war wagons, and artillery. All short range shooting is included implicitly in close combat.

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## Combat Resolution

Combat resolution follows the same procedure for both distant shooting and close combat. See page 46 for detailed step-by-step instructions.

Rules specific to distant shooting are covered in this section.

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Distant shooting is limited to Bows, Pavises, War Wagons, and Artillery:

- Bows, Pavises, and War Wagons shoot in both their own turn and their opponent's turn.
- Normally, Artillery only shoot in their own turn and only if they did not make a tactical move.
- However, if Artillery are shot at in their opponents turn, they may also shoot (return fire).

Each element type has a maximum range.

Element Type	Maximum Range
Bows, Pavises, and War Wagons	3 MU
Artillery	8 MU

The active player chooses the order in which shooting takes place, selecting from the eligible elements that have not yet shot. Each combat is resolved and all resulting outcome moves completed before moving to the next combat.

If an element is eligible to shoot at the beginning of the distant shooting phase but becomes ineligible before it takes its turn, then the element does not shoot in that turn. Conversely, if an element is not eligible to shoot

at the beginning of the distant shooting phase but becomes eligible as a result of other shooting, then that element may be selected to shoot.

An element may not shoot more than once in a turn.

An element may not be shot at more than once in a turn. However, up to three shooters may combine their shooting against an element, the extra shooters aiding the main shooter.

If two or more elements are shooting at the same target, the shooter closest to the target must be selected as the main shooter. As the main shooter, that element's combat factor will be used to resolve the combat.

Elements that are eligible to shoot must do so during the distant shooting phase (an element cannot decline to shoot). Elements that are eligible to shoot at one another must do so.

An element that shoots without being shot at ignores any combat result that would affect it.

## Eligibility

Distant shooting takes place between the shooting edge and the target edge. For Bows, Pavises and Artillery elements, the shooting edge is always the front edge of the shooting element. For War Wagon elements, any edge of the shooting element may be selected to be the shooting edge. Any edge of the target element may be selected as the target edge.

An element is eligible to shoot if all of the following apply:

- At least part of the target edge is in the arc of fire of the shooting element.
- The distance from any part of the shooting edge to any part of the target edge is less than or equal to the

maximum range for the shooting element.

- The path from the shooting edge to the target edge is not blocked (see the definition of blocked on the next page).
- Neither the shooting element nor the target element is in full front, flank, or rear contact with an enemy element.

Note that elements in overlap may shoot and be shot at. Elements in position to provide support in close combat may also be shot at.

### Shooting on a Rear Edge

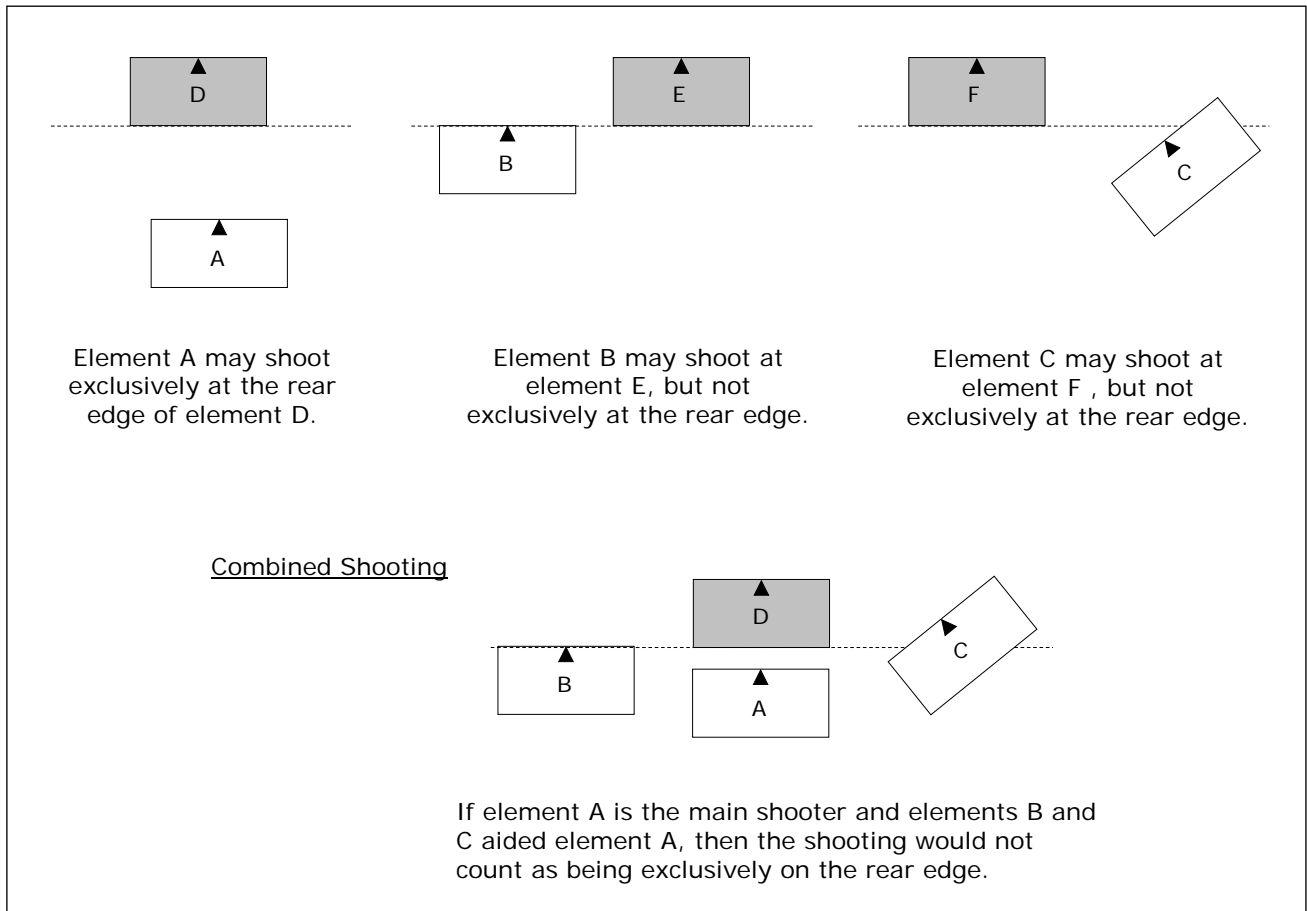
Shooting at an element's rear edge forces the element to turn around before recoiling. This makes it important to know when shooting counts as being on the rear edge.

An element is eligible to shoot exclusively on a rear edge if the following apply:

- The shooting edge is entirely behind an imaginary line running along the rear edge of the target element.
- The element is allowed to shoot at the rear edge of the target.

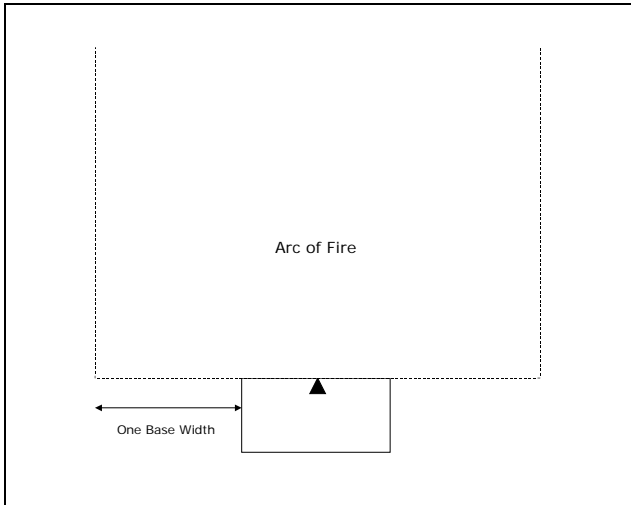
The situation is more complicated if you have more than one element shooting at the target. If the main shooting element is being aided by one or more additional shooting elements, then all shooting elements must be eligible to shoot exclusively on the rear edge. If they're not all eligible, then it's just a regular shot.

See page 50 for the details of how an element recoils from shooting on a rear edge.



## Arc of Fire

For Bows, Pavises, and Artillery, the arc of fire is a rectangular area extending from the front edge of the element forward and extending out one base width to either side.

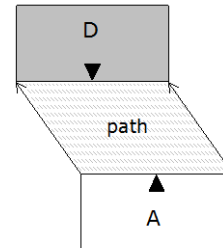


For War Wagons the arc of fire is a full 360° circle around the element.

For Bows, Pavises, or Artillery occupying a camp, the arc of fire is a full 360° circle around the camp.

## Blocked Path

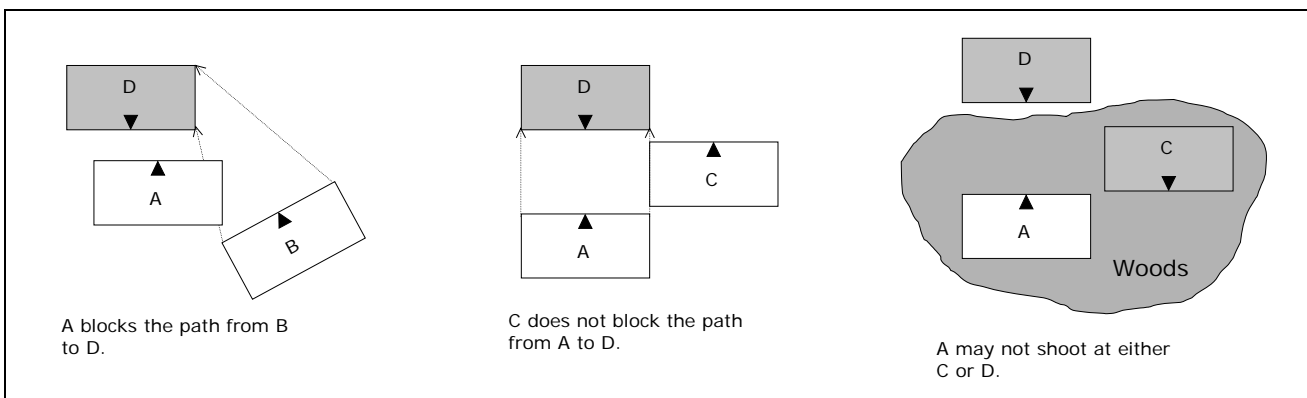
The path from the shooting edge to the target edge consists of the two uncrossed lines running from the corners of the shooting edge to the corners of the target edge and the area in between.



If there is any part of any element (including the shooting or target element) within this area, then the path is blocked. An element whose edge runs along one of these lines does not block the path.

The path is also blocked if any of the following situations exist:

- The target element is entirely in a woods or oasis terrain piece.
- The shooting element is entirely in a woods or oasis terrain piece.
- The entire width of the shooting path is blocked by the crest of a gentle or steep hill.
- The entire width of the shooting path is blocked by a woods or oasis.



### Distant Shooting Mini-FAQ

Q: Why can't my light horse shoot?!?

A: It's not unusual for newcomers to DBA to find the rules that relate shooting and element types to be a bit confusing. This is because there are several element types that represent troops typically equipped with bows, javelins, or other weapons that are used at a distance, but these element types are not allowed to shoot. For example, light horse are frequently armed with bows, but in DBA light horse are not allowed to shoot at a distance (though they may be shot at). Light horse can only attack in close combat. This is because the bow fire from the light horse is included in the close combat attack and not as a separate shooting component.

Q: What's the difference between the bow (3Bw or 4Bw), longbow (3Lb or 4Lb), and crossbow (3Cb or 4Cb) element types?

A: These element types all behave exactly the same in DBA. Same maximum shooting distance, same combat factors. The only thing that's different is the type of figure that you'll want to use to depict them. And even there you're free to use what you think is appropriate. If the army list calls for 3Bw but you think that crossbowmen are more historically appropriate, you should feel free to use the crossbowmen.

Q: So what's the difference between the 4Bw and the 8Bw element types?

A: 8Bw represent a group of soldiers that are organized in a very particular way. Historically, these troops had a one or more rows of spear and shield armed troops in the front ranks, with bow armed troops behind them, sometimes with more spear and shield armed troops in the rear. The Pavise rules are designed to reflect this different organization and the resulting battlefield behavior.



*11<sup>th</sup> C. Byzantine Skutatoi (3x8Bw)*



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# Close Combat

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In DBA, close combat represents all of the fighting that occurred at close quarters. Skirmishers throwing or firing missiles at close range; horse archers galloping up, firing, and riding back; foot troops throwing their pila or francisca as a prelude to their charge; and of course, hand-to-hand combat itself.

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## Combat Resolution

Combat resolution follows the same procedure for both distant shooting and close combat. See page 46 for detailed step-by-step instructions.

Rules specific to close combat are covered in this section.

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All pairs of elements in mutual full front contact at the beginning of the close combat phase participate in close combat during that phase. The active player chooses the order in which combat takes place. Each combat is resolved and all resulting outcome moves completed before moving to the next combat.

If an element that is eligible for combat at the beginning of the close combat phase is destroyed as a result of another combat before it participates in close combat, then that element does not participate in close combat in that turn.

If a pair of elements are not in mutual full front contact at the beginning of the close combat phase, but become so during the phase (due to an outcome move), they do not participate in close combat during that turn.

## Uphill

An element is uphill of its opponent if at least some part of its front edge is on a gentle or steep Hill AND part of its front edge is uphill of its opponent's entire front edge.

## Overlap

An element overlaps an enemy element by corner contact if all of the following apply:

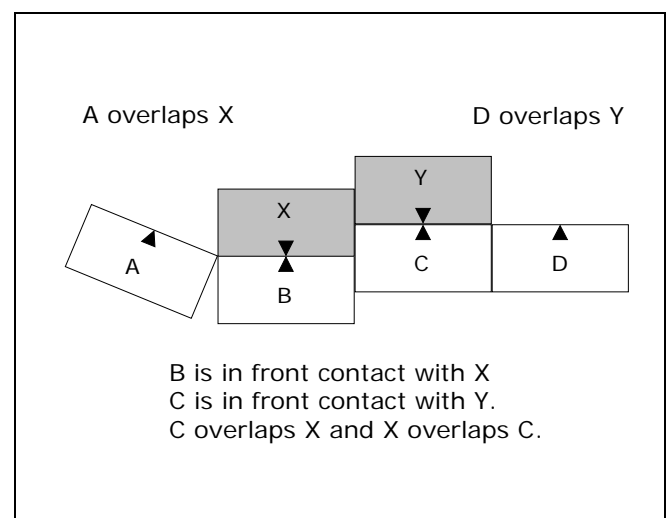
- The element is not in full flank contact with the enemy element.
- The elements are in mutual left-to-left or right-to-right front corner contact.
- A friendly element is in full front contact with the enemy element.
- The element is not in full front contact with another enemy element.

An element overlaps an enemy element by side contact if all of the following apply:

- The elements are in mutual side edge-to-side edge contact.
- A friendly element is in full front contact with the enemy element.

An element cannot overlap a camp; a camp cannot overlap an element.

An element may receive at most one -1 for overlap or full flank contact on the left, one -1 for overlap or full flank contact on the right, and one -1 for full rear contact.



## Rear Support Factors

### Pikes.

An element of Pikes receives rear support when in close combat and supported by a second rank of Pikes. The rear support factor is:

- +3 vs all foot except Bows and Psiloi
- +2 vs Knights, Cataphracts, and Elephants

To provide rear support, the supporting element must be directly behind and facing the same direction as the supported element. Both elements must be entirely in good going.

This rear support applies when attacking a camp if the defender is an element type listed above. Note that Camp Followers are considered foot, so this rear support applies when attacking a camp defended by Camp Followers.

### Light Spears, Spears, and Warband.

An element of Light Spears, Spears, or Warband receives a +1 rear support factor in close combat when supported by a second rank of the same type and fighting the following element types:

- vs. all foot except Bows and Psiloi
- vs. Knights, Cataphracts, and Elephants

To provide rear support, the supporting element must be directly behind and facing the same direction as the supported element. Both elements must be entirely in good going.

As with Pikes, this rear support applies when attacking a camp if the defender is an element type listed above (including Camp Followers).

### Psiloi support for Auxilia, Blades, Light Spears, Raiders, and Spears.

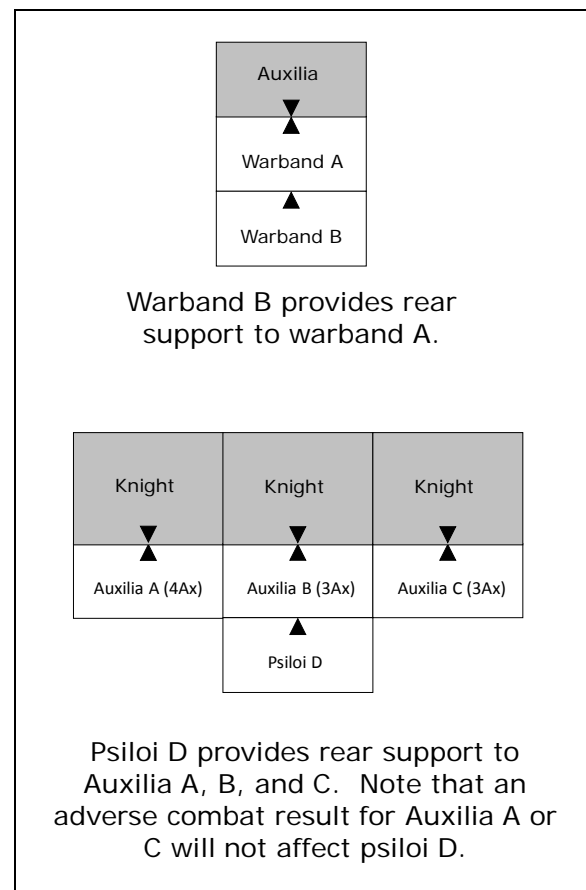
An element of Auxilia, Blades, Light Spears, Raiders, or Spears receives a +1 rear support factor when supported by an element of Psiloi and fighting mounted, Warband, or a camp.

Psiloi provide rear support to those element types when:

- The Psiloi element is directly behind and facing the same direction as the supported element, OR
- The Psiloi element is directly behind an element that is the same type as the supported element and that is in side edge and front corner contact with the supported element.

A psiloi element may support more than one element in the same turn. A supporting psiloi element is only affected by combat involving the element directly to its front.

Psiloi provide rear support even when one or both elements are in bad going.



## Rear Support and Subtypes

In all cases, the subtype and depths of the elements are not important, as long as the elements are of the appropriate type. For example, a 5Wb may support a 3Wb and vice-versa. Similarly, an element of psiloi directly behind a 4Ax may support a 3Ax that is in side edge and front corner contact with the 4Ax.

Note that Light Spears are distinct from Spears and these element types may not be mixed when receiving rear support. Likewise, Raiders are distinct from Blades.

## Attacking a Camp

An element in full front contact with an enemy occupied camp is eligible to participate in close combat. (An element is in full front contact with a camp if any part of its front edge is in contact with the camp.) Only one element may attack a camp during a single close combat phase.

An element cannot overlap a camp and a camp cannot overlap an element. However, an element attacking a camp can receive rear support under some conditions (see above).

If the element defending the camp is destroyed, the attacking element immediately occupies the camp. An element providing rear support to the attacking element does not move in this case.



*14<sup>th</sup> C. Irish Hobilars (1x3Cv) attack an Anglo-Irish camp*

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# Combat Resolution

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Combat resolution is the same in both the distant shooting phase and in the close combat phase:

1. Calculate the combat, tactical, and rear support factors for the two elements involved in the combat.
2. Roll a die for each element. This is its combat die roll.
3. Add the sum of the combat, tactical, and rear support factors to the combat die roll, giving you the combat score for each element.
4. Compare the two combat scores and perform any outcome moves specified by the combat results table.

All of the combat, tactical, and rear support factors are listed on the next page, and the combat results table follows on the page after that.

Examples of distant shooting and close combat can be found on pages 55 and 56.

Quick strategy tip: It never hurts to roll a six!



It's common for the attacking player to call out the sum of the combat, tactical, and rear factors when pointing out the next combat to be resolved. For example, the player might say, "My knight against your spear, four to four."

Sometimes the player will even quickly identify the tactical and rear support factors, "My knight against your spear; I'm a general, plus one; you have psiloi support, plus one; you're overlapped by my cavalry, minus one. Four to four." This can be especially helpful when first learning how to play.

The combat, tactical, and rear support factors are calculated at the time of each combat based on the current disposition of the elements. This means that the result of one combat frequently has a substantial affect on surrounding combats, making the order of combat resolution very important. The active player should pick the order of combats carefully.

# Combat Resolution Factors

## Basic Combat Factors

Element Type	vs. Foot	vs. Mtd
Artillery (CC)	+2	+2
Artillery (DS)	+4	+4
Auxilia	+3	+2
Blades	+5	+3
Bows	+2	+4
Camelry	+3	+2
Camp Followers	+1	+1
Cataphracts	+4	+4
Cavalry	+3	+3
Elephants	+5	+4
Hordes	+3	+2
Knights	+3	+4
Light Horse	+2	+2
Light Spear	+3	+3
Pavises (CC)	+3	+4
Pavises (DS)	+2	+4
Pikes	+3	+4
Psiloi	+2	+2
Raiders	+4	+2
Scythed Chariots	+4	+4
Spears	+4	+4
War Wagons	+3	+4
Warband	+3	+2

DS = Distant Shooting  
CC = Close Combat

## Distant Shooting Factors

Element Type	Situation	Factor
Blades Elephants Raiders	Shot at by any	-1
Foot	Occupying its own camp and being shot at	+2
Any	General's element and being shot at	+1
Any	For each enemy element aiding the shooter	-1

## Rear Support Factors

Element Type	Supported By	Factor
Pikes	same	+3 vs. All Foot except Ps and Bw +2 vs. Kn, Cat, El
Light Spears Spears Warband	same	+1 vs. All Foot except Ps and Bw + 1 vs. Kn, Cat, El
Auxilia Blades Light Spears Raiders Spears	Psiloi	+1 vs. Mounted, Wb or Camp

## Close Combat Factors

Element Type	Situation	Factor
Foot	Occupying its own camp	+2
Any	General's element	+1
Any	Uphill or defending the bank of a river	+1
Any	For each enemy element overlapping or in full flank or full rear contact *	-1
Mounted	In bad going OR In close combat with an enemy element that is in bad going	-2
Artillery Blades Hordes Pavises Pikes Spears War Wagons Raiders	In bad going	-2
Raiders	In bad going	-1

\* Scythed Chariots do not receive a -1 when overlapped front corner-to-front corner, but do receive a -1 when overlapped side edge-to-side edge.

Scythed Chariots overlap enemy elements in the usual way.

# Combat Results Table

**EQUAL:** If the element's combat score is equal to its opponent's combat score:

<i>Element Type</i>	<i>Situation</i>	<i>Result</i>
Scythed Chariots	♦ vs. All	Destroyed
All others	♦ vs. All	No Effect

**BEATEN:** If the element's combat score is less than, but more than half of, its opponent's combat score:

<i>Element Type</i>	<i>Situation</i>	<i>Result</i>	
Artillery	♦ In close combat	Destroyed	
	♦ Otherwise	No Effect	
Auxilia	♦ In good going AND vs. Knights	Destroyed	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Blades Light Spear Pavises	Pikes Raiders Spears	♦ In good going and vs. Knights or Scythed Chariots ♦ vs. Warband not in a camp ♦ Otherwise	Destroyed Recoil
Bows	♦ vs. Mounted	Destroyed	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Camelry	♦ vs. Knights, Cataphracts, Cavalry, or Light Horse	No Effect	
	♦ vs. Scythed Chariots	Flee	
	♦ In bad going	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Camp Followers	♦ vs. All	Destroyed	
Cavalry	♦ vs. Camelry or Scythed Chariots	Flee	
	♦ In bad going	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Elephants	♦ vs. Psiloi, Auxilia, or Light Horse	Destroyed	
	♦ vs. Artillery shooting	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Hordes	♦ In good going AND vs. Knights, Elephants, or Scythed Chariots	Destroyed	
	♦ vs. Warband not in a camp	Recoil	
	♦ In a camp	No Effect	
	♦ vs. Bows, Pavises, War Wagons, or Artillery AND being shot at	Recoil	
Knights Cataphracts	♦ vs. Elephants, Camelry, Light Horse, or Scythed Chariots	Destroyed	
	♦ In bad going	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Light Horse	♦ vs. Scythed Chariots	Flee	
	♦ vs. Artillery shooting	Recoil	
	♦ In bad going	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Psiloi	♦ In good going AND vs. Knights or Cavalry	Destroyed	
	♦ In good going, dunes, or oasis AND vs. Camelry	Recoil	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	
Scythed Chariots	♦ vs. All	Destroyed	
War Wagons	♦ vs. Elephants	Destroyed	
	♦ vs. Artillery shooting	Destroyed	
	♦ Occupying a camp	No Effect	
	♦ Otherwise	No Effect	
Warband	♦ In good going and vs. Knights or Scythed Chariots	Destroyed	
	♦ Otherwise	Recoil	

DOUBLED: If the element's combat score is half, or less than half, of its opponent's combat score:

<b><i>Element Type</i></b>	<b><i>Situation</i></b>	<b><i>Result</i></b>
<b>Cavalry</b>	♦ In good going AND vs. Pikes, Spears, or Hordes ♦ vs. Artillery in close combat	Flee
	♦ Otherwise	Destroyed
<b>Light Horse</b>	♦ vs. Mounted, Bows, Pavises, or Psiloi ♦ vs. Artillery shooting ♦ In bad going	Destroyed
	♦ Otherwise	Flee
<b>Psiloi</b>	♦ In good going AND vs. Knights, Cataphracts, Cavalry, Camelry, or Light Horse ♦ vs. Bows, Pavises, Auxilia, or Psiloi	Destroyed
	♦ Otherwise	Flee
<b>Scythed Chariots</b>	♦ vs. All	Destroyed
<b>All Others</b>	♦ vs. Artillery in close combat	Recoil
	♦ Otherwise	Destroyed

---

# Outcome Movement

---

Outcome movement includes all actions that occur as a result of combat.

**Losing Element.** Apply an outcome move to the element that loses a combat. The type of outcome move is specified in the “Result” column of the combat results table.

**Winning Element.** In some circumstances, the element that wins a combat must pursue. Pursuit is described on page 54.

**Full Flank or Full Rear Contact.** If an element recoils, flees, or is destroyed while in full front contact with an enemy element, any friendly element in full flank or full rear contact with that enemy element must recoil.

**Supporting Elements.** Elements that provided support to a friendly element in close combat are not affected if that element is destroyed.

**Meeting.** Many of the outcome moves are affected by the element meeting something. An element is considered to meet something (another element, camp, etc.) if its required movement would take it into contact with and at least partly into that other thing.

## None

A combat result of “None” has no affect on the element. (Ok, so that was obvious.)

## Destroyed

An element that is destroyed is removed from the game board and placed off to the side.

## Recoil

To recoil, an element moves directly to its rear without turning. It moves its own base depth or one base width, whichever is less.

When an element is forced to recoil from distant shooting and all shooting edges are entirely behind a line prolonging the target element’s

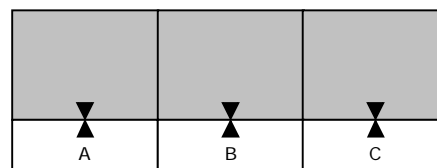
rear edge, the target element first turns in place 180 degrees and then recoils as usual.

An element that must recoil is immediately destroyed if any of the following apply:

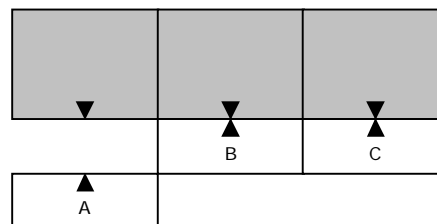
- It starts with an enemy element in full flank or full rear contact with it.
- It meets an enemy element.
- It meets a camp.
- It meets a friendly element that it cannot pass through or push back.
- It is forced to recoil while occupying a camp.
- It meets impassable terrain.
- It meets the edge of the board.

### Example of a Simple Recoil

Before: Elements A, B and C are in contact with enemy elements.



After: Element A loses its combat and recoils.





A recoiling element that meets an enemy element destroys that element if any of the following apply:

- The recoiling element meets an enemy element's rear edge with its rear edge or rear corner.
- The recoiling element meets an enemy element's rear corner with its rear edge.
- The recoiling element meets an enemy element's side edge with its rear corner only.

A recoiling elephant that meets a friendly element destroys that element. If Elephants recoil into friendly Elephants, then both elements are destroyed.

Another quick strategy tip: Having one of your own elephants recoil into your general, smushing him under their clumsy elephant feet, is a really memorable way to lose a game.

### Pass Through

A recoiling element that meets a friendly element passes through if all of the following apply:

- The met element is facing the same direction as the recoiling element.
- There is clear space immediately beyond the met element that is large enough to hold the recoiling element.
- The combination of recoiling and met elements is allowed.

Recoiling Element	Met Element
Mounted	Any except Pikes or Elephants
Blades	Blades or Spears
Pikes	Blades
Bows	Blades
Psiloi	Any except Psiloi

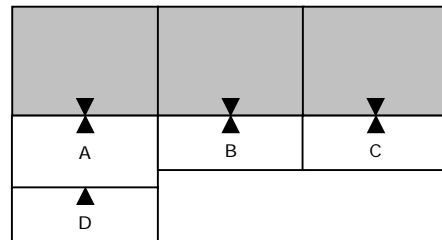
To pass through, an element moves directly to its rear until it is immediately beyond the met element.



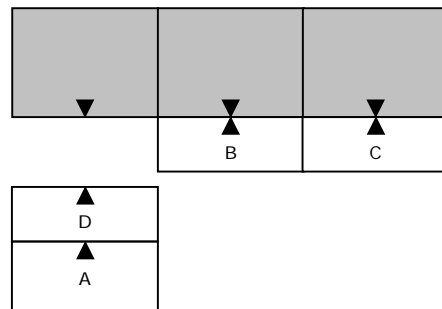
12<sup>th</sup> C. Syrian Cavalry (3Cv)

#### Example of a Recoil with Pass Through

Before: Elements A, B and C are in contact with enemy elements.



After: Element A (Bow) loses its combat and recoils. It passes through element D (Blade).



## Push Back

A recoiling element that meets a friendly element pushes that element back if all of the following apply:

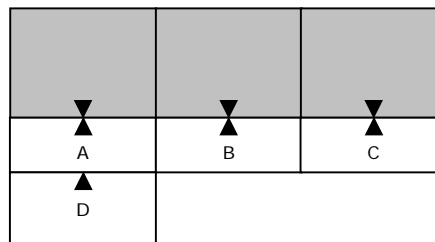
- It cannot pass through the met element.
- The met element is facing the same direction as the recoiling element.
- The met element is not an elephant or war wagon element.

To push back, both the recoiling element and the met element move directly to their rear until the recoiling element has completed its recoil. If the met element meets another element, it pushes it back if it can, otherwise the recoiling element is destroyed. It is allowed to push it back if all of the following apply:

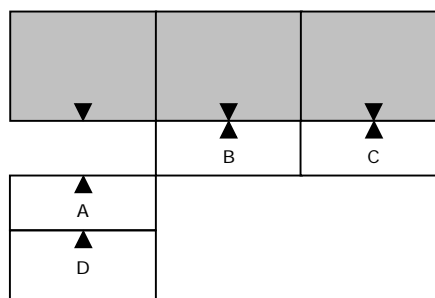
- The subsequently met element is a friendly element.
- The subsequently met element is facing the same direction as the recoiling element.
- The subsequently met element is not an elephant or war wagon element.

### Example of a Recoil with Push Back

Before: Elements A, B and C are in contact with enemy elements.



After: Element A (Blades) loses its combat and recoils. It pushes back element D (Bows).



10<sup>th</sup> C. Burmese Elephants with Crew (2xEl)

## Flee

To flee, an element performs the following steps:

1. It recoils.
2. It turns in place 180 degrees.
3. It makes the equivalent of a full tactical move in the direction it is now facing.

The tactical move may only change direction by the minimum necessary to avoid any of the following:

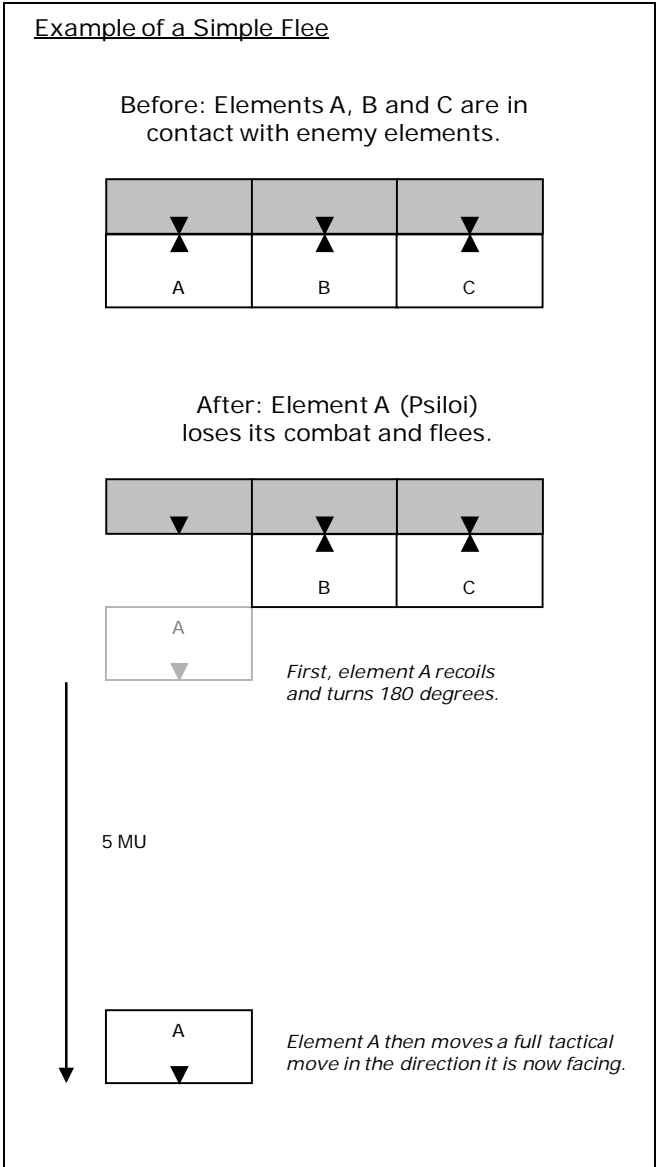
- Enemy elements
- Friendly elements it may not pass through
- An occupied camp
- Impassable terrain
- Bad going under the following circumstances:

Fleeing Element	Avoids
Cavalry	Woods, Steep Hills, Oasis, Dunes
Camelry Light Camelry	Woods, Steep Hills
Psiloi Light Horse	none

An element ignores enemy elements' zones of control while fleeing.

A fleeing element is destroyed if it meets the edge of the board or a river.

A fleeing element halts if it cannot move or continue its move.



*Totally Useless Fact #5*

The DBA army with the most elements of horde is the Sui Chinese (III/20a). The Sui are required to field 4 Hordes elements!

## Pursuit

Historically some troops were notoriously hard to control. This is represented in DBA by forcing certain element types to pursue.

An elements of Knights, Scythed Chariots, Elephants, or Warband must immediately pursue if it is in full front contact with an enemy element and the enemy element:

- Recoils
- Flees
- Is destroyed
- Breaks off

When an element of Warband pursues, an element of Warband which provided rear support (or which is eligible to provide support against an enemy element breaking off) also pursues.



15<sup>th</sup> C. Portuguese Commander (3Kn General)

To pursue, an element moves directly forward its own base depth or one base width, whichever is less. The pursuing element stops if it meets any of the following:

- Another element
- An occupied camp
- Impassable terrain
- A board edge

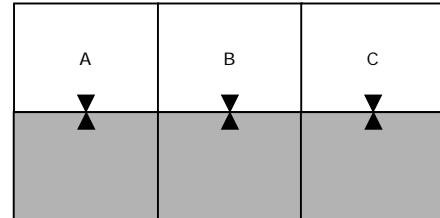
The pursuit is affected by bad going as follows:

- Knights and Scythed Chariots pursue into Marsh and Rough; they stop at the edge of other bad going.
- Elephants and Warband pursue into all bad going.

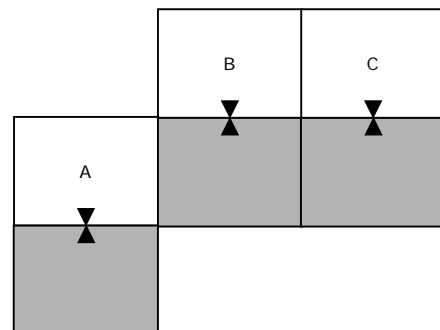
An element that is occupying a camp does not pursue. If the pursuing element meets an unoccupied camp, it occupies it.

### Example of a Simple Pursuit

Before: Elements A, B and C are in contact with enemy elements.

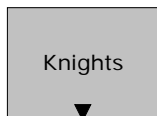


After: Element A (Knights) wins its combat and causes its opponent to recoil. Element A must pursue.

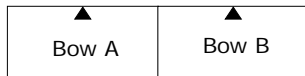


# Examples: Distant Shooting

## Example 1



Bow A shoots at the Knights, aided by Bow B.



*Calculating the factors:*

<u>Bow A</u>		
Combat Factor:	Bows vs. Mounted	+4
Tactical Factor:	None	
TOTAL		+4

<u>Knights</u>		
Combat Factor:	Knights vs. Foot	+3
Tactical Factor:	Extra shooter	-1
TOTAL		+2

Therefore, Bow A attack the Knights, +4 to +2.

*Resolving the combat:*

Bow A rolls a 3. The Knights roll a 6.

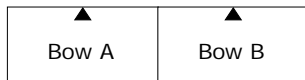
<u>Bow A</u>		<u>Knights</u>	
Combat Roll	3	Combat Roll	6
Sum of Factors	+4	Sum of Factors	+2
TOTAL	7	TOTAL	8

Bow A is beaten, but since it is shooting without being shot at, it ignores the result.

## Example 2



Bow A shoots at Bow X, aided by Bow B.



*Calculating the factors:*

<u>Bow X</u>		
Combat Factor:	Bows vs. Foot	+2
Tactical Factor:	Extra shooter	-1
TOTAL		+1

<u>Bow A</u>		
Combat Factor:	Bows vs. Foot	+2
Tactical Factor:	None	
TOTAL		+2

Therefore, Bow A attacks Bow X, +2 to +1.

*Resolving the combat:*

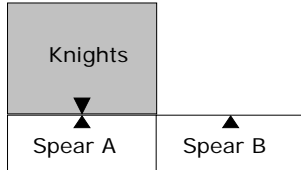
Bow X rolls a 2. Bow A rolls a 5.

<u>Bow X</u>		<u>Bow A</u>	
Combat Roll	2	Combat Roll	5
Sum of Factors	+1	Sum of Factors	+2
TOTAL	3	TOTAL	7

Bow X is doubled and is destroyed.

# Examples: Close Combat

## Example 1



The Knights are in mutual front contact with Spear A.

Spear B overlap the Knights.

*Calculating the factors:*

### Knights

Combat Factor:	Knights vs. Foot	+3
Tactical Factor:	Overlapped	-1
Rear Support:	None	—
TOTAL		+2

### Spear A

Combat Factor:	Spears vs. Mounted	+4
Tactical Factor:	None	—
Rear Support:	None	—
TOTAL		+4

*Resolving the combat:*

The Knights roll a 3. Spear A rolls a 4.

### Knights

Combat Roll	3
Sum of Factors	<u>+2</u>
TOTAL	5

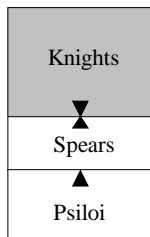
### Spear A

Combat Roll	4
Sum of Factors	<u>+4</u>
TOTAL	8

The Knights are beaten, but not doubled.  
The element must recoil its own base depth.  
Spear A does not pursue.

Therefore, the Knights attack Spear A, +2 to +4.

## Example 2



The Knights are in mutual front contact with the Spears.

The Psiloi provide rear support to the Spears.

*Calculating the factors:*

### Knights

Combat Factor:	Knights vs. Foot	+3
Tactical Factor:	None	—
Rear Support:	None	—
TOTAL		+3

### Spears

Combat Factor:	Spears vs. Mounted	+4
Tactical Factor:	None	—
Rear Support:	From Psiloi	<u>+1</u>
TOTAL		+5

*Resolving the combat:*

The Knights roll a 5. The Spears roll a 2.

### Knights

Combat Roll	5
Sum of Factors	<u>+3</u>
TOTAL	8

### Spears

Combat Roll	2
Sum of Factors	<u>+5</u>
TOTAL	7

The Spears are beaten, but not doubled. The Spears are destroyed, but the Psiloi are not. The Knights immediately pursue, moving forward into contact with the Psiloi.

Therefore, the Knights attack the Spears, +3 to +5.

---

# Winning and Losing

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*To crush your enemies, to see them driven before you, and to hear the lamentations of their women!*

*- Attributed to Ghengis Khan, and later to Conan the Barbarian*

A player wins the game when, at the end of a turn, both of the following conditions have been met:

- Either the opposing general's element or at least four of the opposing army's troop elements have been destroyed.
- The opposing army has lost more elements than the player's army.

There are some special rules for counting destroyed elements:

- Scythed chariot elements and camp follower element are not included in the count of destroyed elements.
- A camp last occupied by an enemy element counts as two elements destroyed.

And of course, if the other guy wins, then you lose. But DBA plays fast; there's time for another game. And this time those darn dice won't let you down like they did in the last game. Set 'em up again!



*1st C. Parthian Cataphracts (6x4Kn)*

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# Print and On-Line Resources

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## Print Resources

**De Bellis Antiquitatis 2.2.** Contains rules for DBA, big battle DBA, giant DBA, and campaigns. Also contains 310 army lists; essential for building your DBA armies.

**De Bellis Multitudinis (DBM) Army Lists, Books 1 to 4.** Created for DBM, but contain detailed descriptions of the armies listed in DBA.

**Wargames Research Group (WRG) Books.** Geared toward the wargamer, these books contains useful descriptions of armies and soldiers, including many black and white drawings. Sadly, most are out-of-print and hard to find.

*Armies of the Ancient Near East.*

*Armies of the Macedonian and Punic Wars.*

*Armies and Enemies of Imperial Rome.*

*Armies of the Dark Ages.*

*Armies of Feudal Europe.*

*Armies and Enemies of the Crusades.*

*Armies of the Middle Ages, Volume I.*

*Armies of the Middle Ages, Volume II.*

**Osprey Books.** Wide range of books covering armies from ancient Sumeria to modern warfare. Most include color drawings.

**Montvert Publications.** Less wide-ranging than WRG or Osprey, but they provide nice color drawings on the areas that they cover.

*Warriors of Eurasia*

*Sassanian Armies*

*Tang Chinese*

*The Armies of Bactria*

## On-Line Resources

**Fanaticus.** The premier on-line resource for DBA. Includes news, vendor information, picture galleries, an active forum, and much more.

[www.fanaticus.org](http://www.fanaticus.org)

**Yahoo DBA Group.** Forum, picture galleries, and some files are available on this site.

[groups.yahoo.com/group/dba](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dba)

**Phil Barker's Web Page.** Phil Barker is the main author of the DBA rules and maintains a web page with a few useful bits, including occasional pre-publication drafts of new rules.

[www.phil-barker.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/index.html](http://www.phil-barker.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/index.html)

**Society of Ancients.** The largest miniature wargaming organization in the United Kingdom.

[www.soa.org.uk](http://www.soa.org.uk)

**North American Society for Ancient and Medieval Wargamers (NASAMW).** The main wargaming organization in the United States for the period covered by DBA.

[nasamw.net](http://nasamw.net)

**The Miniatures Page.** General information on miniature wargaming. Contains an active forum and lots of news about new figures and models, but not much information specific to DBA.

[theminaturespage.com](http://theminaturespage.com)

**Litko.** Vendor of gaming accessories, including movement gauges and measurement sticks for v2.2+.

[www.litko.net](http://www.litko.net)



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# Other Stuff

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## The DBA Rulebook

DBA was written by Phil Barker, Richard Bodley Scott, and Sue Laflin-Barker, and was first published in 1990. It was updated to version 1.1 in 1995, to version 2.0 in 2001, and to version 2.2 in 2004.

A new version (DBA 3.0) has been in development since 2010. The publication date is unknown at this time.

DBA has given the members of WADBAG countless hours of enjoyment; playing the game, painting figures for the game, and discussing the game. We'd like to thank the authors for creating such a wonderful set of rules.

If you don't own a copy of the DBA rulebook, we urge you to go get one. In addition to the basic rules and army lists, you also get rules for Big Battle DBA and Giant DBA, as well as DBA campaigns.

DBA 2.2 is currently available as a volume in John Curry's *History of Wargaming Project* and can be ordered online from these sources:

### Amazon

<http://www.amazon.com/>

**Lulu** (a print-on-demand service)

<http://www.lulu.com/>

Or directly from the publisher:

<http://www.wargaming.co/>

## v2.2+

v2.2+ is a set of amendments to the DBA 2.2 rules. They were developed by a diverse group of tournament organizers with the goal of creating an improved version of the rules; addressing some quirks that had become apparent over the years and adding in a few new features that worked well during the course of extensive playtesting.

The v2.2+ amendments are available as a set of line edits that can be applied to the DBA 2.2 rules. This constitutes the "official" rules when playing v2.2+. There is also a v2.2+ playsheet that provides a condensed version of the rules. Experienced players of DBA 2.2 will find the playsheet to be an easy place to start.

<http://www.wadbag.com/V2.2+/>

## WADBAG

Washington Area De Bellis Antiquitatis Gamers (WADBAG) is a group of DBA enthusiasts in the Washington Metropolitan (DC, Maryland and Northern Virginia) area. We gather monthly for gaming and also organize DBA related events at HMGS-East conventions.

<http://www.wadbag.com>

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# Glossary

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**Aggression.** Measure of how likely an army was to fight outside of its home region. Specified by the army list and used in determining which army is the invader and which is the defender (pages 7 and 13).

**Army List.** Description of an army, including: start and end dates, enemies, allies, home topography, aggression, and element types (page 7).

**Bad Going.** Terrain that impedes movement and combat (page 10).

**Barker Marker.** Another name for a ZOC marker. Named in honor of the main author of the DBA rules.

**Camp.** Playing piece that represents the baggage, tents, livestock, and other flotsam and jetsam that follows an army on campaign (page 11).

**Close Combat.** All fighting that occurs at close quarters. Includes all close range missile fire as well as hand-to-hand combat (page 43).

**Closing the Door.** A move where an element goes from overlapping an enemy element to make full flank contact with that same element.

**Defender.** Army that is on the strategic defensive. The defender chooses the terrain, sets up first, and moves second (page 13).

**Deployment Zone.** The area on the game board where the troop elements belonging to an army may be deployed (page 14).

**Dismount.** To exchange a mounted element with its foot equivalent. Only allowed when specified by the army list.

**Distant Shooting.** Long range shooting of massed bowmen (Bows and Pavises), War Wagons, and Artillery (page 39).



*2<sup>nd</sup> C. Roman Carroballista (Art)*

**Element.** Basic playing piece of the game. Each army is made up of twelve elements (page 3).

**General.** Element designated to include the leader of the army.

**Good Going.** Open ground that doesn't impede movement or combat. Any part of the game board that doesn't have a terrain piece on it is considered good going. Gentle hills are also good going (page 10).

**Group.** Two or more elements in edge and corner contact, eligible to able to move together as a group (page 24).

**Impetuous.** Term used to describe element types that pursue (i.e., Knights, Warbands, Scythed Chariots, and Elephants).

**Invader.** Army that is on the strategic offensive. The invader rolls for base edge, sets up second, and moves first (page 13).

**Jackknife.** Having elements in both full front and full flank contact with an enemy element.

The full flank contact will cause the enemy element to be destroyed if it is forced to recoil.

**Littoral Landing.** Special move available to armies whose home topography is littoral. Between 0 and 4 elements may be reserved during deployment and placed anywhere along a waterway in the first turn (pages 14 and 28).

**Move Stick.** A small stick, usually made of wood or metal, marked in 1 MU increments. Used to measure movement and other distances on the game board.

**Outcome Move.** Involuntary movement of an element due to a combat result (page 50).

**Overlap.** An element that either hangs over the end of the enemy line or is in side contact with an enemy element. Provides an advantage in close combat (page 43).

**PIPs.** Player Initiative Points. A player rolls for PIPs at the beginning of his or his turn and spends PIPs to move elements (pages 18 and 20).

**Tactical Move.** Voluntary movement of one or more elements (page 19).

**Quick Kill.** A situation where an element is destroyed if it is beaten in combat. For example, scythed chariots can quick kill blades that are in good going, and any element can be quick killed if a recoil would take it off the edge of the board.

**Wheel Stick.** A small stick, usually made of wood or metal, marked in base width (40mm or 60mm) increments. Assists in wheeling groups of elements. Placed at the location where the elements will end their move, it makes it easier to correctly measure the movement distance for each element and get the final alignment correct.

**ZOC.** Zone of control. The area directly in front of an element, up to one base width away (page 32). Frequently used as a verb, "My Psiloi has ZOC'd your Spear."

**ZOC Marker.** A square piece of wood or metal, one base width on a side. Used to determine if an element is within the ZOC of another element.



*14<sup>th</sup> C. BC New Kingdom Egyptians (3x3Bd, 1x2Ps) with a Wheel Stick*

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# Index

---

- aggression, 7, 8, 13
- arc of fire, 41
- army list, 7
- Artillery, 4, 36
  - affect on PIPs, 20
  - movement distance, 21
  - shooting range, 39
- Auxilia, 4
  - movement distance, 21
- bad going, 10, 16, 21, 22
  - affect on fleeing, 53
- Barker, Phil, 58, 59
- base depth, 6
- base width, 4
- beer mat, 11
- Blades, 4
  - affect on recoil, 51
  - movement distance, 21
- blocking a zoc, 32
- board edge
  - affect on pursuit, 54
  - passing through a gap, 25
- Bows, 4
  - movement distance, 21
  - shooting range, 39
- breaking off from full front contact, 31
- Camelry, 4
  - in dunes and oases, 10, 21
  - movement distance, 21
- camp, 2, 11, 13, 25, 31, 32
  - affect on fleeing, 53
  - affect on pursuit, 54
  - affect on recoil, 50
  - and winning the game, 57
  - blocking line-of-sight, 20
  - close combat against, 45
  - front contact with, 35
  - general's element in, 20
  - modeling, 11
  - overlap, 43
  - placement, 14
  - shape and size, 11
- Camp Followers, 2, 4, 11
  - and winning the game, 57
  - deploying, 14
  - movement distance, 21
- Cataphracts, 4
  - movement distance, 21
- Cavalry, 4
  - movement distance, 21
- close combat, 43
  - examples, 56
- close combat phase, 18
- column contact, 26
- column move, 26
- combat resolution, 46
- Combat Resolution Factors, 47
- Combat Results Table, 48
- command distance, 20
- compulsory terrain, 16
- Conan the Barbarian, 57
- conforming to a group, 37
- cutting the corner, 30
- defender, 13, 14, 15
- deployment, 14
- deployment zone, 14
- destroyed elements, 57
- dice, 2
- dismounting, 8, 14, 17
- distant shooting, 39
  - eligibility, 39
  - examples, 55
  - on a rear edge, 40
- distant shooting phase, 18
- dunes, 10, 16
  - affect on fleeing, 53

- blocking line-of-sight, 20
- shape and size, 9
- element, 4
- element subtypes, 5
- element types, 4
- element width, 4
- Elephants, 4
  - affect on PIPs, 20
  - affect on recoil, 51
  - movement distance, 21
  - pursuit, 54
- flank contact (full), 35
- fleeing, 53
- forming column, 27
- front contact (full), 35
- game board, 2
  - larger board, 2
  - orientation, 13
  - quarters, 15
  - without a terrain piece, 10
- general, 2, 7, 8, 13
  - affect on PIPs, 20
  - and winning the game, 57
- gentle hill, 2, 10, 16, 43
  - shape and size, 9
- ground scale, 3
- group contact, 24, 27, 28
- group move, 19, 24
- Heavy Chariots, 4
- home topography, 7, 15, 16
- Hordes, 4
  - affect on PIPs, 20
  - movement distance, 21
- impassable terrain, 10, 12, 23
  - affect on fleeing, 53
  - affect on pursuit, 54
  - affect on recoil, 50
- invader, 7, 13, 14, 18
- Khan, Ghengis, 57
- Knights, 4
  - movement distance, 21
  - pursuit, 54

- Light Camelry, 4, 29
  - in dunes and oases, 10, 21
  - movement distance, 21
- Light Chariots, 4
  - movement distance, 21
- Light Horse, 4, 29
  - movement distance, 21
- Light Spears, 4
  - movement distance, 21
- littoral landing, 14, 19, 28, 29, 37
- losing the game, 57
- marsh, 2, 10, 16
  - general's element in, 20
  - shape and size, 9
- measuring distances, 3, 21
- move stick, 2, 3
- movement distance, 21
- movement units. *See* MU
- MU, 3
- oasis, 10, 16
  - affect on distant shooting, 41
  - affect on fleeing, 53
  - blocking line-of-sight, 20
  - general's element in, 20
  - shape and size, 9
- optional terrain, 16
- outcome movement, 50
- overlap, 43
- pass through, 51
- Pavises, 4, 42
  - movement distance, 21
  - shooting range, 39
- Pikes, 4
  - affect on recoil, 51
  - movement distance, 21
- PIP phase, 18
- PIPs, 18, 20
- player initiative points. *See* PIPs
- playing scale, 3
- Psiloi, 4, 29
  - movement distance, 21
  - pursuit, 54

push back, 52  
 Raiders, 4  
     movement distance, 21  
 rear contact (full), 35  
 recoil, 50  
 reducing frontage, 25  
 river, 2, 10, 12, 16  
     affect on fleeing, 53  
     placement, 16  
     shape and size, 10  
 road, 2, 10, 16, 26  
     and subsequent movement, 29  
     crossing a river, 12  
     placement, 16  
 rough, 10, 16  
     shape and size, 9  
 Scythed Chariots, 4, 29  
     and winning the game, 57  
     movement distance, 21  
     pursuit, 54  
 second or subsequent movement, 29  
 sequence of play, 18  
 single element move, 19, 23  
 Spears, 4  
     affect on recoil, 51  
     movement distance, 21  
 steep hill, 2, 10, 16, 43  
     affect on distant shooting, 41  
     affect on fleeing, 53  
     shape and size, 9  
 sublist, 7, 13  
 swap, 14  
 tactical movement phase, 18, 19  
 topography table, 16  
 totally useless fact, 22, 26, 30, 53  
 turning to face, 38  
 uphill, 43  
 WADBAG, 59  
 War Wagons, 4, 36  
     affect on PIPs, 20  
     shooting range, 39  
 Warband, 4, 29  
     movement distance, 21  
     pursuit, 54  
 waterway, 2, 10, 14, 16, 28  
     shape and size, 10  
 winning the game, 57  
 woods, 2, 10, 16  
     affect on distant shooting, 41  
     affect on fleeing, 53  
     blocking line-of-sight, 20  
     general's element in, 20  
     shape and size, 9  
 ZOC, 23, 32, 33  
 ZOC marker, 2, 3  
 zone of control. See ZOC