

# ABSOLUTE WAR!

## Basic Game Rules

### Using This Play Aid

These 4-page Basic Game Rules are meant for a quick introduction and use less of everything, with simpler rules.

**STOP!** Go back to the Rulebook and do a quick check of the first five sections, up to page 7. This will give you a general overview of the game's components, key concepts, sequence of play, and how to set up your first game.

### First Steps

You should have just finished perusing the main Rulebook, and have a grasp of the game's concepts. Set-up the Basic Game Campaign game, or the Stalingrad mini-game, and pick up the two play aids; the Sequence of Play and Combat Sequence are both listed on it.

**IMPORTANT!** All the small-sized units but four (see 18.10) are not used in the Basic game.

### Basic Game Rules

Let's go along phase-by-phase. This will be as brief as possible; for any queries refer to the Regular Game Rules manual. If there are any differences they will be indicated here.

#### Event Phase

At the start of each Game Turn:

- **Turn Event:** Apply the current Game Turn Event, described in the Event Listings (21.0).
-  **War Initiative:** Flip the Initiative marker to indicate the side has the War Initiative for the turn (shown by a German Cross or Soviet Star on the turn track; 6.4). Reshuffle the discards and card decks together whenever the War Initiative changes.
-  **Major Offensive:** The Initiative player receives two "Major Offensive" markers and the Non-Initiative Player receives one such marker; you *must* use all your markers or lose War Objective Points. In "General Winter" Weather, the German player doesn't get the use of any such markers.

### GERMAN PLAYER TURN

#### Supply Phase

At the start of each Player Turn, Phasing player first:

- **Supply Check (both players):** Put an "Unsupplied" marker on friendly stacks that cannot trace a Supply line; if they already have such a marker, put the stacks in the Captured Units Box. Stacks with "Unsupplied" markers that can trace a Supply line have their markers flipped to their "Disrupted" sides.
- **Supply Line:** You trace supply from a stack's Zone to your own colored dotted map-board's edge (West for the German, East for the Soviet). The Supply line can be of any length and can only pass through friendly-Controlled Zones, but for the stack's own Zone.
- **Sea/Lake Supply:** The German player can trace Supply through the Baltic Sea, the Soviet through the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Both sides can trace Supply through lakes.
-  **Unsupplied Marker:** Stacks under this marker have their movement & combat abilities lowered (see TEC).
-  **Pocket Reduction (Phasing player):** Remove your "Pocket" markers from the map. For each marker not in a Zone you Control, the opponent gains *one* Resource Point.
-   **Industry Markers (Phasing player):** Flip your "Industry" and "Lend-Lease" markers to their "ready" non-Plant sides so that they can be used anew.

#### Combat Marker Phase

The Phasing player recycles back his whole set of round Combat Markers (3.4), to the available markers' pile.

- **Marker Total:** Each scenario's instructions give the number of markers a player has for use.
- **Weather Limits:** Unlike the Regular Game, the number of "Attack" markers and Air units you can use does not vary because of Weather.
- **Lost Oil Well:** Only *one* "Mobile/Armor" marker is recycled if a player doesn't Control his Oil Well Zone.

## Card & Resource Phase

The Phasing player draws new Event cards, and purchases Resources Points.

- Unused Card Sections:** The Event text and War Status Goals are not used; only the Timing, Support Points and the Battle Results are.
- Number Drawn:** Draw *four* cards, minus *one* card per lost Home War Economy Site (2.1.1).
- Initiative Player:** The player with the War Initiative may chose to discard and redraw the *first* card he draws in this phase.
- Purchase Resources:** Each card discarded for RPs adds *one* RP to the Resource Track.
- Resource Industry/Lend-Lease Marker:** Each marker flipped adds one RP to the owning player's RP Track (9.2).
- Card Lend-Lease Industry Marker:** The Soviet player gets *one* extra card draw by flipping this marker (9.1).
- Maximum Number:** At the end of his Card phase, a player cannot have more than *six* cards in his hand, or more RPs than the maximum on the RP Track.



**IMPORTANT!** The two "Offensive" card decks are not used in the Basic Game, put these cards aside.

## Strategic Phase

The Phasing player performs these steps for his units, in the order listed:

- Withdrawals:** He removes his departing units from the game as per the Withdrawal play aid sheet.
- Soviet "Untrained" Upgrades:** Any Soviet unit can be flipped to its front (stronger) side at a cost of *one* "Upgrade" Industry marker flip (10.2.1).
- Soviet "Trained" Upgrades:** The Soviet player will get red-colored two-step "Front Upgrade" counters. At a cost of *one* "Upgrade" Industry marker flip, remove from the game a supplied brown Soviet unit already on its front side, and replace it with a red "Front Upgrade" unit of equal strength, making it into a two-step unit.
- Other Upgrades:** Two-step units on their one-step side can be flipped over at a cost of *two* RPs (10.2.2).
- Air & Fort Upgrades:** Flip these counters to their Front side at a cost of *one* CM each (10.2.4).
- Reinforcements:** Arriving units are placed in the Strategic Reserve Box at a cost of *one* CM each; or for *free* in a Supplied (not Sea Supply) and friendly-Controlled City or Major City Zone of the player's home country.



- Replacements:** Shattered, Eliminated, and Captured units (in that order) can be moved from their Holding Box to another Holding Box or to the map by spending RPs. Follow the holding boxes' instructions (10.4).

- Reserves:** Up to *four* Supplied units can be moved to the Strategic Holding box, at a cost of *one* CM each.

**IMPORTANT!** Only counters with "step dots" have two steps, the others only have one step (2.3.7).

## Movement Phase

The Phasing player may move his units. Each may move up to the limit of its Movement Allowance.

- Procedure:** Stacks are moved one at a time, Zone by Zone, and may move until having spent all their MPs.
- Movement Allowance:** "Leg" units may move up to two MPs, "Mobile" up to *three* MPs, "Air" to any *friendly-controlled* Zone, "Static" cannot move.
- Movement Limits:** Markers, weather and terrain have an influence on how far units can move, see the TEC for all the details (11.0).
- Stack Size:** Each stack can be composed of only one square unit, plus one "Fort" and *one* "Air" unit.
- Stacking Limits:** A "Hex" Zone can contain one stack; an "Area" Zone two stacks (of any player); you cannot move into Map Boxes in the Basic game.

**Example:** An Area can contain up to two German stacks, or two Soviet stacks, or one German and one Soviet stack.

- Over-stacking:** If units are over-stacked, any excess go to the Shattered Box, Unsupplied units go to the Destroyed Box.
- Enemy Stacks:** You *cannot* move a stack into a Zone containing an enemy stack; but some Combat results might allow you to Advance in such a Zone.

**Exception:** You can move in a Zone containing only enemy "Air" units, these go back to their Air Units Holding Box.

## Combat Phase

During a friendly Combat Phase, each stack may participate in one attack only, and each defending stack can be attacked once only, unless a special Combat Result says otherwise.

- Major Offensives:** The Phasing player must place his "Major Offensive" markers in any Enemy-Controlled or Contested Zones, one per Zone; he loses *one* War Objective Point for each unused marker.
- Choose a Combat Location:** The Phasing player chooses a Zone to be attacked, adjacent or containing at least one friendly stack, and follows the Combat Sequence; repeat for all Attacks.
- Contested Area:** A stack starting the Combat phase in the same Area as an enemy stack *must* attack it, unless there is any "Fort" unit in that Area.
- Marker Conditions:** Stacks with a "Done" marker cannot Attack/Support. Stacks with "unsupplied" or "Disrupted" markers cannot Support (see TEC).



-  **Attackers and Defenders:** The Phasing player chooses the Attacking stack and the Defending stack. Put an “Attack!” marker on top of the Attacking stack.
-  **Combat Supports:** Initiative player first, both sides can add other nearby stacks that will be Supporting the Combat. Put a “Support” marker on these.
- **Support Conditions:** Only stacks in the Zone attacked or adjacent can give support, one stack per Zone maximum.

**Defensive Support Exception:** A stack in an Area cannot give Defensive Support to an adjacent Area, unless it's Contested (3.7), or an Air unit is on top of the stack.

## Combat Sequence

All the steps below must be conducted for each attack, of which there are two kinds: Battles and Assaults; depending on the terrain of the Zone attacked (see TEC).

1. **Support Step:** The Non-initiative player, then the Initiative player, may commit one Event card for its CP bonus (2.4.4).
2. **Strength Step:** Each player totals the CPs of their participating units on their CP track, adding in terrain, weather, marker and Event card CP bonuses.
3. **Combat Resolution Step (12.5):** Battles and Assaults both resolve combat in a different way:
  - **Battle:** Subtract the Defender's CP's from the Attacker's to get the final Battle Odds. The Attacker then draws the top card of his Event deck, and notes the corresponding Battle Result under the Battle Odds number on the card (2.4.8).
  - **Assault:** The Attacker draws the top card of his Event deck and adds its Support Points to his Combat Point track without any timing restrictions (2.4.3), and then the Defender does the same. Subtract the Defender's Combat Points from the Attacker's to get the final Assault Result.
4. **Apply Combat Result Step (12.7):** The result is applied on the Battle or Assault column of the CRT.
5. **Advance After Combat Step (12.8):** Some combat results will allow the Attacking and Supporting stacks to advance into the Target Zone.
6. **Mobile Exploitation Step (12.9):** Mobile units that have advanced after combat may be allowed to advance a second Zone.
7. **Flip Combat Marker Step (12.10):** Used Combat markers are flipped to their “Done” Sides.

## Combat Resolution

When computing the Combat Strengths, apply these cases:

- **Attacking/Defending Stacks:** Each unit adds its total CPs, if CP color allows (2.3.4).
- **Support Stacks:** Each unit only adds its yellow-colored CPs (usually only one).
- **Terrain:** The bonus defensive CPs due to Terrain are based upon the Defender's Zone.
- **Weather:** The bonus defensive CPs caused by Weather is based upon the time of the year.

- **Across:** If the Lead Attacker attacks across a River or Straits, the defender gets a CP bonus (see TEC).
- **Combat Type:** The Defender's Zone Terrain type also determines what CRT will be used: *Battle* (easy terrain) or *Assault* (difficult terrain).
- **Disrupted/ Unsupplied:** Attacking stacks lose *one* (Disrupted) or *two* (Unsupplied) CPs (see TEC).
- **Battle Odds Limits:** If odds exceed +6, it still is resolved on row 6. When odds are less than -3, the outcome becomes an “A1” (Attacker Defeated).

**Example:** Attacking a Soviet stack in a Minor City (one CP) across a River (one CP) in Mud Weather (one CP), awards the defenders three extra Combat Points.



**Major Offensive Marker:** If such a marker is in the Targeted Zone, a “Pincer maneuver” may be attempted, and one Attack CP is gained by spending an RP to flip the marker for the Combat (12.1).



**Pincer Maneuver:** The Phasing player may attempt a “Pincer Maneuver”, which may Eliminate a Defender if Successful (see TEC) and then form a “Pocket” (3.5). If the conditions below are fulfilled, put a “Pincer” marker on Defenders and an “Armor” marker on the Attackers:

- **Attacker:** There is a Mobile Armored unit in the stack.
- **Defender:** No Armored unit in the stack.
- **Terrain/Weather:** Defender's Zone and Weather have to allow for a “Pincer” (see TEC, no minimum number of Zones).
- **Advancing Armor (Special):** If a Mobile Armored stack without an “Armor” marker Advanced in the Defender's Zone, a “Pincer Maneuver” can still be attempted without conditions above being fulfilled.

## Apply Combat Result

A more detailed explanation of the CRT results is listed in rules section 12.7. Refer to these if needed.

- **Retreat:** If a unit must Retreat into a Contested or Enemy-Controlled Zone it is Eliminated (12.7.6).
-  **Pincer Maneuver:** If successful by the CRT result, the Defender is Eliminated; put a Phasing player's “Pocket” in the same Zone.
- **Air Unit:** It returns to its Air Box if it Retreats or is the target of a Successful “Pincer Maneuver”.
- **Step Loss:** Unless there is a choice (BB, EQ, or A+2 result), the Attacking and Defending stacks must take the Loss. A full-strength two-step unit (2.3.7) is flipped over; a unit with one step left is Eliminated.
- **Eliminated Units:** They go to their Destroyed Box, *on their current counter side*; or to the Captured box (*face down*) if with an “Unsupplied” marker.

**Exceptions:** An Eliminated Soviet “Sevastopol” unit is removed from the game; Eliminated Forts/Air go to their Destroyed Units Box.

## Advance After Combat

In an “Attacker Advance” result, the Attacker and its Supporting stacks may Advance into the Zone Attacked.

- **Move Cost:** This Advance is free.
- **No Advance:** Static units can’t advance.
- **Enemy:** Advance in an Area containing one Enemy Stack is allowed, but watch stacking limits!
- **Terrain/Weather:** Have no effect on any unit’s Advance.

## Mobile Exploitation



Phasing player’s *Mobile* stacks that Advanced after Combat (Attacker/Supports) may Advance *one extra* Zone if stacked with an “Armor” marker, or by discarding an available “Mobile” marker.

- **Move Cost:** This Advance is free. Stacking limits must be respected at the end of the Step.
- **Enemy:** You can advance in an Area containing one Enemy stack; this also allows a “Pincer Maneuver”.
- **Terrain/Weather/Markers:** Exploitation is allowed *into or from* specific Terrain types and Weather, without Disrupted/Unsupplied markers.
- **M Soviet Tanks:** Some Tanks have an “M” icon, indicating they are not Mobile (18.1).

## Flip Combat Markers



After each Combat Sequence flip all “Attack!” and “Support” markers to their “Done” sides, indicating that the stacks under them cannot Attack/Support anymore this Combat Phase.

*Note that the Target stack will not get a “Done” marker, but may already have one when attacked.*

## Reserve Phase

Units moving to the map from the Reserve are placed in any supplied Zone (not Sea Supply) the Phasing player Controls.

**Exception:** German Axis-Allied units have limits (18.6).

## Used Marker Phase

Some of the markers present on the map are removed, going back to the owning player’s marker pool:

- **Phasing Player:** “Major Offensive”, “Disrupted” and “Armor” markers
- **Both Players:** “Done” markers

**IMPORTANT! Scoring:** The Phasing Player loses one WSP for each Major Offensive marker that was not in a Zone he now Controls.

## SOVIET PLAYER TURN

The Soviet player becomes the Phasing player and repeats the same phases as in the German Player Turn.

## End of Turn

Initiative player first, check if the game ends in an “Instant Victory”. If not, start a new Game Turn. If it’s the last turn of the game, you check for a “Game End” Victory.

## How to Win

There are two different victory types; Scenarios have their own victory conditions, described in the Playbook.

### Instant Victory

There are two ways to instantly win the Basic game at the end of a Game Turn, in exact order:

- **War Aim Victory:** If the German player controls at least *four* Soviet War Aim Sites, or the Soviet player controls at least *one* German War Aim Site, that player wins!
- **War Status Victory:** If the Initiative Player has 19 War Status Points, and his opponent Zero, he wins!

**IMPORTANT!** A Zone with a Black Cross is a German War Aim Site; a Zone with a Red Star a Soviet Site.

### Game End Victory

At the end of a game, if there was no Instant Victory, the winner will be decided by the following, in exact order:

- **No Germans in USSR:** If the Soviet player Controls more Zones in Greater Germany than the German player Controls in the USSR, he automatically wins.
- **War Objective Points:** The player with the highest WSP total wins. In case of a tie, the Germans prevail.
- **Scenario:** By Special Scenario Victory Conditions.

*Note that since the German player is first in a Turn, it is more difficult for him to win with a WSP superiority.*

## War Status Points



Both players accumulate WSPs the following way, and use their WSP marker to record these on the War Status Track, “Capture” means taking Control of the objective’s Zone from the enemy player. Some Zones may give multiple awards.

- **Major City Hex Capture:** +1 Point
- **Oil Well Capture:** +1 Point
- **War Aim Capture:** +1 Point
- **Major Offensive Marker Unused/Failed:** -1 Point
- **German Large Unit to Captured Box:** -2 Points (German)
- **Soviet Large Unit to Captured Box:** -1 Point (Soviet)
- **Axis Large Unit to Captured Box:** No Effect
- **Successful Pocket:** +1 Point
- **Over 19 WSP:** If you go over 19 WSPs, lower the Opponent’s WSP total by one for each point over instead.



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