Battle Line

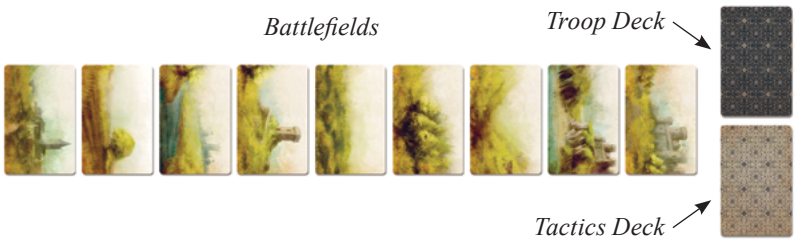
Players: Two
Playing Time: 30 minutes

COMPONENTS

- This rule sheet
- 60 Troop cards, in six colors each with the values 1 to 10
- Ten Tactics cards (white, with different backs)
- Nine Battlefield cards, one side with text and one side without text
- Two player aids
- One double-sided variant card

SET-UP

1. Lay out the nine Battlefields, text side down, in a line between the two players.
2. Cut the Troop deck until one player has the higher number—that player shuffles and deals seven Troop cards to each player. Place the remaining Troop cards as a face-down deck at one end of the battle line.
3. Shuffle the ten Tactics cards and place them as a face-down deck at the same end of the battle line.



OBJECTIVE

The players aim to create powerful formations on their side of the Battlefields to beat the formations on the opponent's side of the respective Battlefields. The first player to win **three adjacent Battlefields** or **any five Battlefields** achieves victory.



PLAY

The non-dealer plays first; play alternates thereafter. On their turn, a player selects either one Troop card or one Tactics card from their hand and places it face up on their side of the battle line. At the end of their turn, the player draws one card from either the Troop deck or the Tactics deck to refresh their hand to seven. When both decks run out, no further cards can be drawn, but play continues. The Battlefields are claimed by formations of Troop cards played adjacent to the Battlefields. The Tactics cards are used to influence the formations.

TROOP CARDS

A player selects one of their Troop cards and places it face up on their side of one of the Battlefields. There are three imaginary card "slots" on each side of the Battlefield. In the course of the game, each player may place a maximum of three Troop cards adjacent to each Battlefield, in order to create formations. The order in which the cards are played is irrelevant. Players may overlap cards to save space but the numbers must remain visible to both players.

NOTE: Some Battlefield and Tactics card add a fourth "slot", requiring players to place an additional card. A fourth card placed there becomes part of the formation.

When a player is unable to play any Troop card, they may pass or play a Tactics card on their turn, but their opponent still continues to play until the game is decided. This situation may occur in two ways: a player may have filled all their available slots on their side of the battle line, or a player may have only Tactics cards in their hand.

FORMATIONS

The different formations from highest to lowest are:

- **Wedge:** Cards of the same color with consecutive values (straight flush).
- **Square:** Cards of the same value (3 of a kind).
- **Column:** Cards of the same color (flush).
- **Skirmish:** Cards with consecutive values (straight).
- **Fray:** Any other formation (sum of values).

When comparing two formations in the same category, the formation with the higher total sum of card values is higher than the opposing formation.



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CLAIMING BATTLEFIELDS

On their turn and before drawing their card from the deck, a player may claim one or more Battlefields. In order to do so, they must have a completed formation of three cards on their side of the Battlefield, and they must be able to prove that Troop cards on the opponent's side of the Battlefield cannot beat this formation.

If the opponent's side also contains three cards, the situation is obvious. If the opponent's side contains less than three cards, the claiming player must prove that the opponent will not be able to create a winning formation, regardless of what Troop cards the opponent might play. For this purpose, the player may refer to the cards already in play in all Battlefields to show that certain cards are no longer available. The player may not use any information from their own hand. Unplayed Tactics cards cannot prevent a Battlefield claim.

If the formations on either side of a Battlefield are tied or at best could be tied, then the player who played (or would play) the last card into the formations loses the Battlefield. Their opponent may claim it on their next turn.

When a player successfully claims a Battlefield, they take the Battlefield card and move it to their side of the play area. No further Troop or Tactics cards can be played to this Battlefield, even if there are still empty slots.



TACTICS CARDS

There are ten Tactics cards which can be played on a player's turn instead of Troop cards to influence the formations. A player may hold as many Tactics cards as they wish within their hand size of seven, but may never play more than one more than their opponent has played. This means a player can always play a Tactics card unless they have already played more than their opponent. Each Tactics card has a special function and belongs to one of the following three categories.

1. **Morale Tactics:** These cards are played into the player's layout in place of, and in a similar way to, Troop cards:

   King of England, King of France, Cavalry Mercenary, Support Troops

2. **Weather Tactics:** These cards are played face up on the player's side of an unclaimed Battlefield. These Tactics do not take up a "slot".

   Fog, Mud

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3. Guile Tactics: These cards are played face up on the player's own side next to the Tactics card deck. All cards played there must be clearly visible and remain there until the end of the game.

Scout, Redeploy, Deserter, Traitor

GAME END

When one player has successfully claimed three adjacent Battlefields or any five Battlefields, the game ends immediately with this player winning. Play halts; no other Battlefields may be claimed after that.

If several games are played, the winner always scores **5 points,** and the loser scores as many points as Battlefields they have claimed. The winner then starts the next game.

ADVANCED RULE

Once you have played the standard game a few times, you may wish to try this variant. A player may only claim Battlefields at the beginning of their turn. This effectively delays claiming a Battlefield by one turn, enabling the opponent to modify the situation with their Tactics cards.

TERRAIN VARIANT

The Terrain variant (see included card) can be used to add another layer of strategy to your games! With this variant, the Battlefields are placed text side up, adding all kinds of special rules to spice things up!

100 YEARS WAR VARIANT

The 100 Years War variant (see included card) expands on the Terrain variant (see above) by having players draft Battlefield cards at the start of the game and having a say on their placement.

GAME CREDITS:

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Many thanks to all playtesters,
in particular to David Farquhar for all his
contributions to the development of the game.





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