

NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

Learn to Play in Just Five Minutes!

Napoleonic Battles is our new, improved game system that lets you play any battle of the Napoleonic era in a few hours or less. This rules summary will get you playing in five minutes.

Area Movement

The board is divided into numbered areas, and pieces move from area to area like squares on a chessboard. The types of pieces are leaders, headquarters (HQs) and units. The “long” units are infantry divisions. In clear terrain, leaders and HQs move up to four areas per turn, cavalry and horse artillery move three, infantry move two, and infantry with attached artillery move one.

Other terrain decreases movement ability and roads increase it (see each game’s Terrain Effects Chart). Units may not enter areas with enemy units, or areas into which they can’t fit. If a unit can only fit by turning a certain way, it must do so. Pieces can stack on top of each other, except that only leaders and attached artillery can stack on top of infantry divisions.



Troops and Leaders

Each leader has two numbers: Tactical Rating and Initiative. He adds his tactical rating to the total combat strength of the units in the same area with him. Initiative determines how well he can command the troops under him.

Each HQ has one number: Initiative. Each unit has two numbers: Combat Strength and Morale. The back side of each unit shows it at reduced strength. Each division has several pieces representing it at different strengths.

The stripe running through each division points to its flanks, and areas behind the stripe are in its rear. Add one to the morale of units that have their leader in the same area with them, and divisions with attached artillery.

Each Army Commander and HQ can command all friendly formation leaders (usually corps commanders). All units are color-coded the same as their leader and can only be commanded by him. A leader and the troops under him are called a formation. Some formations include subordinate leaders with troops of their own.

Command

Start each turn by checking whether all formation leaders are within the command radius of their army commander or HQ, and whether all troops and subordinate leaders are within their own leaders’ command radii. Command radius is the distance from a leader or HQ’s starting area that he or it could move in any direction this turn. So, everything within four areas of a leader or HQ is within its command radius. However, terrain or enemy troops in the vicinity can reduce or block command radius and roads can increase it.

An army commander or HQ can put all friendly formation leaders within his or its command radius “In Command,” unless the number of formation leaders exceeds the Army Commander or HQ’s initiative rating.

Each formation leader outside the army commander or HQ’s command radius or in excess of the army commander or HQ’s initiative must roll his own initiative or less on one die to put himself in command. So must each subordinate leader outside his formation leader’s command radius. Such leaders who roll over their initiatives are “Out of Command.”

A leader who is in command can put all troops and subordinate leaders which report to him and are within his command radius in command. Troops outside their leaders’ command radii or which report to out of command leaders are out of command. Troops who are in command move and fight normally; those who are not can’t attack or move adjacent to enemy units, and have their movement allowances reduced by one (but never to zero).

Activation

Next, each player rolls a die and adds the result to his army commander’s initiative to see who goes first (higher total wins; reroll ties). The winner then rolls another die and subtracts the result from his army commander’s initiative to see how many formations he can activate. A result of 1 or more lets him activate that many formations. A result of zero still lets him activate one formation, but a negative result means he can’t activate anybody (the other player then rolls to activate formations instead).

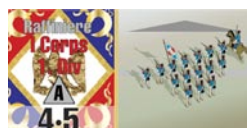
The first player who can activate moves and fights with the number of formations he rolled, finishing all actions with one formation before activating the next. Then the other player rolls against his army commander’s initiative and does the same. Then the first player rolls again, and so on. The turn ends when both players have activated all formations or fail consecutively to activate any (each formation can activate once per turn).

When a formation activates, its troops move and fight in the following sequence: 1) in-command cavalry can charge; 2) artillery (except for heavy artillery) can attach to or detach from infantry divisions in the same area with them, and then unattached in-command artillery can bombard; 3) units which didn’t charge or bombard can move; 4) in-command infantry, cavalry, and attached artillery which didn’t charge or bombard can assault enemy units to which they are now adjacent.

Attacking

When attacking, a unit rolls a number of dice equal to its combat strength. Every 6 rolled is a hit against one unit in the target area. High morale can increase the number of dice a unit rolls in combat, as can the tactical rating of the highest-ranking leader with it. Elite units hit on a 5 or 6, as do units attacking low-morale enemies, attacks that include infantry, cavalry and attached artillery, and artillery stacked with an artillery leader or firing at an infantry division that “formed square” earlier in the same activation.

If a unit takes a hit, flip it to its lower-strength side or replace it with the piece showing it at its next-lower strength level



(eliminate it if there is no lower-strength piece).

Divisions “shrink” to small remnant counters if they take enough hits (remnants are not divisions anymore). The first hit caused by a charge or assault must be taken by a division in the target area (if present), as must the second hit caused by bombardment.



Assault

Each type of combat is different. In an assault, the attacker and defender both fire and score hits simultaneously. Infantry and attached artillery assault at full strength, and cavalry assault at half strength. Unattached artillery defend at full strength if assaulted, but can't attack.

Units assaulting a division in its flank or rear fire at 125% of their normal strength, and the division (and any attached artillery) fires at half strength if hit in the flank, and can't fire at all if hit in the rear.

If a unit takes from one to three hits in an assault, it can avoid one hit by retreating one area. If it takes four or more hits it can avoid two hits by retreating one area. If it doesn't want to retreat, it must roll its morale or less (before damage) on one die to take the hit(s) and stand its ground. Cavalry can't stand their ground against assaulting infantry. Out of Command units can never stand their ground. Elite infantry can always stand their ground. Light cavalry can retreat before combat (avoiding all hits) by rolling their morale or less on one die. Unattached artillery can't retreat, and is eliminated if all other units in the same area with it retreat. Attackers can advance into areas from which defenders retreat.

Cavalry

Cavalry can charge enemy units that are two areas away, if the intervening area has only clear terrain and no troop units. Defending units fire first, with defending infantry and artillery firing at half strength and defending cavalry firing at double strength. Then any surviving charging cavalry attacks at full strength.

If cavalry charges the flank or rear of a division, the effects on the strengths of the

attackers and defenders are the same as with an assault. However, divisions that roll less than or equal to their morale when charged can “form square,” which cuts the strength of the charging cavalry in half.

If the charge eliminates more than half the total strength of the defending units, they must all retreat one area and the cavalry can pursue and attack again (only retreating cavalry can fire back before the second attack). If not, the charge is repelled, and any surviving defending infantry and cavalry (only) can fire again. Surviving charging cavalry must then retreat one area beyond from where it started.

Artillery

An artillery unit's range is equal to the number of triangles printed on it. Only unattached artillery can bombard. Each artillery unit can bombard any one area within range, unless intervening terrain blocks its line of sight.

No more than four artillery strength points can bombard the same area at once, or bombard out of the same area at once. Defending units cannot fire back at or retreat from a bombardment.

That's it—you can start playing now!



Austerlitz 1805

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