

ROME AT WAR

Learn to Play in Just Five Minutes!

Rome at War lets you play any battle of the Roman era in about an hour or less. This rules summary will get you playing in five minutes.

The board is divided into numbered areas. Pieces move between them like squares on a chessboard.

Troops and Leaders

The types of pieces are *leaders* and *troop units*. The “long” units are heavy infantry. Small pieces are leaders and other troop types.

In clear terrain, leaders, horse cavalry, horse archers and chariots move up to four areas per turn, camel cavalry and elephants move three, artillery move one, and others move two. Other terrain decreases movement and roads increase it.

Units cannot enter areas with enemy units or areas into which they can't fit. If a unit's counter can fit only by turning a certain way, it must do so. Pieces can stack on top of each other, but only leaders can stack on top of long counters.

Each unit has two numbers: *combat strength* and *morale*. The back side of each unit shows it at reduced strength.

Each heavy infantry unit has several counters representing it at different strengths. The stripe running through each long counter points to its flanks, and areas behind the stripe are in its rear.



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

Each player has one leader who acts as his army commander. Each army commander commands all friendly leaders, and each leader commands troops of his own (except for special leaders like druids). Scenario instructions describe who commands which troops.

A leader and the troops under him are called a formation. Each army commander usually commands a formation of his or her own.

Command

Command radius is the distance from a leader's starting area that he could move in any direction this turn. Since a leader can ordinarily move four areas, everything within four areas is within his command radius. However, terrain or enemy troops can reduce command radius and roads can increase it.

At the start of each turn, each army commander can put “in command” a number of friendly leaders less than or equal to his initiative, as long as they are within his command radius. Each leader outside his command radius or who is in excess of his initiative must roll his own initiative or less on one die to put himself in command. Such leaders who roll over their initiatives are “out of command.”

A leader who is in command can put all troops under him which are within his own command radius in command. In-command troops move and fight normally.

Troops outside their leaders' command radii, or which report to out-of-command leaders, are out of command. Out-of-command troops can't attack or move adjacent to enemy units, and have their movement allowances reduced by one (but not to zero).

Activation

To see who goes first, each player rolls a die and adds the result to his army commander's initiative (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 lets him activate one formation, but a negative result means he can activate no one and the other player 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. 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 once or fail consecutively to activate any.

When a formation activates, its

troops move and fight in the following sequence:

1) In-command artillery can bombard enemy-occupied areas in range.

2) In-command cavalry can charge enemy units.

3) Units which didn't charge or bombard can move.

4) In-command units which didn't charge can assault enemy units to which they are now adjacent.

Attacking

In combat, each unit rolls a number of dice equal to its combat strength. Every 6 rolled is a hit against one enemy unit in the target area.

High morale can increase the number of dice a unit rolls, as can the tactical rating of the highest-ranking leader with it.

When fighting low-morale enemies, when attacking the flank or rear of an enemy long unit, or when attacking an area that contains too many enemy units, units hit on a 5 or 6.

Elephants hit on a 5 or 6 when assaulting horsed units, and units hit on a 5 or 6 when assaulting elephants with missile fire.

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).

Long infantry pieces “shrink” to small “remnants” if they take enough hits. The first hit scored on an area must be taken by a long unit there (if present).

Assault

Each type of combat is different. In an assault, defending units must first make a morale check. The defending player rolls one die and compares the result to the area morale of the defending units. Area morale equals either the morale of the strongest long unit in the area or the average morale of all units there if there is no long unit.

If the roll is less than or equal to the defenders' area morale, they can stay and fight or withdraw one area away from the attacking units to avoid combat. A unit may withdraw only if it has a higher movement allowance than all attackers and is not being attacked with missile fire.

If the roll is greater than the defenders' area morale, they cannot withdraw before combat and one defending unit must take a step loss.

If there is no withdrawal before combat, attacking and defending units all roll dice and score hits simultaneously. The exception is that missile-capable units (those with one or more arrows in the upper right corner) can attack with missile fire at half-strength. Units attacked with missile fire cannot fire back unless they are also missile-capable.

If a long counter is assaulted in its flank or rear it defends at reduced strength. Artillery can't attack in an assault or withdraw before combat, but can fire back if assaulted.

Attackers can advance into areas from which defenders withdrew or in which all were eliminated.

Charging

Cavalry and chariots can charge enemy units that are two to four areas away from them. Elephants can charge enemy units two or three areas away. The target area and the areas charged through must have only clear terrain, and units cannot charge through areas containing other units. Units can charge "down" slopes but not "up" slopes.

Once charging units move adjacent to the target area, the defending units there must make a morale check as with an assault. If they pass the morale check, any defending cavalry, elephants or chariots in the target area may countercharge, thus turning the charge into a regular assault.

If not, or if no units in the defending area are types that can countercharge, the defending units fire first at the charging units.



Light cavalry, light infantry, chariots and artillery defend at half strength, and phalanxes charged in the front defend at double strength. After taking damage from defenders, surviving charging units attack. Heavy cavalry, elephants and chariots attack at double strength.

If the charge eliminates more than half the total strength points of the defending units, and the charging units don't take more step losses than the defenders, then all surviving defenders must retreat one area and the charging units must move into the vacated area.

The charging player then rolls one die, and if the result is less than or equal to the morale of the highest-morale charging unit (plus or minus the tactical rating of any leader charging with it — charging player's choice), the charging units pursue the defenders and attack again. If defenders keep retreating there can be multiple pursuits.

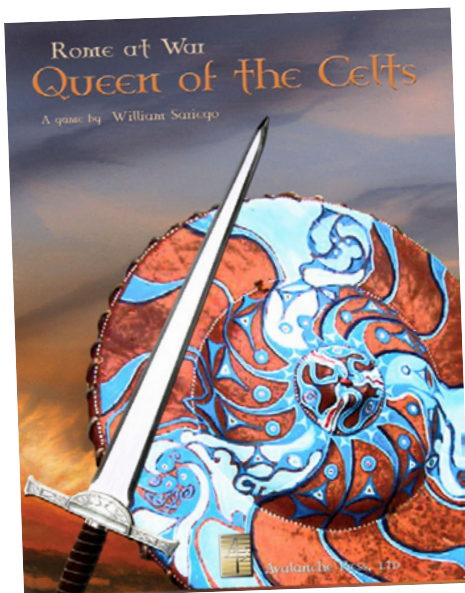
If defenders don't retreat (either on the initial charge or after any pursuit), then the charge is repelled and the charging units must move one area away from the charged units and not charge again that turn.

Artillery

An artillery unit's range is equal to the number of bolts printed on it. Each artillery unit can bombard any one area within range to which it can trace line of sight. If enemy units are adjacent to it, it can only bombard the adjacent units. Defending units cannot return fire or withdraw before a bombardment.

That's It

You can start playing now! See the rulebook, scenario book and Terrain Effects Chart for more.



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