

EN AVANT!

A Simple Napoleonic Wargame



STONE PAPER
SCISSORS

1897

EN AVANT!

Version 2

A One Brain Cell Diceless Napoleonic Wargame

INTRODUCTION

This system was originally designed (nearly 20 years ago!) to play out a regimental level battle using 25mm figures in about half an hour or so, specifically for a public participation game involving non-wargamers. The rules that follow are intended as guidance for the people running such a game.

There is a separate one-page player's guide for the participants, who will not need to see this rule book.

The main change from the original version is the movement to using wooden blocks for the units rather than miniatures. This makes the game more accessible to new wargamers, who may be intimidated by the apparent requirement to own a large collection of expensive models and acquire advanced painting skills just to play the game.

Of course if you already own a model Napoleonic wargame army, then you will immediately see how to adapt it to this game.

The main design aims were to create

- A game that could be understood and played by non-wargamers
- A game that was very fast moving
- A game which rewarded the realistic historical tactics

In order to meet these, in some ways conflicting, objectives it is inevitable that there are a number of simplifications and abstractions.

The main approach has been to make the system rapid to play – and all the rules can actually be easily memorised by reasonably experienced control after just a couple of games.

The game is controlled by someone acting as Game Control who does not give the rules to the players. This adds some uncertainty play and discouraged player from 'rules optimising' rather than just getting on and playing the game.

In order to make it as clear as possible what is going on, the status of the units is shown by labels next to the unit, and players issue orders by using order flashcards. The system does not use dice in combat resolution, which is an approach that is unusual in most wargaming circles and will come as a bit of shock to conventional gamers.

This does give a slight chess-like feel to the game, and it does mean that a game which follows the same course will always have the same result. Fortunately, no game survives first contact with the players, and the chances of two games being exactly alike is small.

Jim Wallman
Folkestone 2022



UNIT REPRESENTATION

Infantry Battalion is represented by 6 blocks approx 50mm x 20mm. We do not separately represent skirmishers, as they are assumed to always be present in some form or other.

Cavalry Regiment is represented by 4 blocks approx 100mm x 20mm in 2 two subgroups.

Artillery 1 block 50mm x 20mm

Command group - one block 50xx x 20mm

.

SEQUENCE OF ACTION

1. Firing
2. Movement
3. Melee
4. Recovery of status / Reordering

COMMAND AND FORMATIONS

Command

Most of the time we are dealing with a regiment/brigade a side.

It is important to understand where the centre of gravity of the formation is.

This is usually where the regimental commander / brigadier is located. They then can concentrate his command effort on any of the units by personal support to any one unit in the formation.

Formations

Formation changes take a long time, given the scale of the game. In general, a formation is chosen at the start of the action, and this is stuck to throughout.

if players wish to change formation, here are illustrative times

From	Into	Turns to complete
Infantry march column	Line to left	3
Infantry march column	Line to right	3
Infantry assault column	Line to left	2
Infantry assault column	Line to right	2
Infantry Line	March column	3
Infantry Line	Assault column	2
Infantry Line	Infantry line about face	2
Infantry assault column	Square	1
Infantry march column	Square	1
Infantry line	Square	1
Cavalry column	Cavalry line	2
Cavalry line	Cavalry column	2
Artillery limbered	Artillery deployed	1
Artillery deployed	Artillery limbered	1

Cavalry formations

Cavalry regiments are divided into two sub-divisions, Each has it's own status label, but they always operate together.

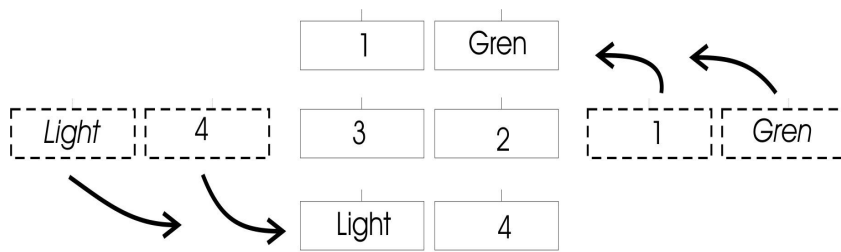
When in column, these two lines are about 20 cm apart.

When in line, they are side by side.

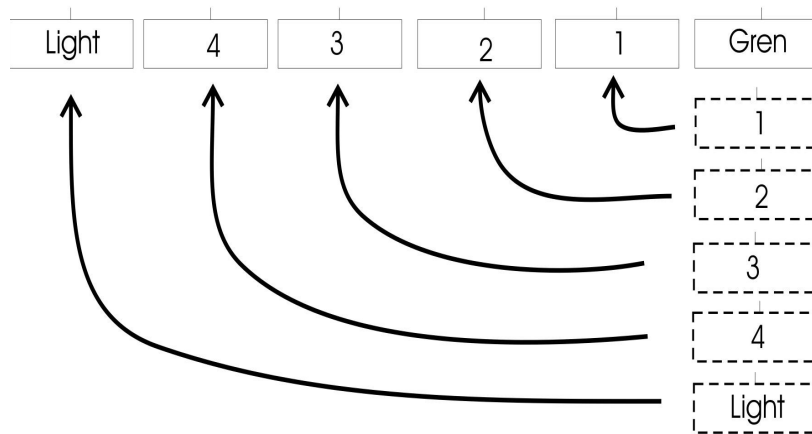
Infantry formations

All infantry units are represented by blocks. Skirmishers are integral to the unit, and are factored in to all the results . The one exception is light companies (such as British rifle companies) operating as semi-independent skirmishers, usually operating some distance in front of the main line. These are represented by a single block per company.

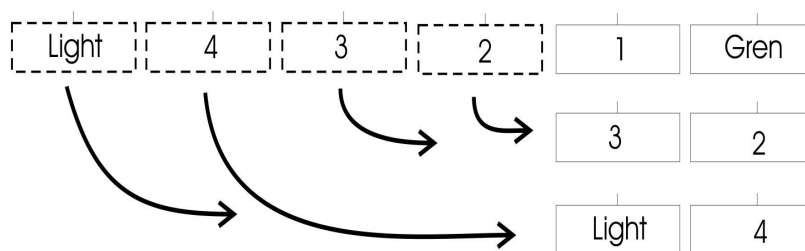
When 6 block infantry units form square, temporarily remove 2 of the blocks and make the square of just 4 blocks. This is to represent the more compact physical size of the square.



Forming Column of divisions on the Centre, from Line
[Prussian and British]



Deploying on the head, from road column



Forming column of divisions on the right, from line
[Prussian and British]

MOVEMENT

Infantry in line	20 cm
Infantry in column	25 cm
Infantry in square	no move
Cavalry in line	40 cm
Cavalry in column	50 cm
Regt / Bde HQ Group	60 cm
Artillery deployed	no move
Artillery limbered	25 cm
Horse Artillery deployed	no move
Horse Artillery limbered	50 cm

Terrain

Control will rule on the characteristics of the various terrain features – examples of which might include:

Light Wood	Movement reduced by half for most units, and units are always disordered by movement through light woods.
Dense Wood	Impassable to units in any sort of formation (it might be possible to filter units through paths etc, but that would take longer than the duration of the game).
Marsh / soft ground	Infantry disordered. Cavalry at half speed and disordered. Limbered guns roll 1d6 per turn – score 1 to become bogged.
Stream	Crossing a stream disorders everybody. The main problem will be the typical areas of marsh / soft ground along the banks.
River	Generally not easily crossed by anyone – some rivers might be shallow and are fordable – the effect is probably the same as marsh. Steep banked deep rivers will need bridges.
Gentle hill	No restrictions
Steep-ish hill	All units lose $\frac{1}{4}$ movement up or down hill
Steep hill	Infantry half speed up or down hill Cavalry half speed up hill Cavalry $\frac{1}{4}$ speed downhill Limered guns roll 1d6, score 1 or 2 to lose control of guns and crash.
Road	No effect – everyone is deployed so there is no benefit from roads

Narrow Defile (such as a bridge, pass or sunken road)	These are tricky because they seldom have space for an entire battalion and are only a couple of cm wide (remember that the use of model bridges on terrain models are misleading) - this would usually be forced by a company of grenadiers or similar - so a small scale assault like that is probably better free kriegsspieled. More generally, defenders are forced away from the bridge by artillery.
Village or build-up area	Cavalry can pass through/round, but are disordered and move at $\frac{1}{4}$ speed while moving through. Infantry cannot deploy effectively in these areas, but firing against them is treated as one status level lower. Defending infantry firing is one status level lower. Built up areas also negate skirmisher advantages

These are just guidelines, you may choose to have scenario-specific terrain features with different properties.

Terrain is also not always familiar to both sides - so Control might not inform players of the exact nature of a terrain feature such as a wood or hill until their units approach it or until they have scouted it in some way. Similarly it is entirely appropriate to add previously unseen terrain features during the game.

Order

Units are either ORDERED or DISORDERED. Disorder is caused by a variety of things, such as changing formation, enemy fire or combat.

A unit may re-order itself by remaining stationary and not firing for one turn.
Laying out the bases in a disorganised fashion shows disorder.

MANOEUVRES

All manoeuvres **must** be conducted **instead of** movement

When they move, units can only move directly forward (or backward) on their current facing. (although game control may allow small variation, for example when closing to combat).

UNIT STATUS

Units have a number of possible states. These are visible to all and a small card or a small die is placed by the unit indicating the current state. All the combat rules affect this status in one way or another:

- 6. Pugnacious** - will continue to move forward and act as ordered, no matter what - and if possible MUST try and close with the nearest enemy.
- 5. Determined** - will continue to move forward and act as ordered.
- 4. Steady** - Will do as they are told, but without too much enthusiasm if it involves increased risk.
- 3. Nervous** - Very unhappy about continuing. Will always stop and fire if the opportunity presents.
- 2. Wavering** - Really considering whether the battlefield is the place to be. Will not move closer to the enemy. Firing becomes sporadic and inaccurate
- 1. Frightened** - they will break and run any moment now.
- 0. Running away** - leaving the battlefield as fast as possible.

FIRING

Although firing occurs before movement, where a move brings the unit through the range of a unit, then that unit always has the opportunity to open fire in its own defence.

Type of firing	Pugnacious, Determined or Steady (6 / 5 / 4)		Nervous, Wavering or Frightened (3 / 2 / 1)	
	Dense Target	Loose Target	Dense Target	Loose Target
First Infantry Volley from line (range 10 cm).	Any target drops two levels	Any target drops one level	Target of equal or lower status drops one level	
Subsequent Infantry volley from line (range 10 cm), or first volley from column or square or disordered line	Target of equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level		
Subsequent infantry volley from column or square or disordered line.	Target of lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
Artillery Canister (up to 25 cm)	Target drops 2 levels	Target drops one level		
Artillery Ball (over 25cm up to 100 cm)¹	Target of equal or lower status drops one level		Target of lower status drops one level	No effect
British Rifle Company (10 cm)²	Target of equal or lower status drops one level		Target of lower status drops one level	No effect

Notes:

1. Artillery ball fire may not reduce a unit below a status of Frightened (1).
2. Riflemen cannot reduce a unit below status of wavering (2)

Losses are not calculated or recorded in this system - units are rarely wiped out by fire - usually major losses occur by being cut down whilst fleeing

Target Density

Dense Target = All cavalry, infantry square, infantry attack column, infantry march column, limbered artillery

Loose Target = Infantry line, light infantry, artillery

CLOSE ASSAULT

STEP ONE

In order for units to attempt to get into base to base contact, they must first assess their Willingness to Close. This is based on status.

If the unit's status is equal or higher to the unit facing it, then it will move forward to close.

MODIFIERS TO APPLY WHEN DETERMINING ATTACKER'S WILLINGNESS TO CLOSE:

Situation	Impact on status
Attacking on the flank	+1
Attacking on rear of enemy	+2
Outnumbering	+1
Cavalry vs infantry square	-2
Cavalry vs infantry not in square	+2
Infantry defending a major defensive feature (such as field defences, substantial buildings etc)	+1
Senior officer personally involved	+1
Attacking infantry fired their muskets last turn	-1
Infantry vs infantry in square	+1
DISORDERED	-1
Infantry forming square the same turn as a cavalry attack	-1
Attacker has superior skirmishers	+1
Attacker has inferior skirmishers	-1

If the attack fails to reach the enemy, the attackers must stop at 5 cm and the attackers are DISORDERED, and the process stops – otherwise go on to Step Two

Skirmishers

Each battalion of infantry is assigned a 'skirmisher level'. This represents the national practice with regard to use and quality of skirmishers. To keep the rules simple, there are three grades of skirmisher level:

- 'No Skirmishers'
- 'Some Skirmishers'
- 'Good Skirmishers'

In the factor list above, a modifier is applied where battalions are facing each other with different grades – skirmishers of the same quality cancel each other out. It also doesn't matter how superior the skirmishers are, just that they are better than the enemy.

Cavalry Vs Forming Square

In the situation where cavalry are attacking an infantry square during the same turn it is forming, then take account of the distance the attacking cavalry is from the forming square.

If it is more than half a turn away treat the infantry as 'in square' from the cavalry's point of view, and 'forming square' from the infantry's point of view.

If the cavalry are half a turn away or closer, treat the infantry as 'not in square' from the cavalry's point of view, and 'forming square' from the infantry's point of view.

STEP TWO

If the attack actually reaches the enemy unit, then the highest base status wins. The only modifiers are:

- +1 if attacking on the flank
- +2 if attacking on rear
- +1 Cavalry line vs cavalry column
- +1 Infantry defending a major defensive feature

If both end up equal, then the attacker wins.

Artillery closed with always lose melee, and are destroyed in the process.

All units on both sides involved in a close assault are automatically DISORDERED, whether win or lose.

Other results depend on the unit's status

Cavalry			Infantry		
Status	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Status
5-6	Pursue enemy -1 status	Withdraw 10 cm -2 status	Player can choose whether unit pursues -1 status	Withdraw 5cm -1 status	5-6
3-4	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 25 cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 10 cm -1 status	3-4
1-2	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 50cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 15cm -1 status	1-2

Units that reach 'run away' status (0) do so at double their normal move for the first turn, then at their normal move every turn after that.

Results apply to the *following turn*, and supersede any orders players' might wish to issue.

Withdraw is a controlled movement backwards facing the enemy.

Run away is always facing away from the enemy, unsurprisingly.

Cavalry will pursue an enemy off the table. The losers are removed from play. The winners are dispersed, but will rally back on their side's command group after 3 turns (simply place the units next to the HQ flag). They arrive DISORDERED.

Cavalry Second Lines in Cavalry vs Cavalry Actions

Once the result of the first line of cavalry action is resolved, on the following round, the second line has options depending on the results and effects on the first line.

Usually the second line is ORDERED, so that gives some initial advantage.

First Line Winning

The second line can follow up and join in, or hold back and wait for something else to happen.

First line losing

The first line can withdraw on to the second line and combine the two line's status, taking the average.

First line drawn

The second line can join in, the resulting status being the average status of the two lines.

Status Recovery

It is possible to recover status in one of two ways

- 2 turns of the Commander staying with the unit will raise status by one level. In order to qualify, the unit must not be under musket fire or within 30 cm of cavalry. It can be moving though.
- **Bring up reinforcements.** Moving a higher status unit to stand within 10cm. Both units must remain stationary for 2 turns, and they cannot be under musket fire or within 30cm of cavalry.

EN AVANT – QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Sequence of Action

1. Firing
2. Movement
3. Melee
4. Recovery of status / Reordering

Movement

Infantry in line	20	Command group	60
Infantry in column	25	Artillery deployed	n.a.
Infantry in square	n.a.	Artillery limbered	25
Cavalry in line	40	Horse Artillery deployed	n.a.
Cavalry in column	50	Horse Artillery limbered	50

Firing

Firer is	Pugnacious, Determined or Steady (6/5/4)		Nervous, Wavering or Frightened (3/2/1)	
	Dense Target	Loose Target	Dense Target	Loose Target
1st Line Volley (range 10 cm)	Any target drops two levels	Any target drops one level	Target of equal or lower status drops one level	
2nd Line volley (range 10 cm), or 1st volley from others	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level		
2nd volley from others	Target lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
Cannon Canister (up to 25 cm)	Target drops 2 levels	Target drops one level		
Cannon Ball (up to 100 cm)	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	
British Rifle Company (10 cm)	Target equal or lower status drops one level	Target of lower status drops one level	No effect	

CLOSE ASSAULT

STEP ONE:

MODIFIERS TO APPLY WHEN DETERMINING WILLINGNESS TO CLOSE:

Attacking on the flank	+1	Attacking on rear of enemy	+2
Outnumbering	+1	Cavalry vs infantry square	-2
Cavalry vs infantry not in square	+2	Infantry defending	+1
Senior officer personally involved	+1	Infantry fired last turn	-1
Infantry vs infantry in square	-1	DISORDERED	-1
Infantry forming square vs Cav	-1	Better skirmishers	±1

If the attack fails - stop at 5 cm and DISORDERED.

STEP TWO:

If it reaches enemy - highest status wins

+1 if attacking on the flank, +2 if attacking on rear, +1 Cavalry line vs cavalry column

If both end up equal, then the attacker wins.

Artillery always lose melee, and are destroyed in the process.

Cavalry			Infantry		
Status	Winner	Loser	Winner	Loser	Status
5-6	Pursue enemy -1 status	Withdraw 10 cm -2 status	Choose if pursues -1 status	Withdraw 5cm -1 status	5-6
3-4	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 25 cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 10 cm -1 status	3-4
1-2	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 50cm -2 status	Pursue enemy	Withdraw 15cm -1 status	1-2

Units at Zero status run away at double move for the first turn, then normal move after that.