

“Bundok and Bayonet” Colonial Wargames Rules

by
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Part 1 - The Basic Rules

Introduction

The following Colonial Wargames rules were written for my own personal use and reflect my philosophy that the simpler the basic rules are, the better the game is. They were originally developed for use with 20mm and 15 mm scale model figures, but are suitable (with minor adaptations) for use with larger or smaller scale figures. The rules were designed to be used in solo wargames or face-to-face wargames with one or two players on each side. As befits a set of wargames rules written to cover the growth of colonial empires during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, all the measurements used are in inches (with metric equivalents in parenthesis).

The Primary Rule Of Wargaming

"Nothing may be done contrary to what could or would be done in actual war."

FRED T. JANE

Organising Units

European & Regular Native Troops

European troops and European-raised and/or trained Native troops are organised into standard-sized units. These are as follows:

- Infantry Company: 4 Infantrymen + 1 Infantry Officer (Total = 5 figures);
- Infantry Battalion: 4 Infantry Companies + Commanding Officer (Total = 21 figures);
- Cavalry Squadron: 3 Cavalry Troopers + 1 Cavalry Officer (Total = 4 figures);
- Cavalry Regiment: 2 Cavalry Squadrons + 1 Commanding Officer (Total = 9 figures);
- Machine-gun Detachment: 1 Machine-gun + 2 Crew (Total = 2 figures);
- Mountain & Field Gun Battery: 1 Gun + 2 Gunners + 1 Artillery Officer (Total = 3 figures);
- Medium Gun Battery: 1 Gun + 3 Gunners + 1 Artillery Officer (Total = 4 figures);
- Heavy Gun Battery: 1 Gun + 4 Gunners + 1 Artillery Officer (Total = 5 figures);
- Transport: 1 Wagon, 1 Pack Camel, 2 Pack Horses, or 3 porter/bearers.

These standard-sized units can be grouped together to form larger formations such as Field Forces, Brigades, and Divisions. These are commanded by a General with a suitably large Headquarters Staff.

- General and the Headquarters Staff (Total = 2 or more figures).

It is recommended that larger formations should have at least one transport unit for every combat unit in the formation.

Irregular Native Troops

Irregular Native troops are organised into non-standard-sized units. It is recommended that such units are organised using the following guidelines:

- Foot Units: 10 - 30 Men + 1 Leader (Total 11 - 31 figures);
- Mounted Units: 4 - 10 Mounted Men + 1 Leader (Total 5 - 11 figures);
- Artillery Units: 1 Gun + 2 - 4 Gunners + 1 Leader (Total 3 - 5 figures);
- Transport: 1 Wagon, 1 Pack Camel, 2 Pack Horses, or 3 porter/bearers.

These non-standard-sized units can be grouped together to form larger formations. These are commanded by a Native Leader with a suitably large Personal Retinue.

- Native Leader and their Personal Retinue (Total = 2 or more figures).

It is recommended that larger formations should have at least one transport unit for every two combat units in the formation.

All foot figures are mounted singly on $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (19 mm) steel washers, and all mounted figures are mounted singly on 1 inch (25 mm) steel washers. This means that they can be used individually or mounted on magnetic movement bases. Machine-guns, artillery pieces and transport vehicles are mounted on suitably sized bases made from thin plywood.

Playing Equipment

The following equipment is needed to play a game using these rules:

- Two suitably organised model armies (Obvious but ...);
- Terrain;
- A scenario;
- A standard pack of playing cards;
- At least sixty small D6 dice (with half of the dice being of one colour and the other half being of a different colour);
- At least six normal D6 dice;
- A dice shaker;
- A small flat box into which to roll the dice (This saves awkward problems with dice falling on the floor etc.);
- At least one 48 inch (120 cm) long tape measure (A longer one is even better);
- At least one 12 inch (30 cm) ruler.

Before The Game Starts

Before the game starts each side is allocated one of the two suit colours (i.e. Black or Red) in the pack of playing cards. If more than one player is on a side, each player on that side is allocated one of the suits within that side's suit colour (i.e. Black = Clubs or Spades; Red = Hearts or Diamonds). The pack of playing cards is then shuffled and placed face down somewhere where all the players can see it.

Movement Sequence

There is no movement sequence in the traditionally accepted sense of the term (e.g. Both sides move all their troops; then all eligible units fire; then any close combats are resolved; and then any morale checks are made). In these rules the pack of playing cards determines who does what and when.

The system is very simple. The top card of the pack of playing cards is turned over, and the suit and colour is exposed for all to see. The player whose side has been allocated that suit and/or colour may now choose one of their units to "activate". This means that they must first test the unit's morale, and then they can carry out any permitted actions. When this has been completed, the next playing card is turned over, and the sequence is repeated. Once all the playing cards in the pack have been turned over, the pack is shuffled again and reused. This continues until the game is concluded.

Morale Checks

Once a unit has been "activated", it must take a morale check before it can do anything else. The only exceptions to this are:

- Generals;
- Members of the Headquarters Staff;
- Native Leaders;
- Members of the Native Leader's Personal Retinue;
- Machine-gun Detachments;
- Artillery Units.

These units do not need to take morale checks. This reflects the high level of training and morale that these units usually exhibit.

Whether or not a unit passes or fails a morale check is determined by throwing dice. Each type of unit throws a pre-determined number of normal D6 dice (Morale Dice), and the score achieved is compared with the unit's current figure strength. If it has fewer figures than the dice score, the unit fails its morale check.

European & Regular Native Troops

Unit Type	Number Of Morale Dice Thrown
Infantry Company	1 x D6
Infantry Battalion	3 x D6
Cavalry Squadron	1 x D6
Cavalry Regiment	2 x D6

Irregular Native Troops

Unit Type	Number Of Morale Dice Thrown
Foot Units	3 x D6
Mounted Units	2 x D6

For morale check purposes transport units are considered to be equivalent to a full strength infantry company.

The only alterations to the number of Morale Dice thrown are:

- Elite units throw one (1) less D6;
- Inexperienced units throw one (1) more D6;
- Militia units throw two (2) more D6s;
- Units in fortifications throw one (1) less D6.

Permitted Actions

If a unit passes its morale check it may:

- Remain stationary, and fire twice;
- Move "at the double";
- Fire, and then move;
- Move, and then fire;
- Change formation, and then fire;
- Fire, and then change formation;
- Change formation, and then move;
- Move, and then change formation;
- Limber-up, and then move (Artillery only);
- Fire, and then limber-up (Artillery only);
- Move, and then unlimber (Artillery only);
- Unlimber, and then fire (Artillery only);
- Charge home on an enemy unit, and then engage in close combat;
- Fight a close combat, and then move away from the enemy.

If a unit fails its morale check it may:

- Remain stationary, and fire twice;
- Move "at the double" away from the enemy;
- Fire, and then move away from the enemy;
- Move away from the enemy, and then fire;
- Change formation, and then fire;
- Fire, and then change formation;
- Change formation, and then move away from the enemy;
- Move away from the enemy, and then change formation;
- Fight a close combat, and then move away from the enemy.

Movement

The speed at which units may move is determined by throwing dice. Each type of unit throws a pre-determined number of normal D6 dice (Movement Dice), and the score achieved is the maximum number of inches that unit may move.

Although this appears to be somewhat random and arbitrary, and does not allow players to plan how to fight their battles with any precision, it should be remembered that real-life warfare is strewn with examples of things not quite working to plan. This is where generalship (and luck!) come to the fore. A good and/or lucky general will allow for and/or cope with things going awry whereas a poor and/or unlucky general will not. It is up to the players to discover where or not they are good and/or lucky or poor and/or unlucky.

European & Regular Native Troops

Unit Type	Number Of Movement Dice Thrown
Infantry Companies & Battalions	2 x D6
Cavalry Squadrons & Regiments	3 x D6
Machine-gun Detachments	2 x D6
Mountain Gun Batteries	2 x D6
Field Gun Batteries	2 x D6 if unlimbered; 3 x D6 if limbered
Medium Gun Batteries	1 x D6 if unlimbered; 2 x D6 if limbered
Heavy Gun Batteries	1 x D6 if unlimbered; 2 x D6 if limbered
Generals & the Headquarters Staff	4 x D6
Horse-drawn/Pack Transport	2 x D6

Irregular Native Troops

Unit Type	Number Of Movement Dice Thrown
Foot Units	3 x D6
Mounted Units	4 x D6
Artillery Units	1 x D6 if unlimbered; 2 x D6 if limbered
Native Leaders & their Personal Retinues	4 x D6
Animal-drawn Transport	2 x D6

The only alterations to the number of Movement Dice thrown are:

- Units moving "at the double" throw twice the usual number of Movement Dice;
- Units moving through open terrain throw one (1) extra D6.

Crossing Obstacles

In order to keep things simple, all obstacles "cost" an additional two (2) inches of movement to cross. These include:

- A hill contour;
- A wall (or similar vertical barrier) that is climbable without the use of a ladder;
- A ford in a stream or river.

Weapon Ranges

European & Regular Native Troops

Weapon Type	Short Range	Long Range
Pistols	3 inches (7.5 cm)	-
Single-shot Rifles & Carbines	4 inches (10 cm)	12 inches (30 cm)
Magazine Rifles & Carbines	6 inches (15 cm)	18 inches (45 cm)
Machine-guns	8 inches (20 cm)	24 inches (60 cm)
Mountain Guns	10 inches (25 cm)	30 inches (75 cm)
Field Guns	12 inches (30 cm)	36 inches (90 cm)
Medium Guns	14 inches (35 cm)	42 inches (105 cm)
Heavy Guns	16 inches (40 cm)	48 inches (120 cm)

Irregular Native Troops

Weapon Type	Short Range	Long Range
Throwing Spears	3 inches (7.5 cm)	-
Muskets	3 inches (7.5 cm)	9 inches (22.5 cm)
Single-shot Rifles & Carbines	4 inches (10 cm)	12 inches (30 cm)
Light Guns	8 inches (20 cm)	24 inches (60 cm)
Medium Guns	10 inches (25 cm)	30 inches (75 cm)
Heavy Guns	12 inches (30 cm)	36 inches (90 cm)

Firing

The system used for deciding the effectiveness of a unit's fire relies upon the "buckets of dice" principle (i.e. throwing lots of dice tends to iron out some of the vagaries of chance whilst still producing some unpredictable results).

The main thing to remember is that you can not fire at anything that you can not see. If an enemy unit is concealed, it remains so until it opens fire on you. This is, after all, one of the reasons why Generals insist on sending out troops to undertake reconnaissance missions (i.e. so that they know where the enemy is!).

The other things to remember are that:

- Only the front ranks of units may fire;
- The target unit must be within 45° either side of a line drawn straight ahead from the front of the firing unit and
- The target unit must be the first enemy unit the firing unit's fire would hit;
- Artillery may not fire over the heads of friendly troops unless:
 - The artillery is on a higher level than the troops they are firing over and
 - The target unit is more than 12 inches (30 cm) from the troops that are being fired over.

Long Range Fire

A small D6 is placed in the dice shaker for each figure in a Infantry Unit, a Foot Unit, a Cavalry Unit, or a Mounted Unit who is armed with a weapon that can fire at long range. The dice are then shaken into the box provided for this purpose, and a casualty is removed from the target unit, by the commander of the unit that is firing, for every pair of 6s thrown.

Three small D6s are placed in the dice shaker for each figure in a Machine-gun Detachment or Artillery Battery. The dice are then shaken into the box provided for this purpose, and a casualty is removed from the target unit, by the commander of the unit that is firing, for every pair of 6s thrown.

Short Range Fire

A small D6 is placed in the dice shaker for each figure in a Infantry Unit, a Foot Unit, a Cavalry Unit, or a Mounted Unit who is armed with a weapon that can fire at short range. The dice are then shaken into the box provided for this purpose, and a casualty is removed from the target unit, by the commander of the unit that is firing, for every 6 thrown.

Three small D6s are placed in the dice shaker for each figure in a Machine-gun Detachment or Artillery Battery. The dice are then shaken into the box provided for this purpose, and a casualty is removed from the target unit, by the commander of the unit that is firing, for every 6 thrown.

Individuals (such as Generals, members of the Headquarters Staff, Native Leaders, and members of the Native Leader's Personal Retinue) may add their firepower (i.e. be counted as being a member of a unit) to any unit with which they are in base-to-base contact.

Units In Fortifications

Units that are in fortifications only suffer half the number of casualties caused by Long Range or Short Range Fire (i.e. At Long Range one casualty is removed for every four 6s thrown, and at Short Range one casualty is removed for every pair of 6s thrown).

Close Combat

The system used for deciding the result of a close combat relies upon the "buckets of dice" principle (i.e. throwing lots of dice tends to iron out some of the vagaries of chance whilst still producing some unpredictable results).

The main things to remember are:

- That figures may only take part in close combat if they are in base-to-base contact with an enemy figure;
- That only figures that are in the front ranks of units may take part in close combat.

A small D6 of one colour is placed in the dice shaker for each figure from the attacking side who is taking part in the close combat. A small D6 of a different colour is placed in the dice shaker for each figure from the defending side who is taking part in the close combat. The dice are then shaken into the box provided for this purpose. A casualty is removed from the defending unit by the commander of the attacking unit for every 6 thrown on an attacker's dice, and a casualty is removed from the attacking unit by the commander of the defender's unit for every 6 thrown on a defending dice.

Definitions

Open terrain:

Open terrain is all terrain that is flat and without vertical or horizontal obstructions. As a result, it is very rarely found on a colonial battlefield.

European & Regular Native Troops:

- European and Regular Native Troops includes:
- All regular troops raised in Europe (e.g. British Line Infantry, French Foreign Legion, German Schutztruppe);
- All locally-raised European Colonial units (e.g. Frontier Light Horse);
- All regular locally-raised European-style Native Colonial units (Sudanese Infantry, Gurkha Rifles, Bengal Lancers).

Irregular Native Troops:

Irregular Native Troops includes:

- All irregular locally-raised Native Colonial units (e.g. Natal Native Contingent);
- All tribal and/or clan warbands or levies (e.g. Zulus, Dervishes, Pathans, Boxers).

Elite Units

An elite unit is any unit that, due to its high standard of training and/or élan and/or fighting reputation, is regarded by opponents with some degree of awe.

Inexperienced Units

Any unit that is newly raised or has only recently arrived from Europe is inexperienced, and remains so until it has been blooded in combat.

Militia Units

A militia unit is any unit that has been hastily raised from local people to defend the locale from aggressors.

Fortifications

Fortifications may be either man-made or natural. Man-made fortifications include trenches, earth-works, stone sangars, forts, armoured trains, and armoured warships. Natural fortifications include dried-up streams and rivers, sunken roads, and large rock formations.