

« Argad ! »

CAVALRY and mounted troops

This document is a compilation of rule details, examples, and optional ideas, to complement the generic rules when necessary.

Texts in blue print or titled in blue are suggestions, optional and/or advanced rules which can be ignored if you do not need them in your games (although, in fact, everything you don't need can be ignored too).

Tactical modifiers suggested for shooting or melee may differ from other wargame rules intended for larger battles on open fields. The perception of terrain is different, many obstacles on the gaming table give advantages to characters on foot. We apologise for awkward syntax or wording in the text in English.

Cavalry, mounted characters, mounted infantry

Male or female characters trained to fight on horseback, and mounting trained warhorses, are **cavalry**. They have advantages over infantry ...and also some drawbacks.

Characters who cannot fight well on horseback, or whose mounts are not trained for war, are called **mounted foot** or **mounted infantry** (even if they can ride well enough). They do not have the advantages of cavalry. They are not inferior cavalry, they are infantry moving faster than on foot.

For example, Dark Ages warriors who would not normally fight mounted (Saxons, Vikings), civilians of any period, mounted infantry military units ("dragoons" of some countries)... (page 18).

Cavalry is "mounted", but all mounted are not "cavalry".

Right: Germanic tribes of the Migration Period do not usually have cavalry, except Ostrogoths who spent a long time under Hunnic domination. The Wisigoth nobility of the kingdom of Toulouse begins to fight mounted in the fifth century. The Franks develop a true cavalry in the eighth century. Dark Ages Saxons and Vikings do not like to fight on horseback but some of their warriors can travel mounted if necessary, to take part in a raid, etc.



Painting: Euthanasor



Above: 14th century knights on caparisoned horses.

Painted by E. A.

Class, clothing, armour

Basic characteristics are the same as on foot:

Class (from 1 to 5) represents the fighting ability and/or military training. We suppose that horses are as much trained for war (or not at all) than their usual owners.

Clothing or **armour** is the protection (or lack of) worn by the character (see generic rules). The rules make no difference between horse and rider. A character in mail shirt or breastplate (called "armour 4" in the rules) is still "armour 4" when mounted. A knight in complete armour ("armour 5" in the rules) is still "armour 5" when mounted, whatever the horse wears.

Horse barding can be more detailed in rare cases if wished but it's not really necessary (page 16).

A summary of this document...

The rules have slowly been built around very simple, basic mechanisms, adding more and more ideas and suggestions for details which can be used or ignored at will.

On open terrain the cavalry moves rapidly, can shoot while moving if the weapons allow it (pages 4-5) and have advantages in melee against enemies on foot and against mounted infantry (positive or negative modifiers, pages 6-7).

The most famous sorts of cavalry are those able to charge for shock in contact. Cavalry charge has an additional positive modifier ...but needs easy (open) terrain to ride on, and can be received at spear point (or on the points of bills, halberds, naginatas, bayonets, etc.) by enemies waiting immobile on foot (pages 9 and following). Middle Ages or Renaissance knights charging with a heavy couched lance get another positive modifier (page 12) ...but cannot use this weapon when they are not charging.

Cavalry without a saddle with high pommel (or a four-horned late Roman saddle) nor stirrups have the same advantages vs infantry but cannot "charge" (they can attack the enemy in melee but without positive modifier for charge). This concerns most riders in the Antiquity, Pictish and Irish warriors of the Dark Ages... and any good rider who did not have time to saddle his/her horse.

Mounted infantry is treated separately (page 18).

The angles of the bases of mounts unable to "charge" may be rounded for easy recognition in the game.

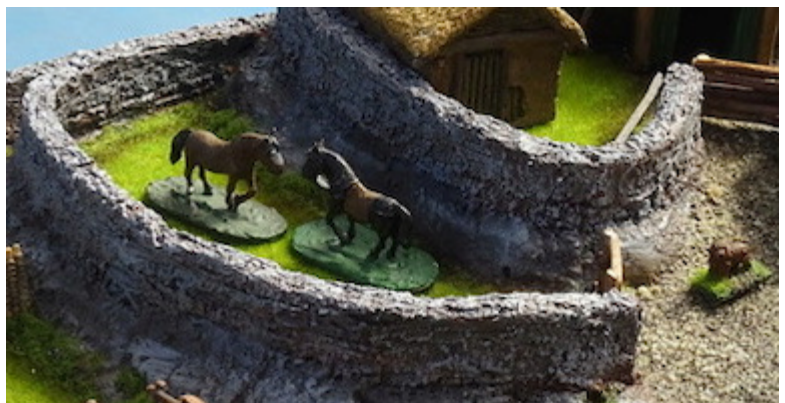
Mounting, dismounting

Mounted characters can dismount if they wish to enter an inn or a pub, search a house, walk across a dense forest, gain protection from shots behind bushes or low walls...

Dismounted characters holding their mounts by the bridle move normally as on foot; these characters and their riderless mounts both have the same protection of terrain (from shots) than standing pedestrians (it is the only case when shooting can eliminate one of them separately, and if they are alone they are considered ...a "couple").

Their moves follow the normal rules for movement on foot, depending on equipment. Heavy cavalry of the 18th and 19th centuries wearing big and impractical riding boots can move 16 cm on foot (even without a breastplate).

Right: Spare horses in a Dark Ages hillfort. Their owner is probably in his/her house now. These horses can be mounted when needed by their owner or other characters (messengers, etc.) Someone could also try to steal them... They may be war horses or not, it must have been decided before (it can be written secretly).



Characters can dismount, or climb into saddle, in one game turn immobile; they cannot shoot, nor strike, nor do anything else (except talk) during this same game turn.

...this rule applies especially to units or groups. For more fluidity in individual action a maximum movement as in "very difficult terrain on foot" may be allowed when mounting or dismounting (and if the slowing die rolls a 6 the character stays on foot near the horse, as per usual movement rules). Some riders in light clothing very well trained to jump on their horse (Huns, Mongols, Plains Indians, cossacks...) can even do it as a movement in "difficult terrain on foot".

MOVEMENT ON HORSEBACK

Cavalry in light clothing, or in chain mail or breastplate, can move 40 cm on open ground. Mounted infantry, and some heavy cavalry of later periods, moves 36 cm. Cataphracts of clibanarii of the Antiquity, and medieval knights in heavy armour, move 32 cm.

| MOVEMENT | light clothing | chainmail or breastplate "armour 4" | complete armour "armour 5" | <i>slowing dice</i> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| cavalry | 40 cm | 40 cm | 32 cm | two dice |
| <i>mounted infantry on horseback</i> | 36 cm | 36 cm | 32 cm | two dice |

Terrain and obstacles may slow or block the movement. In difficult or very difficult terrain all mounted (characters or groups) are slowed down by **two dice** (2D6) centimetres. In **difficult terrain** the total dice result is deduced from movement (in cm) and if both dice roll 6 the mounted character or group is blocked for the whole game turn. In **very difficult terrain** the move is divided by two and the total dice result is then deduced from it; the mounted character or group is blocked for the whole game turn if at least one of the two dice rolls a 6.

Different choices of terrain, and possible effects, are mentioned in the tables.

Some suggestions :

| TERRAIN (examples of toften encountered terrain) | cavalry (except "armour 5") | cavalry in "armour 5" and mounted infantry |
|--|--|--|
| bushes, high crops | difficult terrain 2D6 cm deduced from movement | |
| forest - rather dense | very difficult terrain half move minus 2D6 cm | |
| open forest, or orchard, or well-spaced and pruned tree plantation | difficult terrain 2D6 cm deduced from movement | |
| earthen bank, ditch, hard slope | difficult terrain 2D6 cm deduced from move. | very difficult terrain R* half move minus 2D6 cm |
| line of pointed stakes (coming from the front) | very difficult terrain R* half move minus 2D6 cm | |
| knee-high or belt-high waters (stream, ford, sea near the beach...) | difficult terrain R*? 2D6 cm deduced from move. | very difficult terrain R* half move minus 2D6 cm |

A dense **forest** is very difficult terrain for all mounted, but gives a protection from shooting (–1 modifier to the result of dice rolled for shooting, as on foot). More than 10 cm of dense forest completely blocks view (and shooting). Open forest, or bushy terrain, are difficult terrain for mounted characters and do not protect them from shooting or view.

Cavalry cannot enter buildings without dismounting (*except perhaps very large barns, see an example page 15*). Mounted characters can theoretically not cross fences, low walls, etc. (*jumping over may be allowed, with danger of falling*). Streams and river fords may be dangerous (*depending on scenario, or GM decision*).

Other types of terrain can be imagined, depending on context and on available miniature terrain elements, with similar effects (*marshes, sand dunes, rocky ground, etc.*)

A broken terrain with woods and bushes is more interesting to play on ...but is not favoured by cavalry.

The letter R indicates an optional risk (fall, or drowning, etc.) see page 14 of 2020 generic rules.*



Casualties

A mounted character hit by shooting or in melee (or "killed" for any reason) is removed from the game with his or her mount, they are not separated.

An optional rule may separate important riders from their mounts if a scenario needs it (if narration is built around a special character trying to escape) but in most cases it is better to remove them together; it avoids unnecessary and silly complications in the game.

SHOOTING MOUNTED

Cavalry can often shoot in movement, depending on weapons. Missiles thrown by hand (javelins, etc.) have no penalty for shooting in movement. Most other weapons have a -1 penalty for shooting in movement, with some exceptions. *This is for cavalry; mounted infantry is on page 16.*

Some cavalry ranged weapons

Shooting tables of often encountered ranged weapons. Negative modifiers of javelin or bow shooting at enemies in armour apply at any range; those of firearms may vary according to range.

These tables may slightly differ from those intended for infantry (see detailed sheets for each period).

| throwing spear, javelin | penalty at armour | 0 - 10 cm | 10 - 20 cm |
|---|--|------------|------------|
| can shoot in movement without penalty for movement | no penalty at armour 4 -1 at armour 5 | 6 ext. | |
| cavalry moving on easy terrain (if facing target for 2D6 cm minimum move, or caracole) | | 5 - 6 ext. | 6 ext. |

| short composite bow <i>European or Asian</i> | penalty at armour | 0 - 20 cm | 20 - 40 cm | 40 - 60 cm |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| can shoot in movement on horseback with -1 penalty | -1 at armour 4 -2 at armour 5 | 5 - 6 | 6 | 7 ext. |

| matchlock arquebus, caliver, petronel | 0 - 10 cm | 10 - 20 cm | 20 - 40 cm | reloaded in |
|---|-----------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| can shoot in movement on horseback with -1 penalty | 5 - 6 | 6 -1 at armour 5 | 7 -1 at armour 4, 5 | one game turn immobile |

| flintlock musketoon (smoothbore) | 0 - 20 cm | 20 - 30 cm | 30 - 40 cm | reloaded in |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| can shoot in movement with -1 penalty | 5 - 6 | 6 -1 at armour 5 | 7 -1 at armour 4, 5 | one game turn immobile |

Shooting at mounted targets in a melee (optional rule)

The usual rules forbid to shoot at a melee. However, when one or more mounted character(s) are in contact with foot enemies only, shooting at these mounted above the heads of infantry may be allowed. The shooters must not be farther than 10 cm, nor can they be on higher ground, and they suffer a -1 modifier to shoot because of agitation around their target(s). *If the mounted characters are in group the shooters cannot choose between them, they shoot at the whole mounted group.*

| pistol (<i>wheellock or flintlock</i>) | 0 - 10 cm | 10 - 20 cm | reloaded in |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| can shoot in movement with -1 penalty | 5 - 6 -1 at armour 5 | 7 -1 at armour 4, 5 | one game turn immobile |

A pistol is a very practical weapon at close range on foot; it may also be useful to cavalry although it does not replace the effectiveness of a sabre charge.

Right: Late 17th century cavalry enters at full gallop a coastal village in a Caribbean island, shooting people at random with their pistols.

Cavalry soldiers in this historical period often have one or two pistols in their saddle holsters.

A pistol shooting in movement has a -1 negative modifier (you need to roll 6 to hit an unprotected target at close range). It is not very effective, but such a surprise action would probably worry enemy commanders and could panic the population.

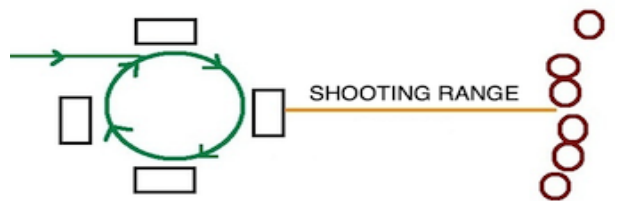


Scratch-built terrain: B. R.

The caracole

Cavalry with ranged weapons (*bows, javelins, calivers, pistols, etc.*) can pass swiftly near an enemy, shooting as they pass. It is called a **caracole** or cantabric circle.

It is done in circle, or in a simple turn when passing by. The riders may later regroup to reload their weapons if needed, or charge the enemy with their swords or sabres in a following game turn, or let some other of their friends charge the enemy.



In any case the shooting range (from both sides) is the shorter distance between the riders and their opponents. When fighting an immobile or slower enemy the riders keep control of this distance even if their opponents are moving.

For the sake of aesthetics on the gaming table, bow-armed cavalry would probably turn clockwise and javelin or pistol-armed cavalry counter-clockwise... but this has no importance in the rules.

Left: Thirty Years War cavalry in caracole near enemy pikemen.

Painted by É. M.

Moving faster than the enemy unit they come close enough to shoot at close range; if the pikemen want to advance towards them they can move the circle backwards at the same time (if there is open space behind).

MELEE ON HORSEBACK

On easy ground, **cavalry** is advantaged versus infantry (*and vs mounted infantry*) by a +1 modifier. This does not apply in difficult terrain for cavalry.

Infantry or anyone on foot (*and mounted foot*) has –1 to strike cavalry.

| | |
|---|------------|
| cavalry vs foot enemy , or vs mounted foot (<i>except in difficult of very difficult terrain for cavalry</i>) | + 1 |
| infantry vs cavalry (<i>except in very difficult terrain for cavalry</i>) or mounted infantry vs cavalry | – 1 |

Mounted infantry and riders whose mount is not trained for war (even if they are good riders themselves) do not have this + 1 modifier vs infantry, and infantry does not have this – 1 modifier vs them.

Reminder of generic rules: *fighting in contact in melee*

In **MELEE** the character with the **longest weapon** strike before opponent(s):

Thrusting spear > **half-long weapon** > **short weapon** > **very short weapon** > **bare hands**.

Result (die + modifiers) **exceeds class** of the enemy: enemy is hit (=killed).

Equals class of the enemy: enemy recoils.

Smaller than class of the enemy: missed.

If the enemy is wearing an armour (chainmail or cuirass = "armour 4", complete armour = "armour 5") higher than his/her class, the die result must also exceed this armour to hit, otherwise enemy recoils.

If the die rolls **a natural 1**: missed (*even with good modifiers*),

a natural 7 (= double natural 6) in Melee: hit (*even with bad modifiers*).

*If two opponents roll simultaneously a "hit" result (or a "recoil" result) only the **higher class** one kills enemy (or forces enemy to recoil). If they are same class, the **highest armour** kills opponent (or forces him/her to recoil). If same class and armour, the **highest natural die** kills opponent (or makes him/her recoil).*

Example : fire or contact?

French Wars of Religion, late 16th century. A cavalryman with arquebus or petronel fights a female opponent, who also has an arquebus or caliver, and an officer of the Holy League, in difficult terrain (bushes).

Right: exchange of arquebus shots, both are immobile at close range (less than 10 cm).



This terrain gives a protection from shots to characters on foot (–1 modifier) but not to mounted. The woman in red shoots the cavalryman if she rolls 5 or 6; the cavalryman must roll 6 (because of the bushes) to hit one of his two enemies (at random as they stand close enough from each other). It would be more difficult in movement.

*Left: if fighting in contact with swords, the cavalryman strikes one opponent, **without** the usual cavalry vs foot +1 modifier (which does not apply in difficult terrain). His foes suffer the –1 modifier vs cavalry. He seems to be wearing a nailed leather cuirass (armour 4) so any of his enemies on foot needs a die roll of 6 to kill him.*

Bill or halberd in melee

The bill (or guisarme) comes in wider use in Western Europe in the second half of the 14th century; it is later replaced by the halberd.

A fighter on foot with a **bill** or **halberd** (or equivalent) has a **+1** modifier to strike a mounted enemy (*it nullifies the negative modifier of foot vs cavalry; we suppose that such a weapon may more easily catch the rider and bring him/her down if the rider is not "charging"*).

| | |
|---|------------|
| infantry with bill, or guisarme, bardiche, halberd, or equivalent, vs any mounted <i>(except vs a cavalry charge, in which case this modifier does not apply but there is another one if waiting immobile to receive the charge at the point of a staff weapon, see page 8)</i> | + 1 |
|---|------------|

Example : Two men-at-arms on foot with 15th century staff weapons face a mounted knight.

If contact happens in melee, the fighters on foot have a -1 (foot vs cavalry) modifier but also (if the knight is not charging) a $+1$ (bill or halberd or equivalent vs cavalry) modifier. Any of them can kill the knight (who certainly is class 5, armour 5) with a die roll of 6.

If the knight "charges" the "bill or halberd" modifier does not apply (...but the character on foot may stay immobile and receive the charge at the point of the staff weapon, see next page).



Example : a knight in bad company

Left: civilian rioters attack an armoured knight (Froissart's Chronicles).

The attackers are probably "class 2". Class 2 characters and/or improvised weapons have a same -1 modifier in melee. Three of them seem to be wielding various weapons which give a $+1$ modifier for different reasons: a "maillotin" (staff mallet) against a mounted enemy, or heavy tools with boths hands. This adds up to no modifier.

A knight class 5 armour 5 is killed by a total result of 6 ...but being on foot his enemies also have a -1 modifier vs cavalry, so they need a 7 (in their case a double natural 6).

And anyway, in melee a natural 7 (a double natural 6) always hits.

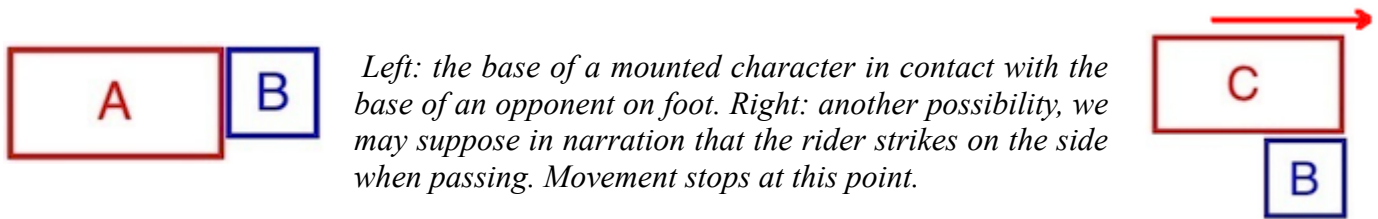
The knight strikes with his sword after the longer weapons if he is not killed or forced to recoil (a die roll of 6 from one opponent would have forced him to recoil to the side where he is not yet surrounded).

In the basic rules the man with the dagger strikes after everyone else; it is now accepted that his die may count to obtain a double 6 even if the knight kills him with his sword (after all, if the knight decides to strike him he is less attentive to the others). Another optional rule may accept a simultaneous strike.

Drawings: mounted in melee

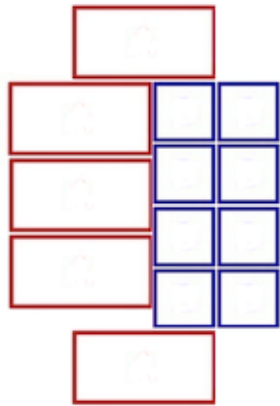
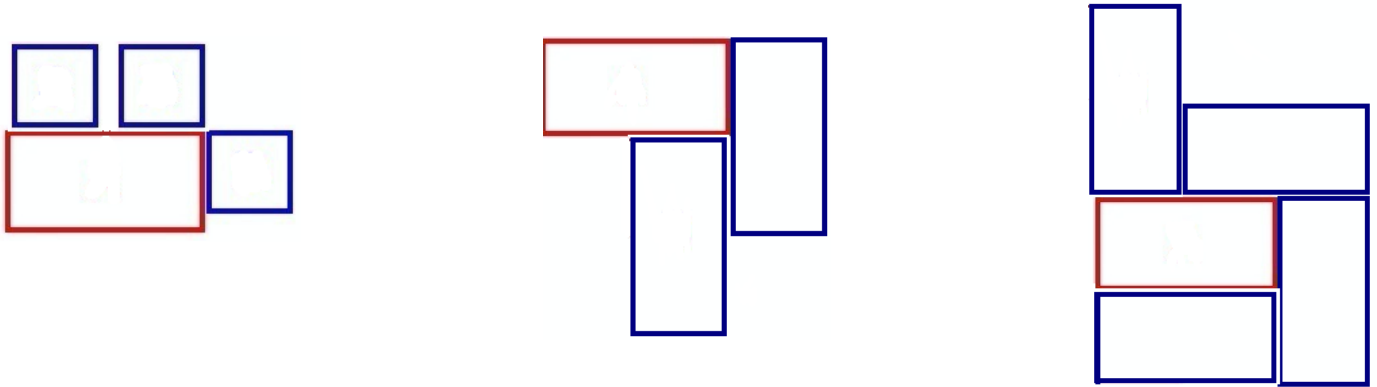
Placing bases for a melee is simple and easy. All fights are resolved separately, one to one, or one against more. Bases must clearly face each other, as for melee on foot (*generic rules 2020, page 25*).

The **mounted character** comes in contact with an enemy (if this enemy accepts contact or cannot avoid it) from the front, or on a side or at the back, it makes no difference.



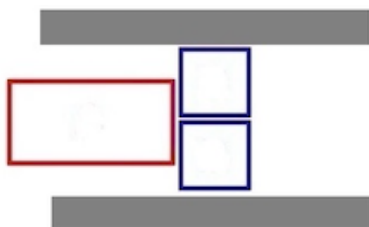
Left: the base of a mounted character in contact with the base of an opponent on foot. Right: another possibility, we may suppose in narration that the rider strikes on the side when passing. Movement stops at this point.

With more attackers, a character still can strike only one enemy (*unless with very special characteristics*) but can be hit by more, in any combination (*drawings below*). Bases should always be side to front, side to side, etc. or in full contact with half the length of base of a mounted enemy. So a mounted character cannot be attacked by more than six enemies (*and by more rear ranks enemies armed with staff weapons or pikes*).



The mechanics are the same with more people on both side. The fight are still, always, resolved one vs one or one vs more. A fighter on foot in contact with two riders may strike whoever is facing the largest part of his/her base side (if equal, choose which one).

Left: cavalry (charging or not) attacks an infantry unit. If foot warriors in the second rank have staff weapons (lances, bills, halberds, naginatas...) they can strike the same enemy as their friend who stands just in front of them (except if this friend wants the advantages of wielding a two-handed sword or axe...) Foot units have clearly interest, if possible, to stand close to a large terrain obstacle on one of their flanks to avoid being attacked on their side.



Special case: in a narrow passage (bridge, small street, etc.) two characters on foot may face and fight a same mounted enemy.

This is also accepted in the mounted enemy is "charging".

More ranks of characters on foot with long or half-long staff weapons may also strike from behind if the rules accept it in other situations.

This is accepted in this situation only, not if there is enough room on the sides to take position all around.

A cavalry "charge" (with the benefit of tactical modifiers explained on next page) must be done in a straight line, *see more drawings page 10*.

CAVALRY CHARGE

Cavalry "charging" any enemy on open easy terrain gets an additional **+1 modifier** (*it can be added to the +1 modifier of cavalry vs infantry*).

A soldier on foot waiting **immobile** to receive charging cavalry at **spear point** (or rhomphaia, bill, juzarm, bardiche, halberd, fixed bayonet, etc.) has a +1 modifier (*nullifying the negative modifier of foot vs cavalry; this only benefits to regular soldiers and warriors trained to do it*).

| | |
|--|------------|
| cavalry "charging" any enemy (<i>impossible in difficult or very difficult terrain; and needs a horned saddle or stirrups</i>) | + 1 |
| infantry immobile with thrusting spear (or bill, any sort of halberd, or fixed bayonet) (<i>including a third rank if rules for their historical period allows it</i>) vs cavalry "charging" it directly | + 1 |

Mounted infantry, and trained riders mounting horses not trained for war, are not "cavalry" and cannot "charge". Cavalry without a proper horned saddle and/or stirrups cannot "charge". These mounted troops who are not "charging" can still contact the enemy and fight, but without the +1 bonus for "charge".

Warriors or soldiers on foot with a spear or long or half-long staff weapon, waiting immobile for a cavalry charge, benefit of the +1 bonus only if they have been trained to do it (or if this kind of tactic is not uncommon for their people or tribe). For billmen and halberdmen this modifier replaces the bonus of their weapon vs a mounted enemy, it does not add up with it.

Other precisions have been added to avoid unrealistic or ridiculous situations (see next page).

Example: a sequel of the previous pages...

If this mounted knight charges, he gets the +1 modifier of cavalry vs foot and the +1 modifier for cavalry charge, adding +2 to his die result.

The warrior or soldier **immobile** on foot who receives charging cavalry at the point of a spear or other staff weapon (bill, juzarm, bardiche, halberd, naginata, etc.) gets a +1 modifier (*if trained to do it; it nullifies the -1 modifier of infantry vs cavalry*).



Picture: other characters cannot come to contact a charging rider, but a second rank on foot with staff weapon, immobile just behind the first rank, can also receive the charge. The two men-at-arms on foot strike at the same time (their dice can be rolled together). If the rider has no lance, the men on foot strike first with their long weapons.



A hero in the first rank... (optional rule)

In principle, only the weapons which can be seen on the figures are considered ...but some situations are interesting. *In medieval times it often happens that good fighters, officers, or standard bearers, only armed with their sword, stand in the first rank covered by staff weapons of their followers close behind them.*

Left: the rules now accept that a bold character in the first rank, if good fighter, strikes at the same time and with same advantages as the follower who

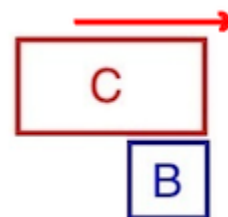
stands just behind. Of course the enemy strikes the front rank character.

Drawings: cavalry charge

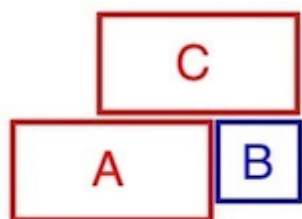
Cavalry charge is treated as other melees, with some more rules to be realistic (*see previous page*). Charging cavalry must ride straight before contact. Only the contacted enemy (and rear ranks, if any) can take part in this fight in the same game turn, except other charging cavalry (friend or foe).



Left and right: same as drawing on top of page 8. These situations are also valid in a cavalry charge.

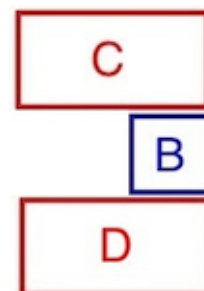


If more cavalry comes charging from the same direction Two charging riders may contact and strike a same enemy:



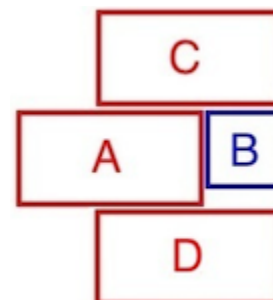
Left: A attacks from the front front, C strikes on the side (but still coming in a straight line).

Right: C and D arrive at the same moment, each of them strike a side of B.



Theoretically (*with suggested 5 x 2.5 cm size of bases*) three riders who charge from the same direction cannot all strike a same enemy on foot.

Right: D coming from the same direction as A and C cannot "charge" a same enemy on foot because he or she would not arrive in a straight line; and if not charging is not permitted to attack someone charged by cavalry (but D could charge a rider whose base is larger than a foot character base).



If cavalry comes charging from different directions, contact may happen on different sides of a same enemy. But a charge in zigzag is forbidden (*see below*).

Minimum distance for a charge

This calculation is not often needed, it just helps to avoid arguments about "charge" bonus when the attackers come from very close or in zigzag.

When a rider (or a cavalry unit) begins the move **very close to the enemy**, roll **2D6**. Charging cavalry must ride at least **2D6 centimetres in a straight line** before contact to gain the benefit of +1 "charge" modifier (*and also to be able to wield a heavy knight's lance, if any, etc.*)

A part of this distance may have been done in the previous game turn.

***Remark:** if all players prefer to use bases of other dimensions, these drawings may be modified to understand easily what happens in melee, even if it slightly changes a few things. The purpose of the rules is to resolve all gaming situations as simply as possible, not to study geometry.*

Example: Battle of Hastings, 1066 (Bayeux Tapestry)

Right: The Norman knights have a +1 modifier for cavalry vs foot and another +1 modifier for cavalry charge: it adds +2 to their melee die.

...but those who charge the Saxons in shield wall (in close order) on the left also have a -1 negative modifier. All Normans would suffer a further -1 modifier if the Saxons were uphill.



The Saxons on foot who receive the charge at spear point have a negative modifier (-1 for infantry vs cavalry) and a positive modifier (+1 for immobile foot lancers vs cavalry) it adds up to zero modifier for them. The Saxon warrior with a large axe has a -1 penalty for foot vs cavalry and a +1 bonus for his two-handed heavy axe... but if he uses it he cannot be protected by the shield wall.

Casualties from shooting in the first rank of a charge before contact



Above: Bayeux Tapestry.

Characters eliminated by enemy shots just before contact with this enemy group or character can immediately be replaced by friends following them (if these friends have enough movement capacity).

If it was a cavalry charge however, those who follow are hampered by their friends falling down and are no more "charging" (they don't have the +1 bonus for charge).

Movement after a charge

Usual rules: A rider who "charges" and kills opponent, or forces opponent to recoil, must advance to take the place where this opponent was standing.

A suggested optional rule (still being tested): A rider who "charges" and kills his/her opponent, or forces the opponent to recoil, must (if there is no other enemy behind the opponent) make an additional move of 2D6 cm: roll two dice, the rider must advance as many centimetres **in a straight line**. If the opponent has not been killed, assume they pass near each other.

During this additional move the rider can avoid massive hard obstacles ...but not light fences or light obstacles, ravines, ponds or rivers. The rider ignores other enemies near his/her trajectory. Other characters (friends or enemies) who move in the same game turn can move aside a bit to let the rider pass.

If the rider comes in contact with another character (friend or foe) standing immobile just in his/her path, the rider must stop in contact. Nobody can strike anymore (the melee phase is over) so they will still be in contact at the beginning of the next game turn.

Heavy knight's lance (couched lance)

From the late eleventh century onwards, noble cavalry often charge with their spear held underarm. In following centuries this spear gains more weight to be used especially in this way. In principle, only noble men-at-arms are trained to use it (*class 5, armour 5 ...or class 4 in light clothing if taken by surprise without their armour!*)

In the second half of the fifteenth century a couched lance can sometimes be used by noble cavalry in brigantine and chain mail (*class 4, armour 4*). It is still used in the sixteenth century by heavy cavalry in half-armour and by demilancers (*armour 4* in optional rules*).

A knight (or any other men-at-arms such as a well-armoured squire) charging with a **heavy couched lance** has a further +1 modifier (*which adds up with the +1 cavalry charge modifier, so that's +2 ...or even +3 if charging foot characters or infantry*).



cavalry "charging" with heavy couched lance

(noble men-at-arms mounted on warhorses only)

+ 1

Heavy lances can only be used by charging cavalry. A man-at-arms who finds himself in melee without "charging" must drop it (*and take his other weapon, his sword or whatever*) and cannot retake the lance again.

A heavy lance can be cut by its owner, or by a servant, to become a simple thrusting spear (which can be used on foot or mounted) it takes a full game turn to a dismounted character.



Painting E. A., picture M. B.

Example: A mid-14th century mounted knight comes to help his sergeants-at-arms. He decides to charge directly into the melee. His sergeants clear from his way in the movement phase. Enemies on foot cannot avoid him (but they could switch places before shock).

The **knight** has +1 modifier for cavalry vs infantry, and also (if he has enough space to charge) +1 for cavalry charge and +1 for charge with couched lance; it means +3 added to his die roll!

The **enemy sergeant** on foot has a -1 negative modifier vs cavalry. If he stands immobile to receive the mounted knight with a thrusting spear (or bill, guisarme, goedendag, bardiche, halberd) he also has a +1 bonus... it adds up to zero modifier to his die roll.

A charge implies a fast and hard shock: no one else can strike charging cavalry in the same game turn (except those charged, and other cavalry charging ...or perhaps a rare hero) and others cannot attack those charged.

Example: Battle of Arques (1589)

King Henri IV of France wears a simple breastplate (class 4, armour 4) and holds a sword or rapier. He fights two opponents in complete armour, one charges with a **couched lance**, the other one fires a **pistol**.

This **pistol** can fire before contact with a -1 negative modifier when in movement mounted (but has no penalty to shoot an enemy in breastplate at short range). If the die rolls a 6 the king is hit, if it rolls less it misses.

The **heavy couched lance** strikes before the king's sword, with +1 "cavalry charge" and +1 "charge with heavy lance": +2 is added to the die roll. The king is hit if the total (die + bonuses) exceeds his class (and also his armour), it happens if the die rolls 3 or more. If the die roll equals 2 the king must recoil (2+2=4 equals the king's class, and equals his armour too).

The king would not have many chances in this situation (it is a political painting...) he said later he won this battle thanks to divine protection! If he has not been killed and did not recoil he can strike one of his opponents, he has a +1 bonus (cavalry charge) so he kills an enemy in armour 5 if his die rolls 5 or 6.



SOME MORE EXPLANATIONS ...to avoid ridiculous situations... ;-)

Mounted infantry, and trained riders mounting horses not trained for war, are not "cavalry" and cannot "charge". Riders who for some reason find themselves mounting without saddle cannot "charge" (they can contact the enemy and strike... without the +1 for "charge" and other related factors).

Cavalry who was in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn cannot "charge". Cavalry cannot benefit from the +1 "charge" bonus for two consecutive game turns (if still in contact with an enemy after the game turn when the charge happened, "charge" factors do not apply). A well-known tactic is to quit the melee after a charge, regroup, and charge again a short time later.

A charging rider must say which enemy (or group of enemies) he/she wants to charge. These enemies can decide to move away or stay immobile; other opponents may advance to receive the charge, if they have enough movement and speed.

For example, foot lancers who were just behind archers can walk two paces forward to protect them, and still be considered "immobile" in the rules; and/or archers can retreat behind lancers).

A charging rider can be attacked, and struck during the game turn, by the character he/she contacts; by fighters on foot with long or half-long staff weapons standing behind this character (if on foot); by enemy cavalry able to counter-charge (or by some super-hero...) ...and by no one else.

Other opponents have not enough time to interfere against charging cavalry. For example, it is forbidden to send pedestrians close around a rider who is charging in the game turn! They must wait till the next game turn, if the rider stays there.

A character attacked by charging cavalry can only be struck, in the same game turn, by other charging riders and no-one else (if the character was already in contact with other opponents they cannot strike him/her, otherwise the charging rider could not avoid to knock them away also).

Cavalry, or any mounted, who see themselves charged by cavalry, are too nervous to be considered "immobile" (if they want to shoot before contact, etc.) even if they do not move.

Cavalry charging and receiving a "recoil" result in melee must recoil per normal rules.

A charging horse could not actually recoil, we assume it slowed down or reared just before the shock.

Force of shock vs more than one opponent

Suggested optional rule (still being tested): A rider who charges, and rolls a melee result which (modifiers included) exceeds the required result to kill the first enemy, can apply the excess amount to another enemy behind.

Example: A knight with couched lance charges infantry class 3. He rolls a 6, and has the modifiers +1 (cavalry vs infantry) +1 (cavalry charge) +1 (charge with couched lance). $6+1+1+1=9$. A result of 4 was enough to kill the first enemy. $9-4=5$, this is enough to kill an enemy of the second infantry rank. The remaining result is no sufficient to harm someone in a third rank.

Morale test by fear of cavalry charge

Morale tests are not often done in the game: for small adventures and skirmishes the morale of the troop is the player's morale! But it can be agreed that characters (*especially class 2*) in **open terrain** who see enemy cavalry **able to contact them in a single move** must test for morale, rolling 1D6 (*for their whole group or unit and isolated friends not far from them*).

– Result **smaller than their morale**: test passed, characters are not (or no longer) in disorder and will not test again for the same reason this same day (except if they happen to be in disorder for other reasons).

– Result **exceeds their morale**: failed, disorder: they have no bonus for shooting or melee, do not benefit of the rules of many 6es, and refuse to advance towards any foe. *As long as they are not in disorder it's better not to roll this die before they need to shoot, fight in melee, or advance, because nobody knows it before it shows (not even themselves)*. If they are known to be already in disorder (for this reason or another) the same reason triggers another test at the beginning of the next game turn, if failed they are routed (run away for a full game turn) or they surrender if they can't run. Then at the end of every game turn, a superior officer or chief (not in disorder himself or herself) within earshot can make them test again.

– Result **equals their morale**: passed if one of their chiefs, within earshot and able to shout orders, has successfully passed the test (*that means he or she has higher morale*); if not, failed as above.

Basic morale is equal to class (*if no other reason applies*) and for this test it is thus modified:

Armed with a lance or other staff weapon or close to a character who has one, +1. In shield wall or just behind a charcater in shield wall, +1. Priest or charismatic mage within earshot, +1. Banner or flag with the group, +1. Friendly musician playing at less than 60 cm, +1. Enemy musician playing at less than 60 cm, -1. To avoid nonsenses, if the result is a rout a coloured die may be rolled at the same time, the number of routed characters cannot exceed its result multiplied by the number of cavalry riders.

A spear for a chief

Generic rules only consider the weapons hold by the figures, except if a scenario or context says otherwise.

Figures of chiefs are often holding a sword, it gives them a bold look ...but can be a disadvantage when fighting an enemy lancer if the rules are strictly applied. However it would be sad to discard these nice miniatures...



A servant or subaltern warrior may follow the chief and carry his lance (an usual custom), it allows the chief to take it (in narration) and use it to fight when necessary.

Fighting in a covered yard, or in a barn... *(an improvisation)*

The RPG spirit of Argad often encourages players to create unusual situations which are often forbidden in other rulesets. It is always possible to improvise and imagine small adaptations of the normal rules... For example in this case:



Cavalry and other mounted cannot ride in a building where the ceiling is at normal height, they must dismount to enter.

This is an unusual situation (*opposite picture*). During a Thirty Years War skirmish, soldiers on foot have retreated in a merchants' hall; the ceiling is high enough, although not practical, to let cavalry attack inside.

If cavalry (or mounted dragoons) decide to enter the

building, or to strike characters inside while staying outside themselves, they will certainly be hampered by the vertical posts, beams, ceiling...

Such a fight can be allowed if we accept they just have to lower their heads; it would be a **very difficult terrain** for all mounted, depriving them from their usual advantages versus infantry.

The scale of miniature buildings is not always accurate, we do not want to measure exactly whether the riders have enough room to raise their sword or not...

The same rule may apply to high arcades and covered passages, medieval halls, large barns, stables, etc.

In this example, the riders have decided to remain mounted, to stay just outside the building, and to draw their pistols to exchange fire with their arquebus-armed foes. The enemies are in contact (or in contact with a narrow wall between them) so nobody has terrain protection from enemy shooting.

A view with the first floor of the house removed:



Painting of figures: É. M.

It is NOT another complication added to the ruleset... it just is a voluntary, and certainly not compulsory, improvised adaptation of the generic system to enjoy the use of a nice terrain element.

Various (optional) armours

The rules may be adapted to some peculiar armour types, if wished.



Left: the front part of the horse of this **sub-Roman cavalryman** is protected by metal armour. The warrior, wearing a coat of scale armour, is considered "armour 4" in the usual rules on foot or mounted.

Optional rule: this barding gives an advantage for charge only, the warrior is considered "armour 5" for the shock vs enemy(ies) facing him. This advantage only exists for the melee phase of the game turn.

His normal move is 36 cm (*instead of 40 cm*).

Right: late 15th century or Renaissance very heavy cavalry or ordinance gendarme.

A man-at-arms in full armour is "armour 5" in the rules. This one, mounting a fully barded horse, can be called **armour 5*** it means that it is superior to an "armour 5" if a melee result is mutual death (or mutual recoil).

He can move 28 cm (*instead of 32 cm*).



Left: cavalry in half-armour (or three-quarters armour) of the early seventeenth century. (*New York Public Library*)

This armour includes metal protection on the upper arms, elbows, and upper legs. It can be called **armour 4***, slightly superior to an "armour 4" in melee. Movement is 36 cm (*instead of 40 cm*).

There is no suggestion of different protections from shooting with these optional armours (it could unbalance the rules, and the tactical use is almost the same as their usual counterpart).

Shooting at mounted opponents close to infantry in a melee

The rules forbid to aim at a precise target inside a group, but shooting at mounted foes mixed with infantry (friendly or enemy) is permitted **at no more than 10 cm range**, even if these mounted are taking part in a melee. If such mounted enemies are close to each other they may be considered a distinct target group at this range.

A **natural double 1** die result (two 1s, or re-rolled) hits a foot character **friend of the shooter** if any is standing near these mounted targets in the same melee.

Napoleonic ...and, broadly, 18th-19th C. updates and suggestions

Heavy cavalry in close order

Late 18th century and 19th century heavy cavalry can form in close order (*alongside a character who stays immobile during the game turn, as infantry in the generic rules*). Its move in close order is **36 cm** in column of twos, **32 cm** in larger column or in line(s). 1D6 cm may be added to the last move of a charge if it could allow to contact the enemy (if too short the charge may still count in the following game turn).

Heavy cavalry has a +1 modifier for charging in close order (*which adds up with the charge bonus, and with the bonus vs infantry if it's the case*) except versus infantry waiting immobile in close order with fixed bayonets.

It is no more in close order (and no more "charging") in the game turn following the shock.



Napoleon's cuirassiers.

Painting and picture: Jean-Jacques Nicomette.

Charge of lancers



Melee tactical modifiers in the rules had originally be conceived for Medieval or Renaissance skirmishes where everyone is well trained with all kinds of spears, but do not fit well with more modern practice and appear unbalanced for Napoleonic and other, later, lancers.

Rules extension update: **cavalry lancers of the 18th, 19th, and 20th C. do not have the +1 modifier for cavalry charge when they are themselves attacked by charging cavalry.** *They may declare a "charge" if it fits with other points of the rules but do not have the modifier against*

enemy cavalry charging them. Also, if they stay in contact in melee, **their lance has no advantage for length in the gaming turns** following the first contact.

Infantry square versus cavalry

Soldiers kneeling in the first rank have a -1 modifier (foot vs cavalry) and a +1 modifier (immobile infantry receiving a cavalry charge with fixed bayonet or staff weapon). Soldiers in the second rank have the same modifiers... or can shoot before contact (they cannot do both with flintlock muskets). A third rank could also fire before shock. A bayonet fixed on a musket is a semi-long weapon. *Casualties caused by artillery could add a negative modifier to shooting (still being tested).*



"Circle" or "fist"

Equivalent to a square for a small handful of soldiers threatened by enemy cavalry. The soldiers regroup, facing all directions. Usual rules for shooting and melee apply normally.

(left: painting and picture Jean-Jacques Nicomette)

Reminder: a result "recoil" in melee, if impossible because surrounded, would cause the surrender or death of the recoiling character.

Infantry attacked by cavalry in open ground without being formed in square (or not in small circle as above) is "in disorder": it loses any bonus and does not benefit from the "rules of many 6es".

MOUNTED INFANTRY

Characters who cannot fight well on horseback, or whose mounts are not trained for war, are called **mounted foot** or **mounted infantry** (even if they can ride well enough). They do not have the advantages of cavalry.

They are not inferior cavalry! They are infantry which can move faster than on foot. It does not prevent some of them to ride quite well for hunting or for sportive activities etc. but at war there do not like to fight mounted, they prefer to dismount.

Mounted infantry can move 36 cm. It cannot shoot in movement mounted (except in some cases when coming to contact) and has a -1 modifier to shoot immobile.

In melee it does not have the advantages of cavalry but suffers almost the same disadvantages as infantry when fighting cavalry. And it cannot charge (it can come in contact and fight but without the +1 bonus for "charge").

"Dragoon" units are originally mounted infantry – although depending on nations and historical periods some may later become true cavalry (and even heavy cavalry).



Right: Dragoon of the mid-18th century (painting by Meissonier). He is armed with a long musket which he would fire dismounted (real cavalry rather have a shorter musketoen or carbine).

Optional idea: angles of bases of mounted infantry and of other mounts unable to "charge" may be rounded for easy recognition during the game.

In a letter to king Louis XIV of France (written from Brest, 15th July 1695) Vauban gives his opinion about the "ban de la noblesse" of Brittany, a mounted militia still existing since medieval times. These local noblemen and their followers probably are good riders for civilian activity, hunting etc. but would be no use in battle if an enemy come ashore (translated from French):

“These regiments of nobility are made of companies, some strong, others weak, some on foot that cannot do better, others mounted on cobs, mares, cart horses and ponies; which, with so less subordination, makes a very bad mix and in my opinion the worst troops in the world, as there is no squadron that could be formed in one hour, or that could walk two hundred paces without breaking. »

Notes