

Extension of Argad generic rules for the second half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century in Europe. It includes reminders of the basic system, reference cards by weapon, some tactical ideas, and the usual 2-pages reference sheet at the end.

You may also have a look at Argad generic rules and at the cavalry generic extension for more explanations and precise examples (*simultaneous movement, difficult terrains, optional shooting during the movement phase, RPG-minded suggestions, etc.*)

Ignore everything you do not need in your games. Texts titled or written in blue are optional or advanced rules or related to peculiar contexts.

The two main characteristics of everyone on the gaming table are their **class** and their **clothing or armour**.

CLASS *(physical training, fighting ability of characters)*

Class 1 : non-combatant.

Class 2 : male or female civilian, villager or peasant, without training, draft soldier or militia, discouraged soldier, straggler or bandit...

Class 3 : trained soldier, experimented brigand, fighter with motivation.

Class 4 : well trained soldier, sergeant or officer, good fighter, noble person well exercised.

Class 5 : exceptional, very well trained fighter; nobility in complete armour.

The class of soldiers may often equal their armour (see below): class 2 or 3 in light clothing, class 4 in armour 4 ou 4, class 5 in armour 5. It helps to identify them during the game and to solve fightings quickly.*

It is sometimes accepted that professional soldiers holding a sword in their hand as only or main weapon are class 4 at least.

Player characters are often class 5, whatever their clothing or armour, for more personality.

Other differences may happen in a scenario or during a campaign: a veteran may become class 4, a bandit or innkeeper or monk could have been a soldier class 4 in earlier life... Characters may also become better fighters in a campaign after glorious feats.

CLOTHING or ARMOUR, ENCUMBRANCE

Light clothing: no protections or almost none (*or surprised in their nightshirt*). Cavalry movement 40 cm, mounted foot 36 cm, on foot 20 cm.

Mounted infantry, or mounted on farm horse: 36 cm. Character carrying a heavy musket or encumbering luggage: 16 cm on foot in light clothing.

Armour 4: breastplate (or chain mail) on the upper body. Cavalry movement 40 cm, mounted infantry 36 cm, on foot 16 cm.

Heavier armour may also be used if wished (not necessarily in small skirmish games):

Armour 4*: half-armour of heavy cuirassier or demilancer (*as armour 4 when shot at, but stronger in melee*). Movement mounted 36 cm, dismounted 16 cm.

Armour 5: complete or almost complete very heavy cuirassier armour. Movement mounted 32 cm, dismounted 12 cm.

Encumbrance is considered when characters carry a heavy object (*movement -4cm*) or very heavy object (*movement -8cm*) or military equipment: musketeers with **heavy muskets** (and forks) are encumbered by their weapon and equipment; in light clothes their movement is 16 cm max.

SIMPLE AND FAST ACTIONS WITH A RPG MIND

The generic system is simple and fast. Players react as they think their characters would do, quickly and spontaneously, with tactical choices that the characters can understand. All movements are simultaneous and by mutual agreement (*see page 9 of generic rules*).



Left: An officer class 4 and a halberdman class 3 see two enemies, one class 4, holding a sword, the other one class 3 with an arquebus. They decide to attack, their player tells it to the opponent. The enemies may wait for them, or run away (all are in light clothing, they can run as fast but a short arquebus fired in movement is less effective).



The enemies say they accept contact, the attackers do not change their mind. If the arquebusier fires (*instead of using his sword*) at the halberdman just before contact, he kills him on a die roll of 5 or 6 (*immobile arquebus firing at short range*). If he does not shoot but takes his sword, the halberd (*longest weapon*) strikes first, the arquebusier strikes afterwards if he still can. *In melee a roll of 4 or more eliminates a class 3 soldier; a roll of 3 forces him to recoil.*

The officer and the other enemy strike each other simultaneously with their sword. They need to roll 5 or more to defeat a class 4 enemy (a roll of 4 forces to recoil). *If they both succeed, the best class, then the best armour, wins. They are same class and with no armour, so the highest natural die that was rolled wins; if equal, both are killed (or both recoil).*

COMMON WEAPONS

Sword or rapier: short weapon. **Knife or dagger:** very short weapon.

Halberd: long weapon, on foot, +1 modifier vs all mounted (*except charging*).

Light thrusting spear, esparton or half-pike: long weapon.

Heavy couched lance: long weapon.

Two-handed sword, two-handed axe: semi-long two-handed weapon wielded on foot, its weight gives +1 in melee (*if there is enough room to wield it*).

Pike: very long weapon, on foot only; *only pikemen already in close order can use it after the first game turn of melee.*

Arquebus (short or long): reloaded in one game turn.

Matchlock musket (on fork): fires on foot, immobile, reloaded in 2 game turns.

Other, older & traditional weapons (bow, light crossbow, throwing spear) or later firearms can appear if wished in some contexts.

Weapon length makes a difference in melee (the length as classified above; not the size of miniature weapons, which can vary between figures).

MOVEMENT

All moves (friends and foes) are simultaneous.

On foot in light clothing	20 cm
On foot with musket and/or breastplate (armour 4) or in female everyday dress or clergy robe	16 cm
Person on foot without physical aptitude	16 cm or 12 cm
Person carrying a heavy or encumbering object	– 4 cm
Person carrying a very heavy, encumbering object	– 8 cm



Cavalry in light clothing or breastplate (armour 4)	40 cm
Cuirassier, demi-lancer (half-armour = armour 4*)	36 cm dismounted 16 cm
Heavy cuirassier (complete armour = armour 5)	32 cm dismounted 12 cm
Mounted infantry, dragoon, or mounting draught horse	36 cm

In **difficult terrain**, 1D6 cm on foot, or 2D6 cm mounted (“slowing dice”) are deduced from the movement. In **very difficult terrain** movement is halved and the result of these dice is then deduced. If the die (on foot) rolls 6, or if the dice (mounted) both roll 6 in difficult terrain or at least a 6 in very difficult terrain, the character or group is blocked before entering it and cannot do anything in the whole game turn.

It cannot be known before entering. A **group** walking together in a same direction does a single, global roll. If crossing different terrains, roll only once.

Reference cards and sheet, mid-16th to mid-17th C.

updated in April 2025 to complete the generic Argad rules.

SHOOTING (reminder of basic rules)

Roll 1D6 for each shot (dice of similar ranged weapons shooting at a same target at same range are rolled together to gain time). When shooting at a group it’s not possible to aim at a single character, casualties are random.

Anyone hit is immediately eliminated (killed, no saving throws). But it’s often accepted that player characters may survive a first wound.

On a same target (isolated character, couple, or group) a double natural 6 equals 6 and 7, a triple natural 6 means 6, 7, 8. A single natural 6 can be re-rolled, if 6 again it becomes 7; rolled again, 8 (...except in “disorder”. See the “rules of many 6es” page 8 of generic rules. Don’t try to get a 8 with a single shot it’s a loss of gaming time ...and you’ll have to reload).

Shooting usually takes place after all movements, before resolving melees. An optional rule allows to shoot before or during movements.

PISTOL wheellock or flintlock

Pistols are useful at short range. They have -1 modifiers when shooting in movement, except when coming in contact on foot (or already in contact). They have no modifier to shoot at armour in contact, on foot or mounted.

Pistols are the only firearm that can shoot in contact with an enemy, or after being in contact with an enemy during the game turn.

pistol	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm
no armour modifier to fire in contact on foot or mounted, –1 modifier to shoot in movement except in contact on foot reloaded in one game turn immobile	5 or + –1 at armour 5 except in contact	7 or + –1 at breastplate or armour

Cavalry or mounted foot who could be contacted by an enemy in the gaming turn are not considered “immobile” to shoot (even if they don’t move) because the riders and mounts feel insecure: their shooting modifier, or inability to shoot, is the same than in movement.

Mounted infantry (not real cavalry) suffer -1 modifiers to fire mounted. They do not fire in movement mounted (optional: it may be allowed with -2 modifiers).

MATCHLOCK MUSKET *with fork*

A matchlock musket with fork and equipment is heavy and reduces movement (-4 cm). *Musketeers in light clothing may move 16 cm.*



Musketeers shoot **on foot, immobile**. A musket is reloaded in two game turns immobile (*it can shoot once in three game turns*).

Musketeers with heavy muskets cannot fire on two ranks. A matchlock musket that has been in contact with an enemy cannot fire the rest of the day.

Shooting muskets at will is not precise but adds a +1 modifier to one of the dice against a same group (add +1 to any die which improves the whole result). It's more effective to shoot in salvo, under command, at a group.

matchlock musket <i>with fork</i>	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm
on foot, immobile, <i>+1 to one die against a group</i> reloaded in two game turns immob.	6 or +	7 or +	(8) or + <i>-1 at breastplate or armour</i>
firing in salvo under command in close order at a group	5 or +	6 or +	7 or + <i>-1 at breastplate or armour</i>

Shooting **in salvo** happens only **against a group** (or against characters partly protected by a building or wall). **The musketeers must be at least three, already in close order** (or on a battlement or behind a solid wall or in a building) and obeying to an officer or NCO.

Optional: *In the second third of the 17th century musketeers may, if needed, get rid of their fork and of part of their equipment and fire their heavy musket without fork. Their shooting range is reduced (same table as lighter muskets next page, but still two turns to reload) but their possible movement is 20 cm. Without fork the first rank may kneel to fire; a second rank with or without fork may fire above their heads.*

ARQUEBUS (*SHORT*)

OR PETRONEL, SMOOTHBORE CARBINE

Short arquebuses and similar weapons can be used on foot or mounted.

Infantry and cavalry can fire in movement with -1 modifiers. Mounted infantry suffers -1 modifiers to fire immobile mounted, and do not fire in movement.

These weapons are reloaded in one game turn immobile.



short arquebus <i>or petronel, smoothbore carbine</i>	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm
on foot or mounted <i>infantry and cavalry can fire in movement with -1 modifier</i> reloaded in one game turn immobile	(short range) 5 or +	(medium range) 6 or +	(long range) 7 or + <i>-1 at breastplate or armour</i>

CALIVER *or long arquebus*

The long arquebus, or caliver, used by infantry is less heavy than a musket. "Wings" of arquebusiers can be placed on each side of large units.

Fires on foot, immobile. One game turn immobile to reload. *Firing mounted, immobile, may be allowed with -1 modifiers.*

long arquebus, caliver	0 - 20 cm	20 - 30 cm	30 - 40 cm
on foot, immobile <i>firing mounted possible, -1 modifier</i> reloaded in one game turn immobile	(short range) 5 or +	(medium range) 6 or +	(long range) 7 or + <i>-1 at breastplate or armour</i>

When "mounted arquebusiers" are mentioned it could mean different kinds of troops: mounted infantry with calivers who usually dismount to fight, or cavalry with shorter arquebuses (see above) able to fight well on horseback.

Other firearms (optional, if needed in a scenario)

LIGHTER MUSKET & FIRELOCK, *snaphaunce, miquelet*

In the 17th century lighter matchlock muskets may be given to dragoon units (who often dismount to fight on foot). The forkless musket replaces the heavy musket by the middle of the century. Early firelocks or flintlocks are also less heavy.

Movement on foot is not encumbered, 20 cm in light clothing.

Fires immobile on foot or mounted, -1 modifier mounted.

dragoon matchlock musket, early firelock (of various design)	0 - 20 cm	20 - 30 cm	30 - 40 cm
fire immobile on foot or mounted, -1 modifier mounted reloaded in two game turns immobile	5 or +	6 or +	7 or + -1 at breastplate or armour

Some dragoon units are real cavalry; others are mounted infantry (depending on historical references) who do not fire in movement mounted. Some dragoons have shorter arquebuses easier to handle than these muskets (see previous page).

Flintlock muskets will reach longer ranges in the end of the 17th century.

RIFLED FIREARMS

Rare and expensive rifled firearms are made by German armourers since the 16th century, not much appreciated for military use but during the Thirty Years War some appear in Imperial armies. Accuracy and range are superior to smoothbore firearms but they take time to reload.

rifled firearms	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm
fire immobile on foot or mounted, -1 modifier mounted reloaded in two game turns immobile	5 or +	6 or +	7 or + -1 at breastplate or armour

Elite shooter : *Elite shooter capacity allows a choice for each shot: add +1 to the die roll or aim at an individual character in a group (not both in a same shot). A player cannot make more than one elite shot in a game turn.*

LIGHT CROSSBOW & VARIOUS BOWS

In the second half of the 16th century light hunting or latchet crossbows, English or Welsh longbows (less effective than in the Middle Ages by lack of training) and weaker traditional bows (in Finland, Ireland...) are still seen in Europe.

A crossbow is reloaded in one game turn immobile. Bows can shoot every game turn. *Modifiers vs armour 4 (breastplate) or 5 apply at any range.*

Bows cannot shoot at long range through a narrow opening (window, arrowslit) they must be in the exterior ("ext.")

	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	
light crossbow -1 at armour 5 -1 to shoot in movement on foot or mounted except if arriving in contact on foot	5 or +	6 or +	20 - 30 cm 7 or +
traditional bow -1 at breastplate, -2 at armour 5 -1 to shoot in movement on foot or mounted	5 or +	6 or +	20 - 40 cm 7 or + ext.

	0 - 20 cm	20 - 30 cm	30 - 40 cm
late 16th C. longbow on foot, immobile -1 at breastplate, -2 at armour 5	5 or +	6 or +	7 or + ext.

More explanations in the medieval "Archery tables" document.

THROWING SPEAR OR JAVELIN

Light throwing spears are still in use in some areas in Europe, on foot or mounted. It can even be thrown from the rear ranks of a group above the heads of their friends, on the rear ranks (not in contact with friends) of an enemy unit. Cavalry is more effective to use them if riding fast towards the target in straight line (2D6 cm at least) before throwing.

throwing javelin	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm
can be thrown immobile or in movement on foot or mounted, no movement modifier	6 or + ext.	
cavalry if 2D6 straight movement on easy terrain	5 or + ext.	6 or + ext.

MELEE *(short reminder of the usual rules)*

Characters fight in contact (*base to base*). The longest weapon strikes before opponent(s): *pike > long weapon > half-long weapon >*

short weapon > very short weapon > bare hands. **Roll 1D6.**

Result (1D6 ± modifiers) exceeds class of enemy: enemy killed (*an optional rules avoids killing each other*). **Result equals class of enemy:** enemy recoils two paces. **Result smaller than class of enemy:** missed. If the enemy wears armour higher than their class (*armour 4 or 4* or 5*) the result must also exceed armour, otherwise this enemy recoils two paces.

A **natural 1 die roll** always misses. A **double natural 6 equals 6 and 7** (*except in disorder*). A **triple natural 6** in melee always hits.

LIGHT THRUSTING SPEAR OR SPONTOON, HALF-PIKE

Long weapon, on foot or mounted.

As other long or half-long weapons it has no length advantage inside a building or to strike through an opening (small door, window...)



Spears can be used on two ranks on foot *above shoulder of friends*, except if the person in the first rank uses the advantages of a two-handed half-long weapon with circular gestures (*two-handed sword, two-handed axe, heavy tool, etc.*). An unit in close order on foot can use spears on three ranks.

Soldiers on foot, trained to do it, can stand immobile to receive a cavalry charge on the point of their weapon. It gives them a +1 modifier in melee (*it nullifies their -1 for infantry vs cavalry*) except if they were in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn.

A light spear may also be thrown as a javelin, but afterwards it is lost.

Left: A "Wilde Irysh man" holding a spear...

Close order formation *on foot (optional rule)*

Close order is formed by trained troops when ordered by an officer. The unit forms in one or more lines, in one game turn, shoulder to shoulder with an **immobile**, recognisable character (officer, ensign, or musician).

Below: these Bavarian pikemen walk to align in contact with their standard-bearer who must stay immobile for the whole game turn. Two arquebusiers, on the left, are probably there to protect the flank.



The bases of the figures stay in close contact thereafter. Other soldiers may join the unit later. Movement must be ordered by an officer: 16 cm in column of twos, 12 cm in larger column or in line, 8 cm sideways or backwards. A column of threes is possible when playing with large units. Moving across difficult terrain immediately breaks formation. Close order is impossible in very difficult terrain.

Soldiers in close order can pivot on their heel (*their base*) once per game turn, class 2 without moving, class 3 (and more) may make a move before or after. An unit may move two paces (*one base length*) or bring a rank just in front or behind the others. Pivoting, walking no more than two paces, or changing ranks, does not forbid to fire or to reload.

Close order is broken at will, or if moving across difficult terrain, or if less than 3 soldiers together, or if attacked on the flank or rear without having time to face the enemy.

HALBERD or bill

Long weapon, wielded on foot. *The advantage of length does not apply inside a building, nor to strike through a door or window, nor if holding something else in the other hand.*

Halberds or bills (as spears) can be used in two ranks (and even three ranks in close order) *except if the person in the first rank uses the advantages of a weapon which needs large circular gestures.*

The halberd has **+1 modifier to strike a mounted character** *...except charging cavalry: against a cavalry charge the soldier must stay immobile and hold the weapon firm to receive the enemy on its point, to get the +1 modifier (suppressing the -1 modifier of foot vs cavalry). However this is not possible if he was in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn.*

BARDICHE, LOCHABER AXE, SPARTH AXE

The bardiche (Eastern Europe) Lochaber axe (Scotland) and sparr axe (Ireland) are **long or semi-long** weapons used on foot.

Exact classification of all variations is not easy and probably not really needed.

For simplicity, those with a **long** staff use the same rules as halberds (above).

The **half-long** ones, needing circular gestures to be most effective, can be treated as heavy two-handed weapons (see below).

Engraving: Russian streletsy with bardiches.

TWO-HANDED SWORD, ESPADON, TWO-HANDED AXE...

Heavy **semi-long** weapons are still in use in the 16th C. and still later in some areas of Europe. They have a **+1 modifier** in melee because of their weight, but need large gestures impossible in interior or in close order.

This advantage usually forbids the soldiers behind to strike above the wielder with a spear or halberd. However some semi-long axes with a sharp point may be used against cavalry charges, standing still with no ample gesture as above.



PIKE

Pikes are **very long weapons** used by infantry units in close order. They strike before all other melee weapons.

A pikeman who has been in contact of an enemy in the previous game turn, not in close order, loses the length advantage and must use his short weapon (*till he goes at some distance for a full game turn*).

An unit in close order fights with all its ranks of pikes, striking at the same time against enemies in contact with its first rank.

Immobile pikemen receive cavalry charges with +1 modifier (*which nullifies their -1 modifier of foot vs cavalry*) *except if they were in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn.*

An unit in close order can fight on different dices or in square... if the soldiers had time to pivot to face their enemies. Beware of flank attacks: pikemen in close order can pivot only once in a game turn (see close order rules). If they cannot pivot in time, only those in contact with the enemy can use their pike and only in the first game turn of melee, close order of the whole unit is broken and the unit is in disorder.

These rules also apply to Japanese pikemen of the same period.

Obvious limitations of half-long or long weapons

Long and semi-long weapons lose their length advantage, and heavy semi-long weapons lose their +1 modifier, inside a building or if striking through a narrow opening, door or window, or holding something in the other hand, or climbing... Suppose that the fighter uses it simply as a short weapon or take their short weapon instead.

Half-long heavy weapons, if a fighter uses their advantages, forbid friends in the second rank and third ranks to strike with a spear or halberd (or equivalent) above the shoulder of the person wielding them.

Less common weapons can be ignored for simple games.

Cavalry & mounted infantry

Cavalry has +1 modifier in melee vs infantry or vs mounted infantry
(except in difficult or very difficult terrain for cavalry).

Infantry, and mounted infantry, has -1 modifier in melee vs cavalry
(except in very difficult terrain for cavalry).

Mounted infantry is not real cavalry, they are not trained to fight mounted and/or are riding untrained horses. They are not cavalry of inferior quality, they are infantry able to travel fast. They cannot charge (when in contact they fight without +1 charge modifiers). They have no advantage vs infantry in melee.

Mounted infantry suffers a -1 modifier to fire mounted (if their weapon allows to fire mounted). They do not usually fire in movement mounted (optional: in case of emergency they may be allowed to fire in movement mounted, not very effectively, with -2 modifiers).

Cavalry or mounted infantry at risk of being in contact with an enemy during the game turn is not really "immobile" to fire (even if they do not move: the riders and their horses are worried by the situation) they suffer the same modifier (or inability) than for firing in movement. However they may try to reload, it will be effective if contact doesn't actually happen in the game turn.

HEAVY COUCHED LANCE

The heavy lance is a **long weapon**, similar to the medieval knights' couched lance. It is used in the 16th century by very heavy and well-trained cavalry (*demi-lancers in armour 4**, *cuirassiers-lancers in armour 5*).

It has a +1 modifier when charging in melee, added to the usual +1 modifier for charging cavalry (also added to +1 of cavalry vs foot if it's the case, this means +3 vs infantry ...but in a period where black powder weapons become effective against armour coming at short range).

It is only used for direct charges. A rider holding a heavy lance, in contact with an enemy and not charging, must drop it and take his sword, the lance is then lost.

A heavy lance can be cut and shortened in one game turn by a character on foot, it becomes a light thrusting spear.

CAVALRY CHARGE (reminder of rules to avoid silly situations)

A charge adds +1 to the melee dice of cavalry. It needs to ride in easy terrain in straight line before contact for at least 2D6 cm (it is rarely necessary to verify this, roll 2D6 to make sure if very close; players cannot change their mind after rolling these dice). Cavalry crossing difficult terrains, and mounted infantry, cannot charge.

Cavalry in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn, or who charged in the previous game turn, do not benefit from the +1 charge modifier (a well-known tactic is to quit the melee after a charge, regroup, and charge again in another game turn).

Charging cavalry must say which enemy (or enemy group) they want to charge. The enemies can decide to move away or to stay immobile; other opponents may advance to replace them and receive the charge if they have enough movement ability.

For example, foot lancers 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, or let the lancers strike first.

Cavalrymen killed by shot during a charge can be replaced in the fight by those coming behind them, but without +1 charge modifiers (...because their corpses fall in the way...)

Trained foot soldiers receiving immobile a cavalry charge **on the point of their pike, spear, halberd** (or *bardiche, Lochaber axe*) have +1 modifiers in melee (which nullifies their -1 for foot vs cavalry) except if they were in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn.

Charging riders can only be hit during the same game turn by the character they contact; by fighters on foot with long or half-long staff weapons standing behind this character (if on foot); and by enemy cavalry able to counter-charge.

Other opponents have no time to interfere against charging cavalry. For example, it is forbidden to send pedestrians around a rider charging in the game turn, they must wait till the next game turn (if the rider stays there).

Characters attacked by charging cavalry can only be struck, in the same game turn, by other mounted and no-one else (other opponents cannot strike the charged person, the charge would knock them away too, even if they were already in contact before).

MELEE *(reminder of the generic rules)*

Characters fight in contact (*base to base*). The longest weapon strikes before its opponent(s), weapons of same length strike simultaneously (*length as classified by the rules, not their miniature size*).

pike > long weapon > half-long weapon > short weapon > very short weapon > bare hands

It makes a difference but should not encourage to give longer weapons to everyone. Characters and units have the weapon(s) they need historically. All soldiers or warriors also have at least a short weapon (sword, rapier...) and almost all civilians have a knife or tool.

For formal duelling on foot between noble characters, it may be accepted that their weapons have a same length (swords or rapiers), whatever is held in hand by the figures.

Characters **class 2** and/or using a **tool** or **improvised weapon** or their **bare hands** have -1 modifier to the melee die. Striking with bare hands is not lethal, the victim is stunned one game turn on the ground.

SOME LIMITATIONS

Semi-long and long weapons, and pikes, have no length advantage in a building (*except very large church, hall or barn, etc.*) nor to attack or defend a door or window; heavy two-handed weapons also lose their weight modifier in such situation (fighters cannot make large gestures or prefer to take their sword).

A **lancer or halberdman in a second rank** can strike above the shoulder of a friend in the first rank, except if this friend wields a heavy two-handed weapon (*two-handed sword or axe, heavy tool... but this friend may limit their gesture, losing the advantage for length or weight*). These two-handed heavy weapons cannot be used from a second rank.

A **lancer, halberdman or pikeman in the third rank** can only strike above friends if the unit is formed in **close order** (*it needs good training; pikes can strike in more ranks*). If not formed in close order, **pikemen** lose their length advantage after a first game turn of melee.



Battle for a low wall. Fighters on foot have +1 in melee to strike an enemy attacking them through this linear obstacle (but if an enemy comes to fire in contact just above this low obstacle there is no protection from this shooting).

RESOLUTION OF THE MELEE *(fighting in contact)*

Fights are resolved one by one. Roll 1D6 (*a six-sided die*) for each character striking someone. *If more than one enemy is in contact, tell which one you strike.*

Result (1D6 ± modifiers if any) **exceeds class** of enemy: hit, this enemy is out of action (*eliminated, "killed" and removed from game*). No saving throws.

Result (1D6 ± modifiers if any) **equals class of enemy**: this enemy recoils two paces (*the length of their individual base; if impossible, enemy is killed or surrenders*).

Result (1D6 ± modifiers if any) **smaller than class of enemy**: missed.

If the enemy wears **armour higher than their class**, the result must also **exceed their armour** to hit, otherwise this enemy recoils two paces.

Natural 1 die roll: missed (*even with good modifiers*). **Double natural 6 = 7** (*except in disorder*). **Triple natural 6** in melee always hits (*even with bad modifiers*).

*When two opponents roll simultaneously a "kill" (or "recoil") result, only the **higher class** one kills their enemy (or forces enemy to recoil). If same class, the **highest armour** kills enemy (or forces enemy to recoil). If same class and armour, the **highest natural die** rolled for this fight kills the enemy (or forces enemy to recoil). If all this is still equal, the **highest total of modifiers** wins. If all this doesn't work, they both die (or both recoil).*

See generic rules pages 25-31 for all details about melee resolution.



A group of Spanish soldiers in loose order: officers in breastplate with sword, halberdmen in light clothing or breastplate, and two or three men with firearms.

Such a group is easy to handle and sufficient to block the road for some time if not outnumbered. Halberds are long weapons feared by infantry and by cavalry; muskets in loose order or arquebuses, standing just behind, may cause casualties at short distance.

BASIC TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Conflicts of this period can inspire ideas of adventures, enquiries, skirmishes between small troops... Begin with the most common weapons, and later, if wished, add variety with more figures when the game system is well understood.

Fighting tactics of the time, even in small skirmishes, ally firearms (matchlock muskets, arquebuses, pistols) and long melee weapons (halberds, pike, some cavalry lances still present in the 16th century)...

Matchlock muskets can be effective at a distance but are encumbering and long to reload, they must be positioned in the right place. Arquebuses and similar firearms are easier to handle, useful for fast actions in the hands of cavalry or foot skirmishers shooting at short range, or for fire exchanges when the need arises to reload fast (*one game turn immobile*). Pistols, fired very close or in contact, are appreciated by characters who can own one.

It is often accepted that player characters are very good fighters (*class 5*) and are not killed by their first wound; other members of a same troop may have different characteristics or skills. It is important to use the best abilities of everyone; player characters often prefer to enter the fight themselves only when the situation needs it. There is no much danger at long distance from the enemies, but when they come closer, casualties happen fast!

For easy identification during the game it is often admitted that firearms with a fork are heavy muskets, those without fork are lighter arquebuses or calivers or lighter muskets.

See also the classical (but optional) manoeuvres of units in close order formation.

All reference cards and sheets are fully compatible with other extensions of the rules, it is possible to mix historical contexts or to fight fantasy creatures with the same characters and soldiers.

WOUND HEALING: A character hit in shooting or melee is usually removed from the game. However, in some cases (*important NPC whose survival or testimony could be useful, or faithful henchmen of a player character, etc.*) we may suppose that perhaps this person is only stunned or unconscious. Other characters may try a healing attempt on the spot, or carry them elsewhere... **Roll 1D6:**

*Health of characters may equal their class if it was not mentioned before. **Die roll smaller than health** of character: still alive and will heal later (not the same day in historical games). **Die roll equals health** of character: will heal but with sequelae. **Die roll exceeds health**: the character is already dead, or dies ...without talking. A qualified healer (herborist, village healer, doctor, surgeon) in contact with the wounded adds +1 to their health (not to the die roll!) during the test. Bad or poor conditions of hygiene and awkward handling (healing on the battlefield, mud and dirt...) reduce health, -1 during test. Sequelae can depend on wound localisation (1D12) and/or are decided at random (handicap, or definitive loss of one point of health, etc.)*

It is often accepted that player characters (one character per player) have “two life points”: they survive their first wound. They may ask to be healed after a first wound same rule as above, including sequelae but not death. Healing will not be effective in the same day. If it fails, a better healer or doctor may be found after the game.



Caracole tactic: cavalry comes to shoot in movement at short range with pistol or arquebus, then rides away, stops one game turn at some distance to reload, comes back to shoot again...

It's a great risk if their enemy holds firm and shoots back (shooting in movement is less effective, at short range they need to roll 6, their immobile foe needs 5 or more) but it can be a real nuisance for an enemy with less firearms or who walks on foot and has no time to reload (gaming this also helps to understand the simultaneous, fast movement system).

Painting and terrain E.M., P.M., D.F.



The capture of important persons to exchange for a ransom, or to keep as hostages, is common practice. It can inspire scenarios and missions, attempts to capture or to free someone, and sometimes it saves the life of player characters surrounded by their enemies.

Painting and terrain E.M., E.A., P.M.

EXCEPTIONAL STRIKE: *Very swift fencers (often player characters or NPC) may have a special advantage or obtain better abilities with a long training or after renowned feats. It should be rare.*

- rapier and dagger: if the rapier misses, the character tries too strike with the dagger (very short weapon) in the same turn.
- try to strike twice in the melee phase (roll 2D6) with sword or dagger against one enemy, only the best die may hit.
- strike twice in the melee phase (roll 2D6) with sword or dagger against one or two enemies, both dice may hit.
- strike with a sword or rapier as fast as half-long weapons, or with a dagger or knife as fast as swords (one single die).

Very exceptional characters from novels or movies (Cyrano, D'Artagnan...) can strike thrice (roll 3D6) with their sword against one or more enemies, all dice may hit.

Ancient drawing: D'Artagnan and the Three musketeers

A rare, very strong, character (best represented by a slightly larger figure) can have a +1 modifier, on foot, to strike in melee. A same character cannot be "very swift" and "very strong".



A TASTE OF SUPERNATURAL *in historical context*

It may be true, or an illusion, or a dream... Characters believe in the supernatural and in witches anyway.



Is this beheaded shape a real ghost? Or, is the player character dreaming at night during an adventure? Or, is it a thief or a prankster costumed to scare people? If someone dares to come near him we shall perhaps know the truth...



A witch flies away on her broom! Is she real? Should we fire? A -1 modifier to shoot at flying creatures probably applies, and perhaps -1 again if she has a magical protection...

PIKES AND MUSKETS

Infantry units in close order, armed with muskets or pikes, are typical of the large battles of the period. Their basic manoeuvres can be recreated with small groups of figures and the same combat rules. *Characters still fight one by one, every figure still is an individual person, but these units can form and walk in close order as in large battles.*

Left of picture: all ranks of a pikemen unit in close order can strike (when not in close order only the first rank can strike, and only in the first turn of contact, then they must use their sword).



Right of picture: heavy muskets firing in salvo, in close order and commanded by an officer, are more effective than individually (in both case they can shoot only one rank deep).

If not firing in salvo they must roll 6 to hit at short range, 7 at medium range, 8 at long range; and if shooting at a group add +1 automatically to the result of one of the dice (for example to change a 5 in 6, only once per player per game turn).

When shooting in salvo under command of an officer, in close order (or from a building or solid entrenchment) they need to roll 5 or 6 to hit at short range, 6 at medium range, 7 at long range (as most other weapons but at longer distances). A 7 (double natural 6) is not rare to obtain when more than one or two soldiers fire at the same time (close order needs at least three soldiers to exist).

See next page the rules of formation, movement and manoeuvre in close order.

ADVANCED TACTICAL SUGGESTION: UNITS IN CLOSE ORDER

The close order optional rule gives the visual impression of actions and manoeuvres of large units with a same number of figures and with the same game system (*one figure is still one soldier, fighting is still done one by one, other characters may still act individually or in loose groups as usual*). Muskets shooting in salvo are more effective. Pikes can be used offensively but have a more defensive role, especially against cavalry.

CLOSE ORDER FORMATION ON FOOT (*optional rule, units of three soldiers or more, pages 43-44 of the generic rules*)

Close order formation is formed when ordered by an officer. The unit forms on one or more lines, in one game turn, shoulder to shoulder with an immobile, recognisable character (officer, ensign, or musician). It is broken at will, or if moving across difficult terrain, or if less than 3 soldiers, or if attacked on the flank or rear without having time to face the enemy (or to form a square of pikes).

Movement in close order on foot: 16 cm in column of twos, 12 cm in larger column or in line, 8 cm sideways or backwards. A column of threes is possible when playing with large units. Moving across difficult terrain immediately breaks formation. Close order is impossible in very difficult terrain.

Soldiers in close order can **pivot** on their heel (their base) **once per game turn**, class 2 without moving, class 3 (and more) may make a move before or after. An unit may also move two paces (one own base length) or bring a rank just in front or behind the others. Pivoting, walking no more than two paces, or changing ranks, does not forbid to fire or to reload. *Soldiers of a same unit may fight in different directions or form a square, but they always need to be able to pivot.*

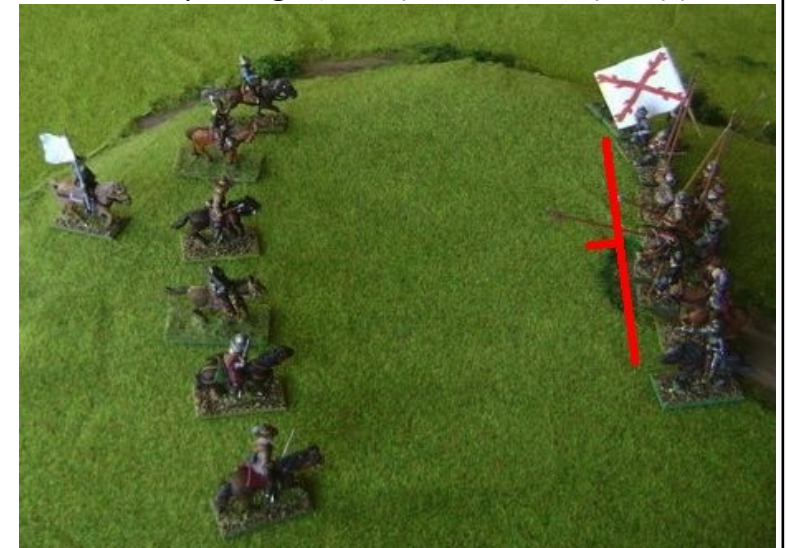
Below: a small column of Imperial pikemen, accompanied by other characters, walks on two files in close order towards left of picture. Enemy cavalry appears near the village. Next picture: every pikeman does a ¼ turn (all figures pivot on their base). The column becomes a double line facing the enemy.



What will happen next (in simultaneous moves) is quickly discussed between the players:

If the cavalry charges, it will face two ranks of pikes (very long weapons). The pikemen have +1 in melee if they stand immobile to receive a cavalry charge (it nullifies the -1 modifier of foot vs cavalry). The riders will probably prefer to shoot at close range without coming in contact.

In another game turn, if the pikemen say they pivot again to walk in column, the cavalry could threaten to charge immediately. The pikemen cannot pivot twice in a game turn: only those contacted could fight on the flank, having moved, breaking close order. To avoid that, the pikemen have no other choice than to stay where they are (or to walk slowly in line).



BUDGET (optional). *Not often used, our RPG-minded adventures and skirmishes do not need real equality and the spirit of the game is not to prepare competitive army lists. These basic costs do no take into account differences in technological development, if there is any the cost of the more advanced may be doubled or tripled.*

Basic cost (in budget points) equals class. **Officer, sergeant, or musician:** twice their class.

Cavalry character on warhorse: twice their class. Thus, cost of a cavalry officer or cavalry musician: thrice his class.

Pistol 4 points. **Arquebus** (short or long) 4 points. **Matchlock musket on fork** 6 points. **Lighter matchlock or early flintlock musket** 6 points.

Light spear 2 points. **Halberd** 3 points. **Bardiche or half-long Lochaber axe** 2 points, **long** 3 points. **Sparth axe** 2 points. **Heavy cavalry lance** 3 points.

Pike 2 points (close order training included). **Two-handed sword or two-handed axe** 2 points. **Half-long tool** 1/2 point, **half-long heavy tool** 1 point.

Armour 4 1 pt. **Armour 4*** 2 pts. **Armour 5** 3 pts. **Hunting crossbow** 2 pts, **longbow** 4 pts, **weaker bow** 2 pts, **javelins** 1 pt for 3 (only two if also carrying a spear).

All fighters class 3 and above have a **short weapon** free (sword, rapier, small axe, mace, or equivalent) even if it does not appear on the figure. Villagers and civilians often have a **very short weapon** gratuite (knife) or a short tool.

Draft horse: 2 points. **Warhorse** in reserve: cost equals class of probable owner (mounting an inferior horse would reduce melee class to the cost of the horse).

LARGE FANTASY CREATURES SKIN PROTECTION AGAINST LATE 16TH C. & EARLY 17TH C. FIREARMS

Argad historical is compatible with Argad fantasy, it is possible to fire matchlock muskets at Ogres, some Goblins could perhaps be provided with arquebuses... The thick skin and fat of large monsters gives them a better armour, this is called protection **skin + armour** (if any) or **equivalent armour**. This protection appears in the fantasy extensions.

To keep things simple, if the total skin + armour exceeds armour 5, **each armour level exceeding 5 adds -1 protection** against all ranged weapons. To avoid too many calculations during the game this table reminds the result to hit at all ranges of the weapons. Black powder weapons are dangerous at close range, less at long range.

	range	equivalent skin + armour = 4	equivalent skin + armour = 5	equivalent skin + armour = 6	equivalent skin + armour = 7
pistol	short 0 - 10 cm	5 +	6 + (5 + in contact)	7 + (6 + in contact)	8 + (7 + in contact)
	long 10 - 20 cm	8 +	8 +	9 +	10 +
short arquebus, petronel, smoothbore carbine	short 0 - 10 cm	5 +	5 +	6 +	7 +
	medium 10 - 20 cm	6 +	7 +	8 +	9 +
	long 20 - 40 cm	8 +	8 +	9 +	10 +
matchlock musket <i>in blue: firing in salvo in close order under command</i>	short 0 - 20 cm	6 + / 5 +	6 + / 5 +	7 ou + / 6 ou +	8 + / 7 +
	medium 20 - 40 cm	7 + / 6 +	7 + / 6 +	8 ou + / 7 ou +	9 + / 8 +
	long 40 - 60 cm	9 + / 8 +	9 + / 8 +	10 ou + / 9 ou +	11 + / 10 +
long arquebus, caliver, dragoon musket, first flintlocks (17th C.)	short 0 - 20 cm	5 +	5 +	6 +	7 +
	medium 20 - 30 cm	6 +	7 + / 6 +	8 + / 7 +	9 + / 8 +
	long 30 - 40 cm	8 +	8 +	9 +	10 +

« Argad ! »

MID-16TH CENTURY TO MID-17TH CENTURY

reference sheet, updated April 2025

MOVEMENT	light clothing	heavy or encumbered: breastplate and/or musket	half-armour 4* (demi-lancer)	armour 5 (complete armour)	“slowing dice”	In difficult terrain movement is reduced by one die (foot) or two dice (mounted). In very difficult terrain movement is halved, and dice result then deduced from it (foot -1D6, mounted -2D6 cm). A die roll of 6 (on foot), or (mounted) of 6 on both dice in difficult terrain or at least one 6 in very difficult terrain blocks the character or group for the whole game turn.
on foot	20 cm	16 cm	(dismounted) 16 cm	(dismounted) 12 cm	-1D6 cm	
cavalry	40 cm	(breastplate) 40 cm	36 cm	32 cm	-2D6 cm	
mounted infantry, dragoon	36 cm	36 cm	—	—	-2D6 cm	
character mounted on farm horse or draught horse: 32 cm					-2D6 cm	

Foot soldiers in **close order**: column of twos 16 cm, larger column or line 12 cm, backwards or sideways 8 cm (turning and manoeuvre may depend on class).

TERRAIN	foot	cavalry or mounted infantry	protect. from shooting	cannot be shot at?
bushes, high crops	difficult (- 1D6 cm)	difficult (- 2D6 cm)	-1 (target on foot)	if crouched immobile and doing nothing
woods, forest	difficult (- 1D6 cm)	very difficult (½ move, - 2D6 cm)	-1 if less than 10 cm /	if more than 10 cm of forest width

FIREARMS		reloaded in	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm
pistol	no armour modifier to fire in contact on foot or mounted, -1 modifier to fire in movement except in contact on foot	one game turn immobile	5 - 6 -1 at armour 5 except in contact	7 -1 at armour 4, 5	—
short arquebus & petronel, carbine	cavalry can fire in movement with -1 modifier, foot in movement at close range only with -1 modifier		5 - 6	6 -1 at armour 5	7 -1 at armour 4, 5

long arquebus, caliver	must shoot immobile and on foot	reloaded in	0 - 20 cm	20 - 30 cm	30 - 40 cm
		one game turn immobile	5 - 6	6 -1 at armour 5	7 -1 at armour 4, 5

matchlock musket	must shoot immobile and on foot +1 to one die when shooting at a group	reloaded in	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm
		2 game turns immobile	6	7	(8) -1 at armour 4, 5
	unit in close order firing in salvo, on command, at a group		5 - 6	6	7 -1 at armour 4, 5

It takes a whole game turn to reload a **pistol** or **arquebus** (and another game turn to shoot), two game turns to reload a **matchlock musket** (and a third game turn to shoot).

Characters in contact with enemy at beginning of a game turn cannot shoot in the turn (except pistols). **Pistols** have no movement nor armour modifier in contact **on foot**.

Firing in salvo is done in close order (or from a building or entrenchment) under command. A matchlock musket having been in melee cannot fire for the day.

Mounted infantry have -1 modifier to shoot immobile mounted (if their weapon allows) and usually do not fire in movement (only in exceptional situations, with -2 modifier).

Cavalry or mounted infantry who could be contacted by an enemy in the gaming turn are not really “immobile” (even if they don’t move) they are supposed in movement because the riders and their mounts are worried and insecure. They suffer the same modifier (or inability) to shoot than in movement. However they may try to reload.

SHOOTING MODIFIERS

Modifiers caused by terrain

Modifiers "caused by terrain" do not add up together

target on foot and can be seen behind cover : wall, earthen bank, bushes, large opening in a wall, window, battlement, etc. and/or target swimming in water, or target behind 0-10 cm of (rather dense) forest (except mounted characters in forest edge)	- 1
or target on foot behind a narrow opening in a strong wall or protection	- 2

Modifiers caused by target

Total of modifiers "caused by terrain" + "caused by target" cannot be worse than -2

firearm shooting at target wearing breastplate or armour (armour 4, 4*, or 5) depending on range (see firearm table)	- 1
"furtive" target (moving target, hidden or in contact with friend of the shooter at the beginning and at the end of the game turn)	- 1

Modifiers caused by shooter

Modifiers separated by "or, and/or" in a same cell do not add up together

infantry or cavalry firing in movement with pistol (except infantry firing in contact or just before contact) or infantry or cavalry firing in movement with short arquebus , petronel, caliver and/or "furtive" shooter (appearing during a short time, shoots in movement, and disappears farther away)	- 1
mounted infantry firing mounted (only immobile, they do not fire in movement mounted, or exceptionally with -2) and/or character class 1 or 2 shooting with firearm	- 1

MELEE MODIFIERS

improvised weapon , tool used as weapon, firearm butt... and/or character class 2	- 1	heavy tool used with both hands: -1+1=0
heavy two-handed weapon (large sword or axe, or bardiche) with both hands, on foot (not inside a building or in close order)	+ 1	
foot vs enemy who strikes through a linear obstacle (earthen bank, low wall, door, line of stakes, battlements, etc.)	+ 1	
character vs enemy on higher ground (hard slope, earthen bank, stairs, battlements, etc.)	- 1	
cavalry vs foot (or vs mounted infantry) (except in difficult or very difficult terrain for cavalry)	+ 1	
foot vs cavalry (or mounted infantry vs cavalry) (except in a very difficult terrain for cavalry)	- 1	
foot with halberd or bill vs any mounted enemy (except vs cavalry who charges them: see bottom line)	+ 1	
cavalry charging (needs to ride 2D6 cm in straight line before contact, impossible in difficult or very difficult terrain) + man-at-arms, demilancer or cuirassier charging with heavy couched lance	+ 1 +1 (total: + 2)	
immobile foot soldier with spear, pike, halberd, bill, spontoon , etc., vs cavalry who charges them directly (if trained) (except if this soldier was in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn)	+ 1	

Pikes strike before all other melee weapons, but if not in close order the pikeman must fight with his sword (short weapon) after the first melee turn.