

IRON STARS

GROUND COMBAT RULES

These rules are optional and intentionally abstract. They are also quite unofficial. Iron Stars is primarily a game of ethershhip combat and should remain rightly so. However, it is recognized that there are those times when ground combat is desired or even necessary for the particular scenario at hand.

Mapping

Unlike most ground combat games, a square mat or map grid is used when utilizing these rules. This allows for simplified movement and the use of standard graph paper if desired instead of a table sized mat. Some preparation of the map grid is required, especially if using an ambush scenario or 'fog of war' movement. This simply involves establishing the grid numbers and/or letters along the margins of the map page. There is no set scale for each square.

Unit Size & Type

Each ground unit is assumed to be platoon-sized and fills a particular role in the battle. The typical unit types are, but not limited to, those that follow;

Skirmishers	A lightly geared, fast moving force of infantry suited for scouting and fast flanking maneuvers.
Standard Infantry	Geared with standard arms and equipment, these are the line troops.
Heavy Infantry	These troops still have some armor held over from earlier eras as part of their uniforms and/or are equipped with heavier armaments than a typical infantry unit.
Artillery	Be it cannon, mortars, or lightening projectors this unit is slow, lightly defended, but able to wreke pain and doom upon other units at range.
Mechanized	This unit is composed of vehicle mounted armor and weapons. Well armed and defended, like artillery it is able to inflict harm at range. It is also more mobile than other units.
Command	This unit provides forward control of the "army" under your command. Each command unit has a rating of 1-6 (randomly rolled) which is used as described below.
Bunker	This is the term for a fixed fortification of some sort housing a single unit of an above type. When a unit is within a bunker it uses the bunker defense die. Bunkers may not be transported as units by ships.

Each unit has a movement rate, attack die, defense die, and range rating assigned to it. Each value will be discussed in the following sections, including modifications for technical/quality advantages or disadvantages. The table below provides the basic ratings.

Unit Type	Attack/Defense	Range	Movement	SU Cost
Skirmishers	d4 / d4	1	2	4
Standard Infantry	d6 / d4	1	1	5
Heavy Infantry	d8 / d4	2	1	8
Artillery	d10 / d6	6	1	15
Mechanized	d8 / d8	4	3	20
Command	d4 / d6	1	1	7
Bunker	by unit/ d10	by unit	none	N/A

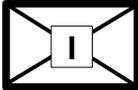
Movement

All movement is simultaneous and based on the orders issued by the player at the start of the turn. Each unit has a movement rate assigned to it based upon type. This rate is equal to the number of squares the unit may normally move per turn. This rate may be affected by terrain type, if used, whose effects are summarized in the table below.

Terrain Type	Movement Penalty
Clear	None
Rough (rocky, desert, forest)	-1 (infantry ignores)
Difficult (swamp, cliffs)	-2 / -1 for infantry
Water (lakes and oceans)	Impassable

Orders (Initiative)

At the start of each turn, the army commander (player) assigns movement orders to each of his units on a separate piece of paper. The format for these orders is quite simple, direction followed by number of spaces moved.

FL	F	FR
L		R
RL	R	RR

So if the infantry unit in the example were to move forward, the orders would be written F1. If it were to go forward and left, then the orders would be FL1.

Range

Range is the number of squares that the unit may fire. When a range of one (1) is given, it is essentially the immediately adjacent square (this includes the diagonal).

Attack/ Defense

The attack die and defense die are the relative values of the unit for relative effectiveness of its offensive and defensive capabilities.

Prepared Defenses

At times, an attacker or defender may have time to prepare defenses for themselves such as trenches, short sandbag walls, hedgerow walls, stone fences, stacks of packing crates, or the like that provide some solid protection short of a fortified bunker. When a unit is fighting from such a position, they may add +2 bonus to their defense rating temporarily. Since this is a temporary bonus, it does not add into the unit point value and is lost should the unit move away from the position.

Combat

When units are within range and have a valid enemy target, they may attack. If a Command unit is on the board, the player may spend a command point to have his attacking unit attack and resolve effects first. Otherwise, the results of all attacks are considered to be simultaneous.

Combat is conducted by the attacker and defender rolling the appropriate die as indicated by the unit attack and defense ratings. If the attack roll is higher than the defense roll, then the target unit has been eliminated and is removed from play. If the defense roll is higher than the attack roll, then the defending unit has survived. It is possible for both units to kill each other in combat during the same turn.

Technical or Quality Advantages

When the quality of troops or the technical level of their equipment is off average (as is usually the case) then a modifier of +/-1 to 4 is applied to the die ratings. This modifier would be added or subtracted to each die roll as appropriate.

Using the British and the Spaniards as examples, the British are well trained and well equipped, so their units might have a +2 modifier to their Attack and Defense Dice. Using a standard infantry unit, it would be recorded as d6+2 / d4+2. The Spaniards are poorly trained and poorly equipped, so their units might have a -2 modifier to their Attack and Defense Dice, recorded for standard infantry as d6-2 / d4-2.

Command Rating

Command units have a command rating of 1-6, which is established by a random d6 roll. This rating may be used during the game to give attacking units “the advantage” when attacking. This advantage means that the attacker conducts and applies the effects of their attack against the target before the target can return fire. Using a command point this way reduces the Command unit rating by one.

If the player with the target unit elects to spend a command point on the defending unit, then the advantage gained by the attacker is neutralized and combat is resolved simultaneously as normal.

A command point may also be used to grant any one infantry or mechanized unit a single square of reaction movement at the end of the movement phase. This movement may be prohibited by terrain if the players are utilizing the option.

Each command point used reduces the command rating of the Command Unit by one. When/ if the Command rating is reduced to zero, then the command unit is effectively expended for the remainder of the battle.

No command unit may spend more than a single command point per turn. If a player controls multiple command units on the board during the battle, then each unit may spend a point during the same turn if so desired.

SU Cost

When embarked upon a space vessel with troop transport capabilities, they take up an assigned value of Space Units (SU) as indicated on the rating table above. (This is an adjusted value based on the Boarding Party cost for a platoon as shown on pg 73 of *The Southern Front*.)

Point Values

Freighters are typically used to transport ground units from destination to destination. As such, their point values do not add anything to the ship CPV transporting them.

Ground Unit Point Values, or GPV, are based solely upon their relationship with other ground units.

Point Values can be generally based by unit. However, new unit types may be desired or modifiers applied. For that, a point value formula is required. The GPV formula is;

GPV= the square root of (Attack die max +/- modifier x Defense die max +/- modifier) x (Range + Movement + Command Rating)

So our earlier example of a British Infantry Unit with d6+2 / d4+2, range 1, movement 2 would have a GPV equal to;

the square root of [(6+2) x (4+2)] x (1+1+0)= 9.79, round up to 10

