

Random War of the Spanish Succession Battles



Duke of Marlborough



Louis XIV

The following is a basic system to allow players to fight a generic War of the Spanish Succession battle in random armies. It is always better to base an army or battle on a real army or event but that is not always possible. The idea behind this document is to generate generic French and Anglo Dutch armies from Flanders in the mid period of the war. Usually the game will be an attack/defence game with the French and their allies defending.

The players decide how many commands they will use. The minimum is 2 and both sides should have the same number. A command is a random number of units but on average will be 6 or 7 units. The table should be about 8 base widths wide per command used. So if using 60mm as your base width you would use the following table sizes as a rough guide.

Commands	Metric	Imperial
2	96 cm	38" or 3' 2"
3	144 cm	57" or 4' 9"
4	192 cm	76" or 6' 4"
5	240 cm	96" or 8'
6	288 cm	115" or 9' 6"

In general it is best to round the above up or down to a convenient size. In general it is best to round down but if a lot of terrain is being used or the commands are exceptionally large then you can round up.

Table depth is not important generally and the armies should deploy within bombardment range of each other.

In a standard attack/defence game the defender should be give something to defend. This could be a river line, some villages and/or a ridge, etc. One flank will usually be covered by some blocking terrain and often the other flank at least partially so. There could also be some fortified positions. As a rule of thumb use enough fortifications for 1 unit for each Infantry or Mixed Infantry command the defender has.

The defender deploys first. They should be well into the table, up to half way across the table. Then the attacker deploys and at least the front line units should be within bombardment range of the enemy.

Commands:

The size of a command is usually the score of an Average dice plus 3, so 5 to 8 units.

The players may use modifiers to the above to reflect the kind of game they wish to fight. If the battle is an encounter battle the French should receive a +1 modifier. The French would get a +2 if they attack in an attack/defence game. If the defender has extensive fortification (a small number of fortifications are fine, this is just if a lot are used) they could receive a -1 or -2 modifier.

The players must decide if a command is an Infantry command or a Cavalry command. In each case they can choose to have the command with some of the other type, a Mixed Infantry or Mixed Cavalry command. A Mixed Infantry command will be mainly infantry with some cavalry and vice versa for a Mixed Cavalry command. A Mixed command must have 1 unit of the other type and can have up to 49% (i.e. less than half of the units) of the units of the second type. Therefore, a Mixed Infantry command with 7 units must have 1 cavalry unit and can have up to 3. A Mixed Infantry command with 6 units would have 1 or 2 cavalry units, it could not have 3 units as that is 50% of the available units.

An army must have at least 2 Infantry and 2 Cavalry commands, Mixed commands count as both Infantry and Cavalry. This means an army with 2 commands must have 2 mixed commands and an army with 3 commands must have at least 1 mixed command.

Units:

The player decides what type a command is and then rolls for the number of units in the command. If the command is mixed they now decide how many of the units will be of the minority type.

The players now roll for the details of the units. All infantry units are usually assumed to be flintlock armed and all musketeers but if both sides agree this can be varies.

Roll a D10 twice for each unit. The first if for the unit size and the second for the quality. Roll once for commanders for their quality.

British, Dutch and allied units:

	1 or less	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Size	S	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	L	L	
Quality (Infantry)	R	T	T	T	T	T	T	E	E	T	-2 Platoon firing
Quality (Cavalry)	R	R	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	E	
Commanders	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3*	

S = Small, M = Medium (i.e. default), L = Large
R = Raw, T = Trained, E = Elite

Infantry which want to use the optional Platoon firing rules get the negative dice modifier.

* A maximum of one 3 commander is allowed, Marlborough. If a second is rolled the player receives a 2 commander.

French and allied units:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 or more	
Size	S	S	S	S	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Quality (Infantry)	R	R	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	E	+1 if M
Quality (Cavalry)	R	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	E	E	
Commanders	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	

S = Small, M = Medium (i.e. default), L = Large
R = Raw, T = Trained, E = Elite

If the players have enough figures an effort should be made to fit the units to appropriate figures.

For the British, Dutch and their allies the Large units are most likely to be British or Dutch. The Small units are most likely to be allied units.

For the French and their allies the Medium infantry units are most likely to be Guard, Swiss, German or Vieux units.

For both sides if the player has a 'special' unit, perhaps guards or some other better than average unit, then use this for any unit that is rolled as Elite. Similarly use 'militia', dragoons or other generally lower quality units to represent any Raw units you have.

Higher Commands and Artillery:



One of the commands will always be the army commander. This commander will be the best commander in the anti French army but the French player just chooses a commander, before rolling for ability, and he is the army commander.

The Anglo Dutch army commander can swap commands with another commander. He can reassign any or all of the units in his command to the other commands. If he retains direct command of units he can swap up to half of the units in his command with units in other commands, perhaps to create a reserve or strengthen an area.

The army will have 1 Trained Field Gun for each Infantry or Mixed Infantry command it has. If the player wishes he can roll a D6 and on a 5 or 6 he will get an extra gun, but on a 1 he loses a gun. The British, Dutch and allied army can change one of the guns to a Mobile gun if it desires. If the players wish they can roll a D6 per gun – 1 the gun is Raw, 2 the gun is a Siege gun (ignore if Mobile gun), 2 to 5 nothing, 6 the gun is Elite.

Example:

The players decide to play a standard attack/defence game with 3 commands each.

They set up a 5' (150cm) table with a major river that can not be crossed down one side that reduces the effective table width to about 4' 6". The terrain is set roughly like that of the battle of Blenheim. A river divides the armies and the French

defensive position I based on this and 3 villages near it. On the opposite flank to the major river are patches of woods that hamper movement their.

Both sides decide to have 1 Infantry command, 1 Cavalry command and 1 Mixed Infantry command. This means both sides will have 2 Field Guns. Both sides roll for there guns and one of the French guns is now a Siege Gun. The French will also have 2 units worth of fortifications, they use them to fortify 2 of the villages in their line.

Both sides now roll for the number of units in each command and their details. The Anglo Dutch player starts with his Mixed Infantry command. He rolls an Average dice and gets 3, so this command has 6 units. The player decides to have 4 infantry and 2 cavalry units. He gets 1 Large Trained Infantry, 1 Elite Infantry, 1 Raw Infantry and 1 Small Elite Infantry. In addition the player gets 1 Large Trained cavalry and 1 Trained cavalry. For the commander the player rolls a 4, the general is a 1 commander.

After further rolls for the other commands he looks at the army he has. The cavalry commander is rated a 2 and is the best commander he has and so will be the army commander. The player wants the army commander to be in charge of the Infantry command and so the two generals swap commands. Also the player also decides to move units between the commands. The player decides to strengthen the Mixed Infantry command above. He gives the command an additional Elite infantry unit from his command. He swaps the Raw infantry and Trained cavalry for a Trained infantry and an Elite cavalry. He has one more swap left and so he swaps the Raw infantry that was originally in the Mixed command into the Cavalry command.

The French player does as above. He also wants the army commander to command the Infantry command and so nominates that commander as army commander. The player rolls as above and the Infantry commander, who is also the army commander, is a 0. Unfortunately the player can not change this but decides that the best thing to do is minimise the impact of the commander. The player could reassign all of the units from the army commander's command to the other 2 commands. This would give them access to the command ability of the commanders of those commands but would mean they would be spread thin. Alternatively the army commander could reorganise his command for a specific, and presumably more limited role. Perhaps form a reserve or a flank guard, or some other more limited role.