

# A Simplified Guide to Crossfire Rules

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This guide hopes to explain the rules of Arty Conliffe's fantastic game *Crossfire* in a way that is easy to learn and understand. I used the wording of [Gaetano Ferrara's](#) similar game, *Covering Fire!*, as a starting point, so it is not 100% compatible with the rules laid out in *Crossfire*, but my hope is that if you learn from this, the rules of *Crossfire* will all seem familiar to you.

## Preparation

**The Battlefield:** The game is played on a flat surface, around 6'x4', with as many terrain pieces as necessary to cover at least 50% of the table. Each terrain piece should be between 4"x4" and 8"x8" in size, and they should be placed so that no clear line of sight can be drawn from one edge of the table to the opposite.

**Basing:** Any scale of miniatures may be used. A single square base usually holds 3 figures and represents a squad of about 10 soldiers. Bases representing platoon commanders and forward observers typically have 1 figure and are half the width of a squad base.

**Distance:** Only one measurement is used and that is "near" or "nearby", which is defined as less than the width of one squad base away.

**The Armies:** A typical army will consist of the following:

- 1x Company Commander (Attack 0)
- 3x Platoons consisting of:
  - 1x Platoon Commander (Attack 0)
  - 3x Rifle Squads (Attack 3)
- 3x HMGs (heavy machine guns) (Attack 4)

Other unit types will be discussed later.

## Playing the Game

Players take turns activating their units, but in a different manner than most games. Players do not take a set number of actions on their turn. They may activate many units on one turn, or activate the same unit repeatedly. In fact, players repeatedly activate any unit of their choice until they either miss when shooting, fail a rally test, or are suppressed by reaction fire. Only then does it become the other player's turn.

**Line of Sight/Fire:** Units have 360° line of sight. Rifle units can fire in any direction. Other units can only fire in the direction they're facing  $\pm 45^\circ$ . Units have line of sight to units in neighboring terrain pieces. Units completely behind hills, fields, woods, rough ground, and hedges are outside line of sight. You cannot fire through friendly units. Lines are measured from/to the center of the concerned units.

## Activation

The player picks one unit and it may do one of the following actions:

- Move: Pivot or move straight
- Shoot: Fire at one enemy
- Go Prone: Hit the ground for better cover
- Rally: Shake off pin or suppression markers

## Movement

Units may pivot and move in a straight line as far as they want until they fully enter or exit a terrain piece. If your turn hasn't ended you can use another action to keep moving. Units can also just pivot as a move action.

**Group Moves:** Whenever a unit moves, all nearby friendly units may also move. They move one at a time, but count as part of the same activation. Indicate a destination. All units must end their move near that destination.

## Shooting

Units may shoot as far as they want at the closest enemy in their line of fire. Roll as many dice as the unit's attack value. Subtract 1 die if the target is prone or in terrain that offers cover (hills, fields, woods, rough ground). Count up all the rolls of 5 or 6:

- 1: Pinned—Can't move
- 2: Suppressed—Also can't shoot
- 3: Killed—Remove from play

If you score a suppression on a unit that is already suppressed, it is killed. If none of the shooting units score a suppression or kill, then the player's turn ends.

**Group Shooting:** Whenever a unit shoots, all nearby friendly units may shoot with it (as part of the same activation), but they must all fire at the same target.

**Crossfire:** A platoon commander may direct all units in his platoon (including attached HMGs) to fire at a single target. They must all have line of sight to the target and line of sight to the platoon commander.

## Close Combat

Whenever any units end a move in contact with enemy units, a close combat happens. The following units are involved:

- All units that are in contact with an opposing unit
- If you have no rifle squads involved and there is one nearby, you may include it
- If you have no commander involved and there is one nearby, you may include it

Company commanders count as rifle squads for close combat. A platoon commander by himself automatically loses a close combat. Otherwise, both players roll one die and apply the following modifiers.

- +1 for each rifle squad involved
- +1 if there is a commander involved
- -1 if a crewed weapon (HMG) is involved
- -2 if a suppressed unit is involved

The lowest rolling side is killed and must remove all units involved in the close combat (if tied re-roll until one side is killed). If the active player loses, their turn ends.

## Going Prone

Going prone makes a unit more defensive if in open terrain. The unit remains prone until it makes any kind of movement. Only rifle squads can go prone.

## Rally

Units that are pinned or suppressed may use rally actions to remove those conditions. Roll one die and apply the following modifiers to the result:

- +1 If no enemy is in line of sight
- +1 If a commander is nearby
- +1 If the unit is a commander

If the unit was pinned, you need a 4 to succeed. If the unit was suppressed, you need a 5 to succeed. On a failure the player's turn ends.

## Reactions

When an enemy unit moves or pivots and is in line of fire of one of your units, you may react to it by shooting. Choose a point along its route and perform a shoot action as above. If your unit misses, then the enemy unit proceeds along its path and your unit can't react to any other action until the player's turn ends. If you score a pin, the target ends its move on the spot, and if you score a suppression or kill then the player's turn ends on top of that.

If you're reacting to a group move and suppress or kill one of the units, the others still finish their move before the player's turn ends (and may also be fired at).

**Group Reactions:** Whenever a unit reacts, all nearby friendly units with line of fire may shoot with it (as part of the same reaction), but must all fire at the same target.

**Crossfire:** A platoon commander may react by directing all units in his platoon (including attached HMGs) to fire at a single target. They must all have line of fire to the target and line of sight to the platoon commander.

## Deployment

Players roll-off and the winner picks one terrain piece to be the objective. The other player picks one of the table edges as his deployment zone with his opponent taking the opposite. Starting with the player that won the deployment roll-off, the players alternate in placing one unit each no more than one quarter of the table from their edge.

**Mission:** At the end of each turn after the first, if unpinned and unsuppressed units from only one side are inside the objective they score 1 victory point. The first player to score 5 victory points wins.

## Start Playing!

This is all you need to get started. The following sections will describe further options you can use to add detail to your battles.

# Units

## SMG Squads

Submachine gun squads are a special type of rifle squad. They normally have an attack value of 2, but if their target is nearby they use an attack value of 4. SMG squads never roll less than 2 dice, even if firing into covering terrain. If all your squads involved in a close combat are SMG squads, add +1 to your roll.

## Engineers

Engineers are a special type of rifle squad. They are able to clear obstacles (see below).

## Commanders

If a Commander is suppressed it does not provide bonuses to units rallying, crossing wire, or in close combat. They also are not considered to be in line of sight for national movement rules.

**Expert Commanders:** Get an extra +1 when helping a unit rally or cross wire, and an extra +1 in close combats.

## Forward Observers

Forward observers call in indirect fire from off-table artillery. They start the battle with a set number and type of fire missions, according to the scenario. Each forward observer can call one fire mission per turn, and if they do, they can't do anything else that turn. Failed fire missions do not end the player's turn. Forward observers can call two types of fire missions:

**High Explosives:** These can be targeted at any unit in line of sight and attack with the following values:

- 50-60mm or 2" Mortars: 3
- Guns up to 81mm or 3" Mortars: 4, +1 suppression
- Larger Guns and Mortars: 4, +2 suppressions
- Heavy Artillery: 5, +3 suppressions

If the targeted squad is killed, additional nearby squads are suppressed. The targeted player chooses which ones. If the additional squads were already suppressed, they are killed. Hills and fields do not provide protective cover from high explosives unless the units are prone.

**Smoke:** Smoke blocks line of sight and can be targeted anywhere in the forward observer's line of sight. It lasts until the beginning of the player's next turn. Roll a die, on a 3 or more place a line of squad-sized smoke bases according to the chart below.

- 2 for 50-60mm or 2" Mortars
- 3 for Guns up to 81mm or 3" Mortars
- 4 for Larger Guns and Mortars
- 6 for Heavy Artillery

If a forward observer is caught alone in a close combat, they automatically lose it.

# Actions

## Retreat

To retreat, a unit must begin the player's turn in a terrain piece. It may pivot and move backward toward the player's table edge as one action and does not draw reaction fire while doing so. Once it has left the initial terrain piece the action ends and that unit may not retreat again this turn.

## Recon by Fire

If playing with hidden deployment (see below) you can fire on a terrain piece in an attempt to reveal troops hidden there. Roll one die, on a 6 all hidden units in that terrain piece are revealed, or it is shown to be empty. The player's turn ends if they fail to roll a 6. Only rifle squads and HMGs may use recon by fire

**Group Recon by Fire:** You can roll an additional die for every nearby friendly unit. The attempt succeeds if any of them are a 6.

# Hidden Deployment

In some scenarios one side will deploy hidden. Number all terrain pieces they are eligible to set up in and the player will write down which units are in which pieces. If a hidden unit moves or shoots it is revealed and placed on the board. If an opposing unit enters a terrain piece with hidden units in it, they are all revealed. When units are revealed, the owning player places them where they want within the terrain piece.

**Ambushes:** Hidden units may react to opponents entering or reaching the edge of their terrain piece with an ambush. An ambush works like a regular reaction, but units get to roll an extra die.

# Terrain

## Obstacles

**Minefields:** Are deployed hidden and occupy a whole terrain piece or join two within four base widths of each other. When a unit enters the minefield it is revealed and the unit stops. The minefield attacks the unit with 4 dice. The player's turn ends on a suppression or kill. Ignore pins. Minefields attack any unit trying to move into, through, or out of it.

**Barbed Wire:** A section is 4 squad bases long and 1 deep. Units must stop when they contact barbed wire and need an additional move action to cross just to the opposite side of it. Non-engineer units roll a die when crossing. If a commander is nearby, add 1. On a 4-6 they succeed, otherwise they stay there and the player's turn ends. Vehicles do not require a roll and destroy the wire when they cross it.

Engineer squads can remove a minefield or barbed wire if they have spent an entire turn in or adjacent to it, are unsuppressed, and have not taken any actions during that turn.

## Buildings

Buildings block line of sight and provide cover. Moving into contact with an occupied building, like moving into contact with a unit, initiates a close combat. All occupants of the building and all units contacting it are involved in the close combat. If the occupants are hidden they may react with an ambush or allow the close combat with a +1 to their roll.

Individual units in a building cannot be targeted by a high explosives attack from a forward observer. The building itself is targeted. If the attack succeeds, the targeted player decides which units are affected.

## Troop Quality

Depending on the scenario or troops selected, units may be designated as veterans, regulars, or green troops. Regulars follow all the rules as given.

**Veterans:** If all your units involved in a close combat are veterans, you get an extra +1 to your roll. Veterans add +1 to their attempts to rally or cross barbed wire.

**Green Troops:** If any of your units involved in a close combat are green, you take a -1 to your roll. Green troops take -1 to their attempts to rally or cross barbed wire.

## National Variations

**Russia/Italy/France:** Rifle squads must begin and end all moves in line of sight with a commander.

**US/UK/Japan:** Rifle squads must begin all moves in line of sight with a commander.

**Germany:** No move restrictions.

Commanders (particularly platoon commanders) can move along with other units in a group move to maintain line of sight.

If moving to contact to initiate a close combat, Japanese and Russian units ignore pin results, but suppressions become kills.

Japanese HMGs have an attack value of only 3, but don't take the -1 crewed weapon penalty in close combat.

Russian platoon commanders do not add +1 to rallying.

## Vehicles

Vehicles can only take one action per turn, and may not retreat or go prone. They may not participate in group shooting. Vehicles can also only react once per opponent's turn. A vehicle's line of fire is determined by its turret if it has one. The turret may be rotated along with any move action.

**Firing at a Vehicle:** Weapons capable of firing at a vehicle will have accuracy and penetration values assigned to them. Vehicles have armor values for their front and back sides. Roll one die, add the weapon's accuracy value (which may be negative), and subtract 1 if the target is in protective cover. If the result is 4 or more, roll again. If that roll plus the weapon's penetration value (which may also be negative) is greater than or equal to the target's armor value then the target is killed. Vehicles are never pinned or suppressed.

**Vehicles Firing at Infantry:** Works the same as high explosive missions from a forward observer. Weapons will have attack and suppression values assigned to them.

**Close Combat:** Vehicles may participate in close combat. If they are not in woods, fields, or rough ground, turreted tanks add +3 to their roll, turretless tanks add +2, and other vehicles add +1.

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