

An Introduction to Large-Scale Combat via a Simple Village Town Defence

SITUATION

You have agreed to help defend the town of Westmoor in the King's Forest of Breland from a clan of ruthless bandits known as the "Jungle Boys." It is expected they will return in 3 days to collect their tribute. You therefore have 3 days to prepare the village and make fighters out of the simple peasants.

PREPERATION

Over the next 3 days, you may spend up to 12 hours/day working, with 8 hours considered a normal working day. You will have to plan with your party what tasks to complete as you face a scarcity of resources including time, wood and alchemical components.

Resources:

There are 3 types of resources in this scenario: time, wood and alchemical components.

Time: is limited. You have a maximum of 36 working hours to prepare the village.

Wood: is used for construction of defences. You will need to spend time gathering wood.

Alchemical Components: are limited. These special resources may be used to make special types of ammunition.

You will each be given a squad of villagers for which you will use to help prepare the village. You will liaise with the squad through a Village Elder. In addition to preparing defences for the village, you may spend time training the squad into a combat role, which will allow them to aid you in combat. See below for more information.

Squad Training:

Villagers by default are not prepared to fight in battles. But with training and encouragement, can be used to help defend the village. There are 3 types of combat roles a villager squad may take, but each squad can only be trained in one of these roles, i.e., no cross training is allowed.

Spear Levies: are front-line militia trained in hand-to-hand combat with spears.

Archer Levies: are rear-line support militia trained to use bows.

Siege Engineer Levies: are support troops trained to use special siege equipment.

Initial training takes 8 hours to complete. Further training may be done to improve a unit's combat stats. Each period of additional training takes 4 hours before efforts are rewarded.

Town Defences:

In addition to squad training, here are some ideas on how to spend time preparing the town's defences. Note this list is not exhaustive and is only meant to provide a guide as to what could be done.

- ⇒ **Gather Wood:** by chopping down trees and portions of forests. This provides much needed wood and opens lines of sight. Each hour spent gathering wood yields 1d4 units of wood, and removes 1 tile of trees.
- ⇒ **Dig a Ditch:** spending 4 hours creates 2d4 consecutive tiles of difficult terrain. People inside ditches have disadvantage on melee attacks they try; incoming melee attacks have advantage on them, and incoming range attacks have disadvantage.
- ⇒ **Stockpile Supplies:** spending 4 hours creates 1 use of extra supplies that may be used to renew injured units. A squad can take their action to resupply, gaining a +1 bonus to their attack or defence, and moral for 1 minute. Doing so consumes 1 use of the supplies. Note a squad cannot use the supplies if they are at full hp. A squad can use 2 supplies to gain the above benefits as well as replenish their hp by 1.
- ⇒ **Build a Wall:** spending 4 hours creates 1d4 consecutive tiles of wall. Requires 2 wood per tile of wall. Walls obstruct vision and take 1 turn to tear down.
- ⇒ **Construct Cheval de Frise (spikey barriers):** useful anti-cavalry defence, prevents cavalry from passing through. Is considered difficult terrain for other unit's movements. Spending 4 hours creates 1d4 consecutive tiles of barriers. Requires 1 wood per tile of barrier. They take 1 turn to tear down.
- ⇒ **Build Scout Tower:** spending 4 hours allows the construction of a simple scouting tower. This allows you to double your vision distance and to allow vision over walls. Is staffed by a villager for free. Requires 5 wood.
- ⇒ **Build a Hide:** spending 4 hours allows your squad to construct a hide across 2 tiles on the map. A hide allows you and your squad to burrow in and to see out but be hidden from your enemies. This is determined by a Wisdom check upon construction vs enemies' passive perception.
- ⇒ **Build & Lay Blast Disks:** See hand out on Blast Disks for explanation of their use. Building one requires proficiency in alchemist supplies and tinker's tools. Spending 8 hours will create 1d4 +1 blast disks and will consume 2 alchemical components per disk.
- ⇒ **Repair Ballista:** the village has an old ballista that can be repaired. Doing so takes 8 hours and requires 15 wood. See separate handout for ballista stats.
- ⇒ **Build Ballista Ammo:** by default, the ballista is considered to have an unlimited source of ammo, but special ammo types can be made.
 - **Fire Bolts:** are like standard bolts but with a flaming tip that explodes on impact. Deals 3d12 +9 fire damage in a 15ft radius. Requires 2 wood to build and takes 2 hours per bolt.
 - **Concussive Bolts:** are fitted with a special tip that is filled with alchemical substance, exploding on impact, and slowing opponents. Deals no damage but produces the effects of the *Slow* spell in a 20ft radius. Requires 2 wood and 3 alchemical components and takes 4 hours per bolt to build.


THE BATTLE

The battle will proceed as usual D&D combat, but with an additional macro level. Notably, if you have chosen to train your squad of villagers into a combat role, then you will be able to coordinate them in battle as well as do your usual character abilities. The one requirement here is that to issue orders to your squad, they must be able to hear you. If no orders are issued to them, they will act on their own accord, which may not be in your best interests.

During your turn, you can command your squad as a free action. There are two approaches you can take when commanding your squad: the macro or micro approach.

If you do not want to micromanage your squad, you can simply issue general commands to them, i.e., *attack this unit*, *defend this position*, and the unit will complete their orders to the best of their ability, i.e., the DM will take control of the unit. Alternatively, each unit has a simplified range of actions they may take, and you may choose to move the unit yourself, decide what the unit does and control the unit like a character.

To understand what actions a unit can take, we first need to understand what stats a unit has. See below for an example unit stat card.

		ROCKBREAKERS	
		DWARF ELITE HEAVY INFANTRY	
		COST: 440	
ATTACK:	+6	DEFENSE:	15
POWER:	+6	TOUGHNESS:	13
MORALE:	+8	SIZE:	1d6
TRAITS			
Stalwart. Enemy battle magic has disadvantage on Power checks against this unit.			

Name of Unit

Race, Unit Experience level, Unit Equipment, Unit Type.

Attack: it's to-hit modifier when attacking.

Defence: it's AC.

Power: it's damage modifier.

Toughness: the threshold before a unit suffers a casualty.

Morale: the modifier when making *Morale* checks.

Size: it's hp / how many units are in the squad.

Traits: other effects unique to this unit.

When a unit attacks another, it uses its *Attack* modifier against the opponents *Defence* score. If it meets it, it is considered a hit. Then, the unit uses its *Power* modifier against the enemy's *Toughness* score. If it meets it, enough damage has been done to the unit to cause it to suffer a casualty. This is reflected by reducing the *Size* die by 1 – note the *Size* of a unit begins on the maximum value of the dice. Once a unit reaches half its size, it is considered *diminished*. Whenever a diminished unit suffers another casualty, it must make a DC15 *Morale* check. If it fails, it suffers another casualty as a member of the squad flees.

You may command a unit to take any one of the following actions during your turn, in addition to moving the unit up to their speed.

- ⇒ **Attack:** as expected.
- ⇒ **Defend:** adds +5 to their Defence stat.
- ⇒ **Ambush:** same as *Hide*.
- ⇒ **Sprint:** same as *Dash*.