

Battlefronts.

A game of Attrition Warfare.

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scott@ledgaming.com

Game Overview:

This is an attempt to make a simple game out of being a commander at a very high level of a war. You do not spend your time with the details of close range combat, or movement factors, or whatever. You are looking at the big picture, and commanding “I need men here!” This is done by assigning Battalions to one of the 5 Battlefronts.

A Battalion is a stack of cards, normally face-down with the top card face-up. The top card indicates what the current fighting strength of this battalion is.

This is also a game mostly about Attrition. As defined by Wikipedia.org:

Attrition warfare is a strategic concept which states that to win a war, one's enemy must be worn down to the point of collapse by continuous losses in personnel and material. The war will usually be won by the side with greater such reserves/resources.

As the game goes on, each Battalions slowly weakens and eventually “dies off,” whether due to attrition or from the battle itself. This occurs by discarding the top card of a Battalion, and flipping over the next card. Once all cards are removed from a Battalion, the Battalion ceases to exist; it has been worn down to the point of collapse.

Conceptually, battles at each contested Battlefronts are happening continuously. However, to simplify this, the Attrition Phase and Battle Phase is when damage is taken to your troops.

All cards that are discarded due to Attrition or Battle are considered out of the game.

If at the end of a Round a player has control of 3 of the Battlefronts, that player has won the game.

What you need:

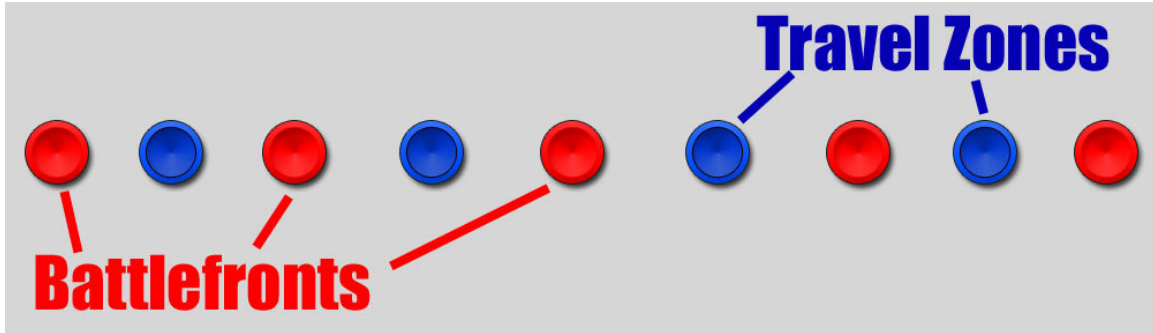
1 poker deck for each player

5 red poker chips (or some other markers to designate a Battlefront)

4 blue poker chips (or some other markers to designate a Travel Zone)

Setup:

Denote five “areas” of play on the table between both players. These are called Battlefronts. This can be done with red poker chips. Place a blue poker chip between the red poker chips. These are Travel Zones.



Each player should have one full deck of poker cards. Aces count as 1s. Each player shuffles their deck and places it face down.

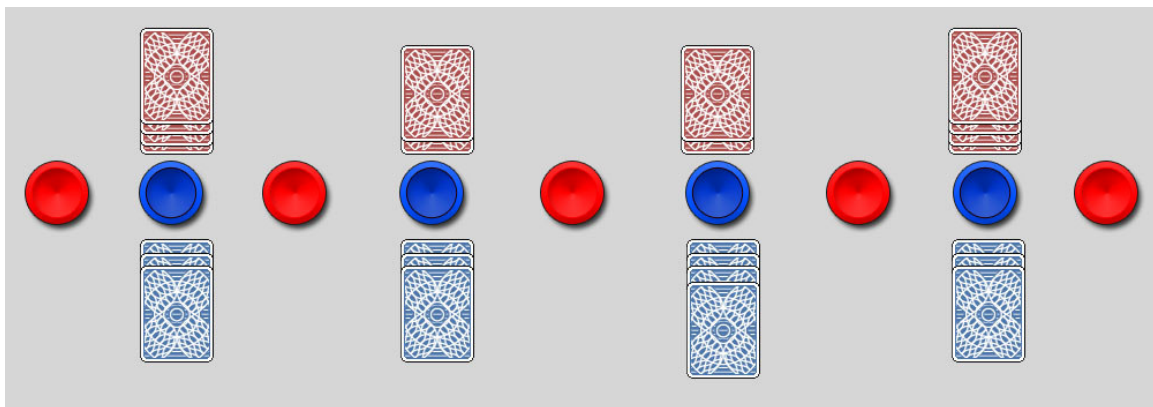
A Round of Play:

A round of play is made up of Phases which go in this order.

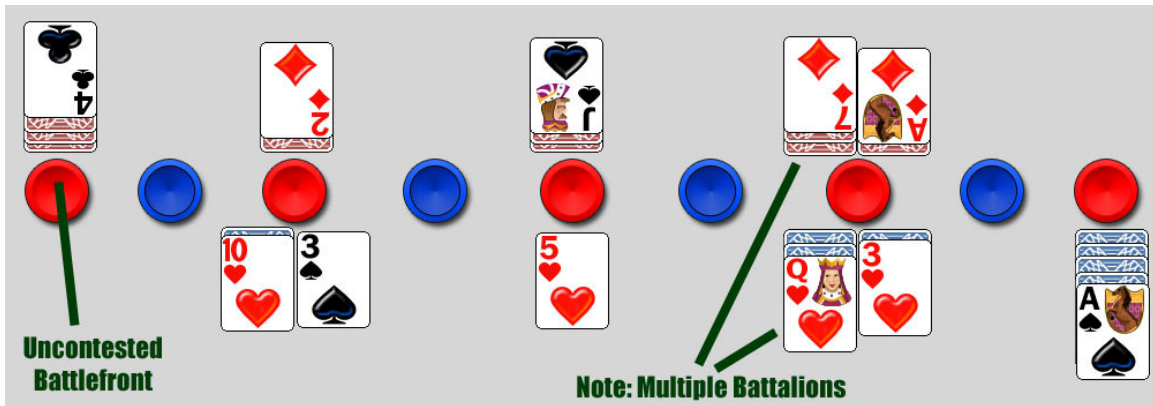
- Attrition
- Move
- Support
- Battle
- Check for Win

The Attrition, Move, and Support phase are performed with players taking turns. Select one player to go first in all of these phases. During the next Round, the other player goes first. Rotate back and forth as required for each subsequent Round.

On the first round of play, the only phase that will naturally occur is the Support phase. This is the phase where players “call up” Battalions from their decks. After the first round of Support, the board will look something like this:



After the first round, all the phases are in operation, and players will be moving Battalions to Battlefronts, suffering Attrition, and generally beating each other up. This is how the board may look like a few Rounds into the game.



A few notes regarding the image above:

A player may move as many Battalions as they wish to a Battlefront.

Battlefronts can be either **Contested** or **Uncontested**. A contested Battlefront will have Battalions from both players there facing off against each other. Uncontested Battlefronts have Battalions from only one player there. So, in the image above, the three middle Battlefronts are contested; the outer two are uncontested, one for each player.

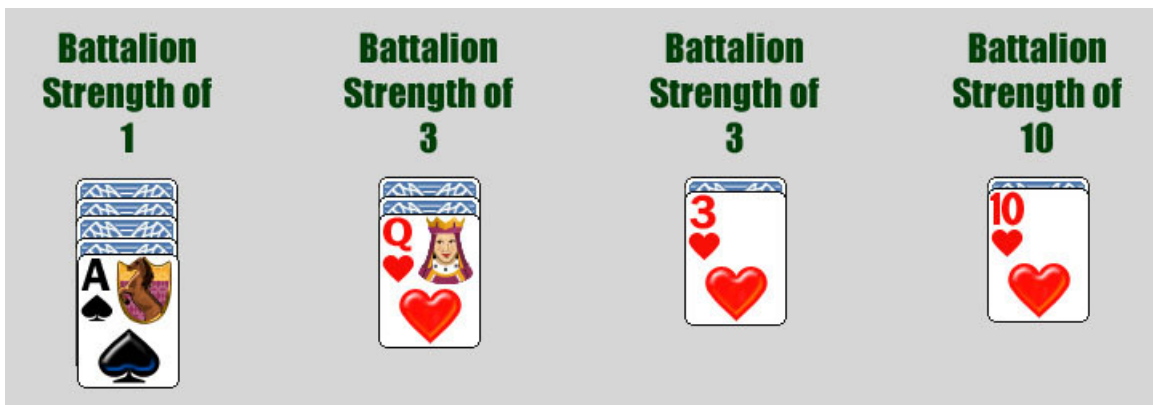
The way to win the game is for a player to “own” 3 uncontested Battlefronts.

Determining the strength of a Battalion:

The strength on any one Battalion is the value of the rank shown on the face up card on top of the Battalion.

An Ace is considered to have a strength of 1.

If the top card of a Battalion is a face card (Jack, Queen or King), then the strength of that Battalion is the number of cards that make up the Battalion.



Attrition Phase:

At each Battlefront that is contested discard the highest valued card on one of your Battalions. Turn face-up the top card of this Battalion to set its new Strength. This is what is known as **reducing a Battalion**.

Uncontested Battlefronts do not have Attrition.

If you have multiple Battalions showing the same Strength, you select which Battalion is reduced.

Obviously, if you only have 1 Battalion at a Battlefront, that is the one that gets reduced.

Move:

Players take turns moving Battalions from a Travel Zone to a neighboring Battlefront, or from a Battlefront to a Travel Zone. A Battalion can only move once per Round. If a Battalion moves from a Travel Zone into a Battlefront and its top card is face-down, this is the time to turn it face-up.

If a Battalion has a face card (Jack, Queen or King) face up on top of a Battalion, he may discard the face card to move the Battalion directly to any Battlefront, bypassing any Travel Zones and Battlefronts that may be “in the way.” Flip over the next card in the Battalion after moving.

Support:

Players now take turns **calling up Battalions**. Battalions are called up into the Travel Zones. Each Travel Zone can only take in one call up per Round per player, so you can only call up a maximum of 4 Battalions per Round.

To call up a Battalion, a player decides how many cards will make up the Battalion and deals them face down in front of a Travel Zone.

Once a player runs out of cards, he cannot call-up any other Battalions.

Once both players are satisfied with their call-ups, Battle commences.

Battle:

At each Battlefront that is contested, both players add up the strength value all Battalions stationed there to get a total strength value of their forces. Divide this numbers by 5 (round up). The resulting number is the amount of **Battle Attrition** inflicted to the opposing Battalions.

Example: Remember, a Battalion who is being “led” by a Jack, Queen, or King has a strength equal to the amount of cards in the Battalion.

Once again, Attrition occurs. Except this time, Attrition occurs an equal amount of times based on Battle Attrition from your opponent.

Of course, this all sounds confusing. An example might be useful:

At a single Battlefront:



James has:

- ** A three card Battalion, it's top card showing a 5.
- ** A Two card Battalion, it's top card showing a Queen. The Queen currently has a strength of 4 since there are four cards in that stack.

David has:

- ** A four card Battalion, it's top card showing a 3.
- ** A one card Battalion, it's top card showing a 10.
- ** A one card Battalion, it's top card showing a 2.

James has a total Strength of 9, divide this by 5 and round up: This results in 2 additional Attrition to David's forces. David must reduce his Battalions twice.

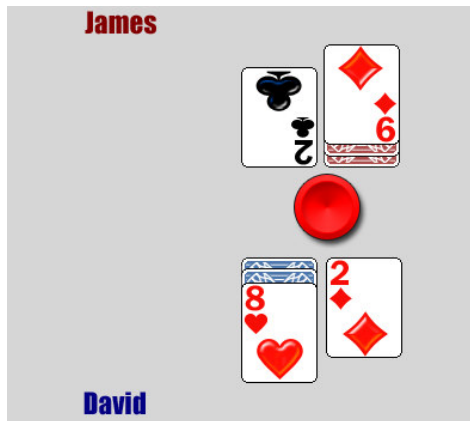
David has a total Strength of 15, divide this by 5: This results in 3 additional Attrition to James' forces. James must reduce his Battalions three times.

Remember, Attrition reduction happens to the highest Rank card shown. So...

1. James discards his 5, he flips over the next card in this Battalion, which is a 9.
2. James discards his 9, he flips over the next card in this Battalion, which is a 2.
3. James discards his Queen (strength of 4), he flips over the next card in this Battalion, which is a 9.

1. David discards his 10, there are no other cards in that Battalion; it has been worn down.
2. David discards his 3, he flips over the next card in this Battalion, which is an 8.

After all of this resolves, the Battlefront now looks like this:



James currently has a strength of 11, and David currently has a Strength of 10.

However, at the beginning of the next round, when the Attrition phase happens, James will be forced to reduce his 9 from his Battalion, and David will be forced to reduce his 8.

It's tough to keep these troops motivated!

All Attrition is considered to happen simultaneously at a single Battlefront. So, proceed through the Battlefronts, calculating Attrition and reducing Battalions before moving to the next Battlefront.

Check For Win:

If a player has Battalions at 3 of the 5 Battlegrounds which are uncontested, the player is declared the winner.

The game is considered a draw if both players have less than 3 Battalions.