

Command and Chaos Rules Prototype C
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I am seeking play-testers and feedback to improve the design and, ultimately, develop Command & Chaos into a publishable game. Please take the play-test survey at Survey Monkey
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FZV5ML2>

or feel free to email me directly with feedback
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Version Note (Major changes from B):

- More complete rules for deploying reserves and extra cavalry have been drafted
- Initial light infantry rules have been added

Thanks!

Command & Chaos: A card-based game of Roman battles in the third and second century BCE.

Historical Note:

Many games about ancient warfare over-exaggerate and even misrepresent many features of battle. Most importantly, they suggest that units could maneuver quite flexibly and independently of their comrades and that commanders had often significant tactical control over units. In reality, (see McCall 2018 forthcoming) when it came to battles the Roman manipular armies fought in the late third to late second centuries BCE

- Commanders had very little tactical control over armies once deployed
- Roman infantry units rarely engaged in tactical maneuvers to outflank an enemy battleline (and vice versa). Movement tended to be in straight lines with little maneuver
- The most important control generals had over combat was deployment of troops, setting of reserves, and boosting the morale of trouble spots in the line through personal intervention
- Most of the battle was up to the soldiers in the fight who fought, not until their units were destroyed or incapacitated by wounds, but until their morale crossed a threshold and the individuals in the unit decided they were better off fleeing than continuing the fight.

This game is designed to provide an interesting and not overly complicated battle experience from the perspective of the commanders, since the player in most any battle game inevitably takes the perspective of a commander. The scale of conflict is large unit sized. The basic units of the Roman armies in the game are sections of a legion in the main battle line, sections that include the maniples of hastati, principes, and triarii.

Setting up the game and the game space

Step 1: Determine the size of the battle. The standard game is played with armies of 8 unit cards in the main battle line, 2 unit cards as reserves, and 4 light infantry cards.

(When learning the rules, it's a good idea to play with only eight battle line units (6 heavy infantry and 2 heavy cavalry and leave out reserves and light infantry.

Step 2: Each player places a starting max morale chit one each of their units, facing down so that the other player cannot see the max morale number given to each unit. Three units are given veteran max morale chits

The total amount of morale assigned equals the number of heavy infantry and cavalry units * 3 + 4. So a standard army of 10 heavy units has a total starting morale maximum of 34 ((10 * 3) + 4)

Each unit may have a morale as low as 2 or a morale as high as 5. Some options that have a balance of max morale numbers include (# Units—Max Morale)

Three units are designated as veteran units by giving them a veteran morale max chit. These veteran units are not disclosed to the other player. Veteran units must have a morale of at least 4. These are some balanced distributions of morale chits (a V next to the number indicates a veteran)

2-5V	3-4V	3-5V
1-4V	1-4	5-3
6-3	6-3	2-2
1-2		

In special circumstances, a player might wish to have a split between the number of very high morale units and very low morale circumstances like so:

3-5V	2-5V
1-5	2-5
1-4	1-4V
5-2	5-2

Step 3: Assigning Stamina Points

In a standard battle, each heavy infantry and heavy cavalry unit gets three stamina chits placed on it.

Step 4: Deploying troops.

Gamespace

The table top is invisibly divided into 5 invisible zones, Left Wing, Left Battle line, Center Battle line, Right Battle line, Right Wing. Each zone is two spaces wide (two columns, each the width of a unit card, approx. 2.5”) and 7 to 9 spaces (7-9 rows, each the depth of a unit card, approx. 1.75”) deep.

Left Wing	Left Battle Line	Center Battle Line	Right Battle line	Right Wing	Spacer Cards
Rearmost starting position					
□	□□	□□	□□	□	
					□
					□
					□
□	□□	□□	□□	□	
Rearmost starting position					

Players roll dice. The player with highest roll decides whether to start

Order of Play

Each turn of the battle is divided into 4 phases

1. Initiative Phase
2. Movement Phase
3. Melee phase
4. Rally, Reserve, and Officer Phase

PHASE 1: INITIATIVE and REFILL BATTLE CARD HAND

Each player rolls 1 die. The player with the higher roll (called the first player) goes first for all phases this turn.

Each player may discard up to 2 cards from their hand and draw two new cards

After discarding and drawing up to two cards, each player draws Battle Cards from their deck until they have five in their hand. If they run out of cards, shuffle the discard pile and reuse.

PHASE 2: MOVEMENT

The first player may either:

- move as many of the units in one of their zones as they wish
- or
- require the other player to move as many of the troops in one of their zones first.

Either way, players alternate moving troops one zone at a time until each has moved or passed on moving all the units in all zones. Once the units in a zone have been moved or left in place, they cannot move until the next movement phase.

Allowed Movement

- All movement must be in a straight line forward or backward **except** when carrying out flanking movement
- Engaged units (units that have rolled attack dice against each other) cannot move until they have defeated their opposing unit.
- Heavy infantry may move one space. If that space is occupied by an opposing light infantry unit, that light infantry unit may roll a javelin attack (1D6; Hits on a 6) and is then required to fall back 2 spaces even if this requires it to move through or end on friendly units.

- Light infantry may move up to two spaces. They may move through a friendly heavy infantry or cavalry unit or end their move on such a unit.
- Cavalry may move any number of spaces forward or backward in a column, unless it is a mixed cavalry and light infantry unit (shown by a light infantry unit card on top of the cavalry unit). A mixed unit that the player wishes to remain mixed must follow light infantry movement guidelines (1-2 spaces forward or backward in the column)

Charging. When their zone is active, heavy infantry units and cavalry units can charge once per game if they end their move in a space adjacent to an enemy unit in the same column (light infantry units cannot charge). The player who wishes to charge announces a charge and indicates the target units. The opposing player may choose to have their unit counter-charge or defend in place. The charging unit loses 1 Stamina and roll 2d6 attack dice. The unit being charged may counter charge, in which case it will also lose 1 Stamina and roll 2d6 attack dice.

Alternatively, the unit being charged may stand and defend. At the cost of no stamina, the defending unit rolls 2d6 attack dice. Each successful hit it rolls cancels one successful hit roll of the charging unit.

Flanking Movement. A unit may make a flanking movement if:

1. There are no enemy units in its column
and
2. There is an enemy Heavy Infantry unit in the column directly to its left, right, or both.

If these conditions are met, the unit may make a flanking movement against the enemy unit in the column directly to the left or right.

Cavalry vs. cavalry note: Cavalry units cannot receive flank attacks to reflect their ability to move and maneuver rapidly. If two cavalry unit in a wing are deployed against a single opposing cavalry unit, no flanking bonuses are received. The single cavalry must be routed before either opposing cavalry can move on to make a flanking attack against the opposing heavy infantry.

Heavy infantry flanking movements: A heavy infantry unit making a flank move moves forward or backward in its column according to the normal movement rules until it is in the same row as the enemy unit. As soon as the flanking unit reaches the same row as the target enemy unit, turn the flanking unit card 90° to the left or right as needed/desired to face the side of the enemy card to mark that the enemy card has been flanked. The flanking unit will occupy part of two spaces this way.

Heavy cavalry may when making a flanking movement, simply move to the closest exposed unit flank regardless of how many spaces they must travel. As with infantry, turn the flanking unit card 90° to face the side of the enemy card. Then, if the closest unit is already receiving a flank attack from an allied unit, the flanking cavalry can be placed at the rear of the flanked unit and conduct a rear attack.

If a unit that is attacked on the flank routs the enemy unit to its front, it may turn to face the flanking enemy.

Note a reserve unit can attack the flank of a unit in its column, if that unit is flank attacking an allied unit.

After all active zones have been moved (or passed on) the COMMANDER and LIEUTENANTS may move to any zone. The first player moves or makes the second player move first

PHASE 3: MELEE

In the melee phase, players play battle cards, resolve melees between engaged units, and remove any routing units.

Close combat between light infantry units. Light infantry units conduct close combat by rolling a single die. The player with the highest die roll wins the combat and the defeated light infantry unit must move backward two spaces.

Close combat between light infantry and heavy infantry. The light infantry unit may roll a javelin attack (1D6; Hits on a 6) against the Heavy infantry and is then required to fall back 3 spaces (the extra space reflecting it has been driven off by the heavy infantry) even if this requires it to move through or end on friendly units.

Play battle cards. Each player may play up to three battle cards in the combat phase, one card per unit, to enable three units to take special actions. Players play battle cards in the same order as the movement order determined by the die rolls at the start of the turn. The player who won the initiative may either play first or pass first. Then play alternates until both sides have deployed **up to** three cards.

- Each battle card applies to one unit card and must be played face down.
- Once played face down, a battle card may not be withdrawn or placed next to another card.

Resolving melee. Melee is conducted by all engaged units in order from the attacking player's (the player who won the die roll for initiative at the beginning of the turn) left flank to their right flank in order. Each pair of engaged opposing units will conduct melee attacks. Once they have both conducted their attack the effects of the attacks are applied at the same time.

Each unit makes one of these types of melee attacks; they are not required to make the same kind of attack.

The first time a unit engages in combat, each player announces whether their unit is a veteran or average. If the unit is a veteran, it is now marked with a blue veteran token.

A **standard melee attack** occurs if the unit is not taking a special action from a battle card. The unit rolls one die, adding to the number rolled if making a flank attack (+1 to die roll) or rear attack (+2). If the unit is a mixed cavalry and light infantry unit it gains a +1 to its attack roll(s). If the enemy unit is an average unit, it takes one morale hit chit (placed on the unit card) if the attacker has a modified die roll of 4 or better. If the enemy unit is a veteran unit, it loses one morale point if the attacker has rolled a modified die roll of 5 or better.

Role of Officers: If a LIEUTENANT or COMMANDER is attached to a unit, the unit receives a +1 to its attack roll

Two-against-one cavalry melee: Two cavalry may attack one opposing cavalry if both units are adjacent to the single opposing unit. In this case, there are no flank or rear melee bonuses. The two cavalry units both make attack rolls against the single unit. The single unit makes a single roll. Before making the roll, the single attacking unit selects the opposing cavalry unit targeted by the attack.

A **special action occurs** if one of the players played a battle card face down behind their unit before resolving melee. The player turns the card face up and follows the instructions on the card. If both players played battle cards face down behind their units, both players reveal their cards at the same time and follow the instructions on their cards to complete their special actions. When the melee phase is over, all played battle cards are put in the players' discard piles.

Remove Routing Units and Checking Allied Morale. Any unit that has a number of morale hit chits equal to or greater than the max morale chit number on the unit is routed and removed from the battlefield. Any friendly unit in one of the 8 squares around a routing unit must roll 1 die to determine if it takes a morale hit. The normal rules apply: average units lose 1 morale point on a 4+, veteran units on a 5+

PHASE 4: RALLY, OFFICER ATTACHMENT, AND RESERVES DRAW NEW CARDS CAN REPLACE 2

Rallying a unit. A unit with an attached LIEUTENANT or COMMANDER at the start of the phase receives +1 morale but may not increase the unit's morale above a half its starting morale (round up).

Attaching officers to units. Once units with a LIEUTENANT or COMMANDER attached have been rallied, each player may choose to transfer any officers to another unit within the zone or remove it from its current unit and place it behind the front line in its zone. LIEUTENANTS must remain within their zone. The COMMANDER must be removed from a unit before it can move to a different zone next turn.

Moving Reserves. Players may move their reserve units from column to column during this phase each turn according to movement rules. Once the player has the unit positioned in the column they wish, they may start to move the reserve unit forward. After the reserve unit has begun to move forward it can no longer change columns.

Replacing dead Lieutenants. If a LIEUTENANT died in the MELEE PHASE of the previous turn, a new LIEUTENANT steps up from the ranks. Return the LIEUTENANT figure to the zone where it was removed.

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End of Game

When more than 50% of one army's unit cards have been removed from play, the other player has won the battle.

Note from the Designer

Thanks you so much for checking out the prototype for Command & Chaos! Player feedback on the prototype is most appreciated.

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Can deploy these wing-columns only if both front line spaces have cavalry unit deployed in them

Left Wing	Left Battle Line	Center Battle Line	Right Battle line	Right Wing	Spacer Cards
	Rearmost starting position				
	□	□□	□□	□	
					□
					□
					□
	□	□□	□□	□	
	Rearmost starting position				

Can deploy reserve cavalry in either of these wing-columns