

Ancient Ancients

By

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Introduction

This set of rules was written because, I lost my set of Slim's Ancient & Medieval rules. After many years of ancient wargaming I still prefer Donald Featherstone's system of saving throws. The time scale is one turn equals 6 seconds, time enough to fire one arrow or sling bullet. Use any figure scale you like, but count casualties as 1 = 1 or 1 = 20 scale. Example if 100 figures represent 25,000 troops, remove 1 figure per 20 casualties inflicted, if 100 figures represents 100 troops, remove 1 figure per hit.

Light armour consists of padded jerkins, small breastplates, leather and cheap quality metal helmets. Medium cavalry and infantry wear light armour. Camel riders may have light armour only. Light troops carry no armour but may have shields or bucklers.

Heavy armour consists of bronze or iron plate, fabric corselets, chain mail and scale-mail covering the torso usually down to the hips, grieves on the legs and a good quality helmet.

Extra heavy armour covers more of the body further reducing casualties.

Large battles

As written the rules work very well for 1 to 1 skirmishes. With a modified weapons range and saving table they will work for medieval games up to about 1350 AD. In large battles casualties are a much smaller percentage of those involved than in a skirmish. Missile fire-power was not decisive before the introduction of the longbow. For example, an archer armed with a composite bow could expect to hit a man-sized target with regularity at a distance of perhaps 160+ metres. This would be on a range with the target distance known and without the distraction of anyone shooting back. Under the stress of combat conditions the same archer would struggle to make a hit on a man at 100 metres. The range tables are based on effective ranges at which a group of men might expect to get a reasonable number of penetrating hits on a group target. Heavy infantry fought in 8 or more ranks deep and many didn't get the chance to strike a blow. To reflect all of this when using 1 = 20 scale or higher remove 1 figure per 4 hits.

Movement is in centimetres and represents a figures best speed on good ground. One centimetre represents one yard. Troops advance at the walk until they are at the edge of enemy missile range (i.e. range + 1D10 + 10), where foot increase speed to a jog and mounted troops increase to a canter. Increase or decrease speed by up to two steps per turn for skirmishers and one for all other troop types. Any troops designated as skirmishers may move any fraction of their movement allowance, shoot and move the remainder. Foot may increase to charge speed when they are charge speed plus 10 from the enemy.

	Wk/Jog /Ch		Wk/can/ gal		can/gal		can/gal
Hvy infantry	8/12/18	Lt chariot	10/22/35	Hvy cavalry	10/26/62	Elephant	9/19/32
Med infantry	8/14/21	Hvy chariot	10/20/33	Med cavalry	10/29/66	Siege engine	5
Lt infantry	8/16/24	Camels	10/18/30	Lt cavalry	10/32/48	Wagon	10

Artillery shoot in alternate moves. Bolt-shooters and slings reduce saving throws by 2 and 1 respectively.

Changing formation Close order to open order takes 1 full move at half speed. Rallying or reforming takes 1 full move on the spot. Attacking a unit while changing direction or formation causes disorder.

Changing direction No penalty for left, right or about turn but only one direction change per move.

Difficult terrain Close order - walk speed. Open order - Jog/canter speed. Chariots and wagons entering broken ground must roll 1D6 for breakdowns. Wagons breakdown on a 6, chariots breakdown on a 5+, causing 1 figure to be lost (regardless of figure scale). Leave this figure on the table as an obstacle. Any figures crossing a river except at a ford will drown on a roll of 6 or 3+ if routing through a river.

Obstacles are crossed at walk speed; cavalry and chariots may not cross obstacles.

Light woods Use walk speed, for open order troops, pikemen take 3 turns to reform on leaving light woods, others take 2 turns.

Skirmishers in open order must evade if attacked by close order troops, skirmishers attacked by other skirmishers may stand or evade. Skirmishers may always split move to avoid contact when in open order.

Interpenetration Troops may pass through others in open order without penalty. Troops in close order must have the time (1 move) to change to open order before contact is made. A melee is fought if the interpenetrating troops are contacted, the withdrawing troops scoring half casualties.

Missiles No shooting overhead within 10cms of friendly troops. Roll 1D6 per figure on the to hit table then make saving throws where applicable. Saving throws versus a pilum are reduced by 1. Two ranks may fire (8 ranks at 1 to 1 scale) to an angle of 30°. Mounted troops may shoot all round, every alternate turn. Foot missile men may either shoot or move.

Saving throws are made with 1D6. A spearman armed with metal helmet, light body armour and shield has a saving value of 2.4 subtracting this from 7 gives a saving throw of 4.6, therefore all rolls of 5+ are saves, 4's have a 60% saving chance. Re-roll 4's using 1D10 saving on =<6. Saving throws are halved for mounted troops, even when on armoured horses. This represents the horses vulnerability.

Armour Type Saving Table

Light Armour	Heavy	Extra heavy	Horse	Shield	Pelta	Buckler	Grieves	L/M helmet
0.7	1.8	2	1	1	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.3/0.7

Range table

Hit table

Ranges	Short	Medium	Long	Ranges (target)	Short	Medium	Long
Bolt-shooter	90	180	270*	Halted	3+	4+	5+
Ancient longbow	70	140	200*	Advancing	4+	5+	6
Composite bow	33	66	100*	Target mounted	-1	-1	-1
Horsebow		50		Hard cover	+2	+2	+2
Sling	50	100	150*	Soft cover	+1	+1	+1
Javelin/Dart	15/15	30/30	0/40	Split move and shoot	+1	+1	+1
Pilum or Spear	Impact			Target is in phalanx	+0.05	+0.05	+0.05

* Shooting at cavalry add 60cms, at foot add 20cms per armour class less than extra heavy e.g. troops without armour and all cavalry add 60cms.

Melee For infantry versus infantry and cavalry versus cavalry count 1 point per figure involved and roll 1 dice per 5 points. Half the resulting points are casualties. For cavalry versus infantry the cavalry each count as 2 points. Count the odd 1 or 2 points as half a dice and 3 or 4 points as a whole dice. Swordsmen (like Romans) and veterans get +1 per dice; spearmen and pikemen get +1 when charging into contact. Pikemen get +3 (+1 if charging) reducing by 1 for each round of combat down to zero. Flank and rear attacks get +1 and +2 per dice respectively. Levy, disordered troops, troops fighting from a disadvantaged position and those who shot in the same round as melee contact was made get -1 per dice roll.

Melee Draws If a melee is drawn on the second or subsequent round then the opposing units each withdraw 2cms. If one player wishes to withdraw that unit replacing it with a fresh one (the Romans were expert at this) he must win an opposed dice roll to do so. If successful it takes 1 move for both units to go to open order and 1 more to exchange places. During this time the enemy unit is considered to be to confused and or exhausted to do anything about it. Only disciplined troops like the Greeks and Romans can interpenetrate during this lull in melee, tribal forces like Gauls have insufficient training to achieve this in combat, but may open ranks to allow routing troops through.

Charging Units must accelerate up to maximum speed to get the charge bonus. Note: Archers must choose between shooting up to contact and excepting a charge if their fire doesn't cause the enemy to halt, or leaving room to cease-fire and counter charge. Note that mounted troops advance on their opponents very quickly. Modern horses are capable of galloping at 19mph, light cavalry in these rules make approximately 16mph, which is fast for the big ponies ancient horsemen rode. Ancient ponies and mules are pound for pound stronger than horses and require less food than modern horses.

Elephants Missile troops firing at elephants from close range must dice, 1,2,3,4 half the hits, 5+ normal hits. Elephants save on 3+ (4 + if armoured), 2 (2 or 3 if armoured) the elephant stampedes, 1 the elephant is killed. Roll for the direction of a stampede, 1 or 2 45⁰ right rear 3 or 4 45⁰ left rear 5 or 6 straight back. If the elephant comes up against a solid obstacle re-roll for direction. Any unit in the path of a stampeding elephant will be attacked as normal roll 1D6 casualties from elephant and crew. Any unit struck in the flank will suffer 2D6 and rear 3D6 casualties. Elephant mounted archers shoot in the missile phase. Cavalry or chariots unused to elephants require 4+ to stand. Otherwise they will break and rout cavalry needing 4+ to survive, chariots needing 5+ to survive.

Chariots A light chariot counts as 2 and a heavy chariot 3 points in melee. Light chariots save on 6 heavy save on 5+. Chariot mounted archers shoot in the missile phase.

Morale tests are made if the unit has suffered casualties, is charging or being charged. Persians need to get -1 or more to their dice roll versus Greeks to have any hope of an historical outcome. Decide this before battle.

Roll 1D6 +2 plus or minus the listed modifiers.

+1	If the unit is advancing or charging. If the unit is behind soft cover. If the unit has rear support.	-1	If the unit is disordered If a forward or flanking unit has to retreat If the unit lost melee +1 for each continuous
loss.			
+2	If the unit has a protected flank. If the unit is behind hard cover.		Open order units attacked by cavalry Per 5% casualties suffered.
-2	Any unit attacked in flank or rear		Stationary cavalry attacked by any troops

Result: 1 the unit routs to the rear 2 charge moves with backs to the enemy, 2 it retires 1 normal move, facing the enemy, 3 the unit halts for 1 move if under missile fire or retires 1 base depth from melee, , 5 or 6 troops rally or continue to follow orders.

Any morale system which both players agree to may be substituted for the above system. A morale system of some sort is obviously required whichever system is in use it may require alteration to suit the particular scenario or campaign game being played.

Rallying Troops who have rallied lose their bonuses for being pikemen spearmen or swordsmen. This is because some will have lost most of their spears or pikes, but more importantly they will have a general drop in morale. Lower morale causes them to fight less efficiently which in turn will probably cause them to lose the melee and fail the subsequent morale test.

Pursuit Check for pursuit if your opponent routs or withdraws from melee.

- 1,2 Pursue. -1 from score if levies
- 3,4 Don't pursue. +1 to score if veterans.
- 5,6 Players choice.

Pursuers in contact get a free hack (double normal casualties), then a normal melee is fought with the pursuers counting half casualties. Pursuers faced with a new enemy must dice: +<3 engage new enemy 4+ stop pursuit and make a walk move in any direction to counter the new enemy.