

THE RULES

This article explains the rules to Warhammer Skirmish, allowing you to play small-scale games in no time at all. Field a force of brave warriors and stake your claim in the Old World.

INTRODUCTION

First off, it is probably useful to ask why there should be any special Skirmish rules at all. The Skirmish rules were written to allow for Warhammer battles between small forces. They are modifications to the main rules allowing for scaled-down actions like Running, Climbing, Hiding, and causing Critical Hits. Instead of dealing with massive units wheeling and manoeuvring across enormous battlefields, Skirmish focuses on a handful of warriors.

THE SKIRMISH FORCE

The following rules work best with modest forces, say 100-250 points per side. Such forces should include very few, if any, magic items or Wizards (who should be limited to Level 1). You should choose one character from your army list to act as leader. A Hero level character will make a fine leader for the skirmish force and rules for leaders are explained below. Otherwise, feel free to choose any troops that suit the scenario you're playing, ignoring the limitations of Core, Special and Rare units.

The biggest difference between Warhammer and the Warhammer skirmish game is that in a skirmish game each model forms a unit on its own, rather than several models being formed into units in ranks.

SKIRMISH SCENARIOS

Skirmish games are far more entertaining if you come up with a scenario which supplies a reason for the battle. This could simply be a border skirmish, two scouting forces meeting each other, a local militia defending their village from raiders, or an expedition to rob the tomb of an Undead king. Feel free to come up with scenarios for your own battles.

THE TURN

To keep track of who is doing what and when, each turn is split into five phases. This is called the Turn Sequence.

TURN SEQUENCE	
1. Recovery During the Recovery phase you may attempt to rally individuals who have lost their nerve and recover models who have been knocked down or stunned.	2. Movement During the Movement phase you may move the warriors of your force according to the rules given in the Movement section.
3. Magic In the Magic phase any Wizards in your force may use spells.	4. Shooting In the Shooting phase you may shoot with any appropriate weapons as described in the rules for shooting.
5. Close Combat During the Close Combat phase all models in close combat may fight. Note that both sides fight in the Close Combat phase, regardless of whose turn it is.	

THE RECOVERY PHASE

During the Recovery phase you may attempt to rally any of your models that have lost their nerve. To take a Rally test, roll 2D6. If the score is equal to or less than the model's Leadership, the model stops fleeing and has rallied; turn it to face in any direction you wish. The model cannot move or shoot for the rest of the turn, but models able to do so can cast spells. If it fails the dice roll, the model continues to flee towards the closest table edge.

Note that a model cannot rally if the closest model to him is an enemy model (fleeing, stunned, knocked down and hidden models are not taken into consideration for this).

During the Recovery phase, warriors in your force who have been stunned become knocked down and warriors who have been knocked down may stand up (see the Injuries section).

THE MOVEMENT PHASE

During the Movement phase models are moved in the following order:

MOVEMENT PHASE	
<p>1. Charge! If you want a model in your force to charge at an enemy model and attack it in close combat then you must do this at the start of the Movement phase before moving any of your other models. When you charge a model, declare to your opponent that it is doing so and indicate which of his models it is attacking.</p>	<p>2. Compulsory moves Sometimes a model is forced to move in a certain way and this is called a compulsory move. For example, a fighter whose nerve breaks must run away from his enemies and take cover. Make all of your models' compulsory moves before finishing any remaining movement.</p>
<p>3. Remaining moves Once you have moved your chargers and made any compulsory moves that are needed, you may move the rest of your warriors as you see fit.</p>	

MOVING

During their Movement phase, models can move up to their Movement rate in any direction. They may move up and down ladders and stairs and over low obstacles such as barrels and boxes.

In normal circumstances, models are not obliged to move their full distance, and don't have to move at all if you do not want them to. Any exceptions are explained later on and invariably involve either charging or compulsory moves.

RUNNING

The Movement value represents how far a warrior can move whilst going at a fairly rapid rate, allowing him time to aim and shoot a weapon and to observe what is going on around him. If you wish, a model may move much quicker than this – he can run! A running warrior can move at double speed (for example, 8" rather than 4"). Note that running is not the same as charging as it does not allow your model to engage the enemy in close combat.

A model can only run if there are no enemy models within 8" at the start of the turn (fleeing, stunned, knocked down and hidden models do not count). Check this distance after any charges have been declared. If there are any enemies within 8" at the start of the turn, the model will prepare to fight instead and so is unable to run. The running model can move closer than 8" to an enemy as it moves.

Any model that runs loses its chance to shoot during that turn. He is concentrating on running and is not prepared to fight, having sheathed or shouldered his weapons. You should declare that models are running as they move, as this will remind both players that the model is unable to shoot that turn. Running models can cast spells as normal.

CHARGE!

If you want a model to engage the enemy in close combat then you must make a special move called a charge. Without measuring the distance, declare that your model is charging and indicate which enemy model he is going to attack. You can charge any opposing model if you can draw an unobstructed line from your model to the target. If your warrior wants to charge an enemy model within 4" that he can't see (e.g. it is behind a corner) but has not been declared as hidden, he must pass an Initiative test to detect it. If he fails the roll, your model may not charge this turn, but can move his normal distance, shoot and cast spells.

A charge is like a running move and is performed at double the model's Movement rate, but ends with the attacker moving by the most direct route into base contact with an enemy model. Once their bases are touching they are engaged in close combat. Charge reactions are allowed as normal.

Models are also considered to be in close combat even when separated by a low wall or obstacle, where it is impossible for bases to physically touch because the obstacle is in the way.

A model may charge any model within its charge range as long as there is no enemy model who is not in combat within 2" of the charge route (see diagram). It will undoubtedly be intercepted if it tries to run past the enemy.

In this situation, move the intercepting model into the charge path and the charging model then engages the intercepting model instead of his original target. The charging model still counts as charging when determining the strike order, weapon bonuses, etc.

Sometimes a charging warrior may not reach the enemy because you have miscalculated the distance. If this happens, move your warrior his normal Move distance towards the enemy. This is called a failed charge. The model cannot shoot in the same turn in which he failed a charge, but he can cast spells as normal. Keep in mind, however, that a failed charge can still be intercepted.

Models cannot be moved into close combat except by charging – any move that brings a warrior into close combat is a charge by definition.

CHARGING MORE THAN ONE OPPONENT

If you can move your warrior into base contact with more than one enemy model with its charge move, it can charge them both. This might be inadvisable as it will then be fighting two enemies at once!

HIDING

The Hiding rule represents warriors concealing themselves in a way that our unmoving and dramatically posed models cannot. A hiding warrior keeps as still as possible, just peeking out of cover.

A model can hide if it ends its move behind a low wall, a column or in a similar position where it could reasonably conceal himself. The player must declare that the warrior is hiding and place a counter (such as a coin, dice, etc.) beside the model for it to count as being hidden.

A model that runs, flees, is stunned or charges cannot hide that turn. His sudden burst of speed prevents it.

A model may stay hidden over several turns, so long as he stays behind a wall or similar feature. He may even move around provided that he stays hidden while doing so. If an enemy moves so that he can see the hidden warrior, the model is no longer hidden and the counter is removed. When hidden, a warrior cannot be seen, shot at or charged.

When hiding, a model cannot shoot or cast spells without giving away its position. If a hidden model shoots, or moves so that he can be seen, he is no longer hidden and can be shot at.

A model may not hide if he is too close to an enemy model – he will be seen or heard no matter how well concealed. Enemy warriors will always see, hear or otherwise detect hidden foes within their Initiative value in inches. So a warrior whose Initiative value is 3 will automatically spot all hidden enemies within 3".

Models may hide on the edge of woods just as if they were behind a wall or hedge.

CLIMBING

Ruined buildings etc., do not always have stairs or ladders, so your warriors will have to climb to reach higher ground.

Any model (except animals!) can climb up or down fences, walls, etc. He must be touching what he wants to climb at the start of his Movement phase. He may climb up to his total movement in a single Movement phase (but cannot run while he is climbing). Any remaining movement can be used as normal. If the height is more than the model's normal move, he cannot climb the wall.

To climb, a model must first take an Initiative test. If he fails the test whilst climbing up, he cannot move that turn. If he fails the test while he is climbing down, he falls from where he started his descent (see the Falling section).

JUMPING DOWN

Your warrior may jump down from high places, such as walkways and balconies, at any time during his Movement phase (to a maximum height of 6"). Take an Initiative test for every full 2" he jumps down. If he fails any of the tests, the model falls from the point where he jumped, takes damage (see Falling) and may not move any more during the Movement phase. If successful, the model can continue his movement as normal (jumping down does not use up any of the model's Movement allowance).

DIVING CHARGE

You may charge any enemy troops that are below a balcony or overhang etc., that your model is on. If an enemy model is within 2" of the place where your warrior lands, he may make a diving charge against that model. Take an Initiative test for each full 2" of height the model jumped down, up to a maximum of 6", like a normal jump. If he fails any of them, your model has fallen and suffers damage, may not move any more during the Movement phase and cannot charge the enemy. If he succeeds, the model gains a +1 Strength bonus and +1 To Hit bonus but only during the following Close Combat phase.

JUMPING OVER GAPS

Models may jump over gaps (up to a maximum of 3") and streets (eg. from the roof of one building to another).

Deduct the distance jumped from the model's movement but remember that you cannot measure the distance before your model jumps. If your model does not have enough movement to jump the distance, it automatically falls. If your model is able to cover the distance, it must pass an Initiative test first or will fall. A model is able to jump over a gap and still fire a missile weapon if it is not running. It may also jump as part of its charge or running move.

WARRIORS KNOCKED DOWN OR STUNNED

If a warrior is knocked down or stunned within 1" of the edge of a roof or building, there is a chance that it will slip and fall off.

Take an Initiative test. If the model is unfortunate enough to fail the test, it falls over the edge to the ground and suffers damage.

FALLING

A model that falls takes D3 hits at a Strength equal to the height in inches that it fell (eg. if the model fell 4", it would take D3 hits at Strength 4). No Armour saves apply. Falling will not cause critical hits (see the Close Combat section for the Critical hits rules).

A model that falls may not move any further or hide during that turn, even if it is not hurt.

THE MAGIC PHASE

During the Magic phase, Wizards can cast spells as detailed in the Magic section. For the purposes of spells which target units, all enemy models that are within 2" of each other are considered to be a single unit, and can all be affected by spells which target units.

For purposes of models that when in a unit count as spellcasters (ie. Plaguebearers), we invented a simple House Rule you might like to try. Each model that is within 2" of one another counts as part of a "unit". So, for example, if you have 5 Plaguebearers within 2" of one another, they form a "unit" and are considered a Level 1 wizard. This will also work against you for spells that affect a unit!

THE SHOOTING PHASE

Apart from the following exceptions, all the normal rules governing shooting in Warhammer apply: During your force's Shooting phase each of your warriors may shoot once with one of his weapons. This means that he can fire a bow, shoot with a crossbow, or hurl a throwing knife, for example.

Work through the models one at a time. Pick which warrior is going to shoot, nominate his target, work out whether he hits the enemy and, if he does, any wounds or injuries that are caused. Then continue with the next shooter. You can take shots in any order you wish. Be sure to remember or note down which models have already shot.

WHO CAN SHOOT?

Each model can shoot once during the Shooting phase, so long as the model can see a target and assuming that it has a suitable weapon to shoot with. Mounted models have a 90 degree arc of sight and models on foot have a 360 degree arc of sight as normal.

The model may not fire in the following circumstances: if it is engaged in close combat, has run or failed a charge in the Movement phase, has rallied this turn or is stunned or knocked down.

To shoot at a target, a model must be able to see it, and the only way to check this is to stoop over the tabletop for a model's eye view. Models can see all around themselves (ie. 360°), and they may be turned freely to face in any direction before firing. Note that turning on the spot does not count as moving.

CLOSEST TARGET

Your model must shoot at the closest enemy because he represents the most immediate threat and therefore the most obvious target. However, he may shoot at a more distant target if it is easier to hit or if closer models are stunned or knocked down (see the diagram below).

For example, a closer target may be hard to hit because it is in cover, whilst a more distant target might be in the open and therefore an easier shot.

Your model can shoot at models that are fleeing, knocked down or stunned, but he can choose to ignore them, because they do not represent an immediate threat. It is better to shoot the closest standing enemy model instead.

Note that your model may not shoot at models engaged in close combat, as the risk of hitting his comrades is too great.

SHOOTING AT A SINGLE TARGET

As a House Rule, we've had great success ignoring the -1 penalty for shooting at single targets as this made our bowfire nearly useless! Give it a try both ways and decide for yourself, just make sure you and your opponent are clear on which method you are using before you start a game.

SHOOTING FROM AN ELEVATED POSITION

A model situated in an elevated position (ie. anything that is more than 2" above the table surface, such as an upper floor of a building) may freely pick any target he can see and shoot at it. The exception to this rule is that if there are enemies in the same building and in line of sight of the shooter, he must shoot at these, as they present a more immediate threat.

THE CLOSE COMBAT PHASE

Apart from the following exceptions, close combat follows the same rules in the main rules section.

COMBAT RESOLUTION AND OVERRUNS

Neither of these rules are to be used in Skirmish.

WHO CAN FIGHT?

Models whose bases are touching are engaged in close combat. This can only happen once a warrior has charged his enemy, as models are otherwise not allowed to move into contact.

All close quarter fighting is worked out in the Close Combat phase. Regardless of whose turn it is, all models in close combat will fight. A warrior can fight against enemies to his side, front, or rear. In reality the fighters are constantly moving, dodging, and weaving as they struggle to kill their adversaries.

Models fighting in close combat do not shoot in the Shooting phase. They are far too busy fighting for their lives. Any very close range shots they are able to make using pistols are treated like close combat weapon attacks (see the Weapons & Armour section).

WHICH MODELS FIGHT?

A model can fight if its base is touching the base of an enemy model, this includes "corner to corner" fighting. Even models attacked from the side or rear can fight normally.

If a warrior is touching more than one enemy, he can choose which to attack. If he has more than 1 Attack, he can divide them in any way the player wishes, so long as he makes this clear before rolling to hit.

HITTING THE ENEMY

To determine whether hits are scored, roll a D6 for each model fighting. If a model has more than 1 Attack roll a D6 for each Attack.

The dice roll needed to score a hit on your enemy depends upon the Weapon Skills of the attacker and the foe. Compare the Weapon Skill of the attacker with that of his opponent and consult the To Hit chart on page 69 to find the minimum D6 score needed to hit.

CRITICAL HITS

If you roll a 6 when rolling to wound (only in close combat and shooting) you will cause a critical hit, which counts as 2 hits with no Armour save. In addition, if the attacker normally needs 6s to wound his target, he cannot cause a critical hit. His opponent is simply too tough to suffer a serious injury at the hands of such a puny creature!

Each warrior may only cause one critical hit during each Close Combat phase (see the Close Combat section for more details), so if he has several attacks, the first 6 rolled to wound causes a critical hit.

RESOLVING INJURIES

Most warriors have a Wounds characteristic of 1, but some have a value of 2 or more. If the target has more than 1 Wound then deduct 1 from his total each time he suffers a wound. Make a note on his roster sheet. So long as the model has at least 1 Wound remaining he may continue to fight.

As soon as a fighter's Wounds are reduced to 0, roll to determine the extent of his injuries. The player who inflicted the wound rolls a D6 and consults the injury chart for the wound that reduced the model to no wounds and for every wound the model receives after that. If a model suffers several wounds in one turn, roll once for each of them and apply the highest result.

INJURY TABLE - D6 Result		
1-2 Knocked down	3-4 Stunned	5-6 Out of action
The force of the blow knocks the warrior down. Place the model face up to show that he has been knocked down.	The target falls to the ground where he lies wounded and barely conscious. Turn the model face down to show that he has been stunned.	The target has been badly hurt and falls to the ground unconscious. He takes no further part in the game and is immediately removed from the battle.

KNOCKED DOWN

A warrior who has been knocked down falls to the ground either because of a jarring blow, because he has slipped, or because he has thrown himself to the ground to avoid injury. Turn the model face up to show that he has been knocked down.

Knocked down models may crawl 2" during the Movement phase, but may not fight in close combat, shoot or cast spells.

If he is in base-to-base contact with an enemy, a knocked down model can crawl 2" away only if the enemy is engaged in close combat with another opponent, otherwise he has to stay where he is. In combat, he cannot strike back and the enemy will have a good chance of putting him out of action.

A warrior who has been knocked down may stand up at the start of his next turn. In that turn he may move at half rate, shoot and cast spells, though he cannot charge or run. If he is engaged in close combat, he may not move away and will automatically strike last, irrespective of weapons or Initiative. After this turn, the fighter moves and fights normally, even though he has no wounds left. If the model takes any further wounds, then roll for injury once more, exactly as if the model had just sustained its last wound.

STUNNED

When a warrior is stunned, he is either badly injured or temporarily knocked out. Turn the model face down to show that he has been stunned. A fighter who is stunned may do nothing at all. The player may turn the model face up in the next Recovery phase, and the warrior is then treated as knocked down.

OUT OF ACTION

A warrior who is out of action is also out of the game. Remove the model from the tabletop. It's impossible to tell at this point whether the warrior is alive or dead, but for game purposes it makes no difference to the result of the game.

INJURING CAVALRY MODELS (House Rule)

We've adopted the practice of having the first wound a cavalry model fails to save kill the mount and not the rider. There is no Injury roll for the mount, it is simply replaced with a dismounted version of the model (Orc Boy for Boar rider, etc.). If the first wound on a cavalry model is a critical, it negates the Armour save but doesn't affect the rider. This keeps cavalry at good value for high points and avoids placing a horse face up on a Knocked Down situation!

ATTACKING STUNNED AND DOWNED WARRIORS

If an enemy is fighting a warrior who is knocked down, he may attack him to put him out of his misery. All attacks against a warrior knocked down hit automatically. If any of the attacks wound the knocked down model and he fails his Armour save, he is automatically taken out of action.

A stunned warrior is at the mercy of his enemies. A stunned model is automatically taken out of action if an enemy can attack him in hand-to-hand combat.

Note that a model with multiple attacks may not stun/knockdown and then automatically take a warrior out of action during the same hand-to-hand Combat phase. The only way you can achieve this is to have more than one of your models attacking the same enemy. So if the enemy is stunned/knocked down by the first warrior, he can be hit and put out of action by the next warrior to attack.

If your model is engaged in close combat with an enemy who is still standing, he cannot attack any other models that are stunned or knocked down, since in reality they will not pose an immediate threat and their companions will try to protect them.

KILLING BLOW

This takes precedence over critical hits and will take the victim out of action. Don't roll on the injury table, just take the headless corpse off of the battlefield!

POISON ATTACKS (House Rule)

On a to hit roll of 6, a Poisoned Attack will automatically wound an opponent. You may still roll a D6 just to see if a Critical hit is caused, as this will also negate an armour save and cause two wounds.

SWARMS (House Rule)

The myriads of tiny creatures that gather to form a Swarm do not get an Injury roll, they simply lose a Wound, so if it is the last Wound, remove the model. The Swarm's strength lies in numbers, not in strength of individuals.

PSYCHOLOGY

PANIC

Ignore stipulations 3 and 4 in the Panic rules found on page 80 of the Warhammer rulebook because they really don't apply to Skirmish battles.

BREAKING FROM COMBAT

A warrior who panics whilst fighting in close combat will break off and make a run for it. When a fighter breaks from combat he simply turns and runs. If his move is up to 6", then move him 2D6 away from the combat. If his move is over 6", then move him 3D6 away from the combat.

His opponents automatically hit the warrior as he breaks, each inflicting 1 hit which is worked out immediately.

Note that warriors cannot choose to leave a fight voluntarily.

COMBAT RESOLUTION AND OVERRUNS

Neither of these rules are to be used in Skirmish.

ALL ALONE

Being outnumbered and alone is a nerve-racking situation for any warrior.

If your warrior is fighting alone against two or more opponents, and there are no friendly models within 6" (knocked down, stunned or fleeing friends do not count), he must make a test at the end of his Close Combat phase. The test is taken against the model's Leadership on 2D6.

If the warrior scores equal to or under his Leadership then his nerve holds.

If the score is greater than his Leadership, the warrior breaks from combat and runs. Each one of his opponents may make one automatic hit against him as he turns to run. If the model survives, he runs 2D6" directly away from his enemies.

At the start of each of his turns, the warrior must take another Leadership test. If he passes, he stops but can do nothing else during his own turn except cast spells. If he fails or is charged, he runs 2D6" towards the nearest table edge, avoiding any enemy models. If he reaches the table edge before he has managed to recover his nerves, he is removed from combat.

If a warrior is charged while he is fleeing, the charger is moved into base contact as normal, but the fleeing warrior will then run a further 2D6" towards the table edge, before any blows can be struck. If a model flees off the table it is counted as out of action for purposes of calculating when to take Rout tests.

LEADERS

Determine a leader for your force before play begins. This will be the model with the highest Leadership value. A warrior within 6" of the leader may use his leader's Leadership value when taking Leadership tests. This represents the leader's ability to encourage his warriors and push them beyond normal limits.

A leader cannot confer this bonus if he is knocked down, stunned or fleeing himself. The sight of your leader running for cover is obviously far from encouraging!

THE ROUT TEST

A player must make a Rout test at the start of each of his turns if a quarter (25%) or more of his force is out of action. For example, in a force that has 12 warriors, a test is needed if three or more are out of action. Even forces that are normally immune to psychology (such as Undead) must make Rout tests.

If the Rout test is failed, the force automatically loses the fight. The game ends immediately and surviving warriors retreat from the area. A failed Rout test is the most common way in which a fight ends.

To take a Rout test roll 2D6. If the score is equal to or less than the force leader's Leadership value, the player has passed the test and may continue to fight.

If the force's leader is out of action or stunned, then the player may not use his Leadership to take the test. Instead, use the highest Leadership characteristic amongst any remaining fighters who are not stunned or out of action.

DESIGNING SCENARIOS

Here are a series of guidelines Warhammer Team members Alessio Cavatore and Gav Thorpe came up with that they felt were a good start towards making your own enjoyable little game. Keep in mind that these are not hard and fast rules, but just a set of suggestions. After all, you must leave some of your competitive spirit out of this and be prepared to play something that will probably not be as finely balanced as the battle game. The only way I can imagine the self-designed small skirmishes to be competitive is for the players to swap sides at the end of the first game and see who can play better with both sides.

But now let's look at the recipe for a perfect Warhammer Skirmish scenario:

- Keep the number of models under control (try not to field more than fifteen per side).
- Try and use only infantry. Do not include cavalry (not too good at moving in buildings and broken terrain) and large monsters (unless it's a classic 'Hunt the Troll' scenario).
- Do not use War Machines or Chariots.
- Stick to simple troops (Core units preferably, try to avoid Special and Rare stuff).
- Be careful with Lord level characters (use Heroes, unless it's a Lord and a few followers against lots of enemies).
- Do not use anything capable of flight (too scary!).
- Keep the magic levels low (preferably none to a maximum of a Level 1 per side).
- Do not include banners (including Battle Standards!) and Musicians. If you really want to upgrade the odd warrior to a Champion, that's not a big problem.