

MARTIAN EMPIRES

MARTIAN EMPIRES FAQ

BASIC CONCEPTS

Starting forces and how many points?

The game is designed to be played with forces between 1200 and 2000 points, for the best effect of the command and control system, but can be played quite successfully with less units and smaller forces. You will just find that players can order their units around more easily, especially if they brigade them. I would say that 500 points is really the smallest you would want for a game that gives a feel of the whole game. So, 3-4 units a side and a commander will get you started. The game is really designed for 1500 points a side and it works better with more units, when the limits of command and control start to affect the players.

Commander to unit ratio

The game is really designed so that you should have more than 4 units to an officer which stops players brigading everything into one command and ordering the whole lot around.

Regular cavalry as shown on page 13 and 15 appear to be in open order, as open order is only available to irregulars is this a legal formation?

Interesting - no it isn't - I'm guessing we did this to fit the unit into the photo.... :-)

As Giant Martians are only permitted open order formation can other irregular units form line and column?

Yes, irregular troops can form a line or a march column but it is not their usual formation. Imperial Martian troops are much better in a two deep line.

The Hexosaur and chariot artillery, is it treated the same as other artillery? In other words does it need to limber/unlimber.

Yes it does.

A Martian Hit Ray Unit - Contains 2 Bases is that 2 Heat Rays or 1?

Up to you how you base your heat rays - I base them two to a base, 3 Cephalod infantry to a base and just one Smoke Projector to a base.

Bases touching to form brigades?

Units may be within 1cm or so and be considered able to be ordered in a brigade formation. This helps clearly identify which units are which and can be useful when there are hordes of Martians in a line!

Victory Condition - Should a battlefield quarter only be able to be held by non-flier units?

You are quite right that it would be very cheesy to use a flyer to hold ground - it had never occurred to me that you would, as fliers clearly can't occupy an area (unless they land the crew get out I suppose). Martian Empires is written to be played the way I play my games - with some common sense and as a game - it wasn't ever written for competition or power gamers in mind.. :-)

ORDERS AND MOVEMENT

If the army commander fails to stop an impulsive tribal charge, is that the end of orders for the Martian side?

No, this is an attempt to stop a unit doing something and Impulsive orders happen before normal orders, so it doesn't end his normal orders for that turn.

When moving Rocket troops, do they jump? Are they affected by any terrain or simply move from their start position and in one leap end up to their 20cm +2d6 die roll?

They leap over terrain - you might want to measure distance to the top of things like cliffs, but otherwise they jump over hedges, rivers, etc.

Can rocketeers jump over friends in an ordered move to engage enemy in combat?

Yes, but if they land on their own troops they will disorder both units.

When ordering rocket troops to advance on enemy or cavalry do you count 20cm+12cm =32cm as the range from enemy before they suffer the command penalty to their die roll?

No, 20cm as normal as per infantry - they could only move 22cm after all.

When issuing brigade orders do you apply factors to each UNIT so that some factors apply to one unit and enable it to move and when applied to another unit it may fail? In this case, is the general considered to have passed or failed his command roll?

No, a brigade order is an order to all the units in a brigade to do something, thus the brigade is ordered at the lowest factor of all its units (if one is close to the enemy, all are considered to be close to the enemy), in the same way that a brigade moves at the speed of the slowest unit. The order to the Brigade succeeds or fails.

When Artillery is Forced Back - Do they retire with the guns or without?

They are forced back with the guns - because it simplifies the game and means you don't have to have separate crew figures, rules for re-crewing guns, using enemy guns, etc.

Unlimbered (deployed) artillery cannot retire (Page15). Can deployed artillery be forced back or rout or is it destroyed?

Artillery is forced back by firepower or in combat like any other unit. How they manage that move is not detailed as such in the rules, but IIRC it doesn't take a large force back to make unlimbered artillery run. The prohibition on unlimbered artillery receiving a retire order is purely to stop players prolonging their guns away from an approaching enemy. Further to the explanation in the rules, I view the idea that artillery crew would manhandle their pieces way from the enemy, rather than limbering up and scarpering, as somewhat gamey, as I can't see such crews outdistancing anyone.

What happens to a force when all characters are killed or have fled the table, as they would in effect have no one to issue orders....

Blimey - never had that happen! At that point you have lost as you have no characters left. I guess you could promote a new leader from amongst the men and treat him as one level poorer than the commander he replaces.

Buildings, woods, and strong-points are described as "dense terrain". What does that mean? If it's in the rules, I did not see it.

Dense Terrain affects orders and is explained on Page 12 under the Explanation of Orders.

FIRE COMBAT

In the second picture on page 16, the British line can fire at full affect at the cavalry, even though two British stands would be firing through the Martian foot?

Subject to line of sight/obscured units rules. Two stands of the British unit can fire; the other two do not have line of sight.

When rocketeers are pushed back are they considered infantry for force back and rout considerations? Put another way, how far do you have to push back rocketeers to rout them?

Yes, they are considered as Infantry so a push back of 20cm will rout them - I don't think they are likely to jump backwards when pushed back.

Do tripods shoot over any terrain? Do units block their line of fire?

Yes, tripods can shoot over units as they are so tall. They cannot fire if a unit is within 5cm of an enemy unit (similar to the dead ground rule for hills). I wouldn't say they can fire over terrain unless it is a low wall - they can't fire over hills or buildings, as they aren't that tall.

Units that meet terrain are eliminated if unable to complete their force back move, but what if they meet enemy troops....are they removed counting as having surrendered?

They are also eliminated if forced back into an enemy unit (which I guess won't happen that often!).

War machines - if a warmachine is disabled (movement wise) through combat results, does it still get pushed back?

If a war machine is immobilised then it cannot be pushed back.

If a vehicle is forced by damage to move into impassable terrain, what happens to it?

A unit forced back into impassable terrain by close combat is destroyed as with a routing unit. I would say that a unit shot out should have some leeway to move back around some impassable terrain.

I have two units that can fire at the same target. The first unit fires and the target is "forced back" out of range of the second unit that could fire. Is fire simultaneous such that both units can fire or sequential and only one?

Yes it is simultaneous - you nominate all targets before you fire so you would state that both the units are firing at the same target and work out the two lots of firing and then apply the accumulated force backs.

Can artillery fire at fliers?

Yes, provided the flier is not at maximum height (see Page 17 sidebar - fliers and ranges).

Do war machines fire only to their front unless explicitly stated otherwise? It's those MGs on the side of the heavy tank...

Yes, machines only fire to the front - the rifles on the sides of the heavy tank are just for show :-)

Can you fire into melee? If (say) a unit of tribal Martians is beating up the afore-mentioned artillery crew, can the rest of the British army pour fire into the Martians exposed 4 stands? In a very unkind and unsporting manner? :-)

No - Page 16 states that you can fire at a unit provided it is not blocked by another unit. Units partially blocked by TERRAIN can fire/be fired upon.

Do artillery Count the +1 for every two stands firing or is this restricted to Infantry?

+1 for 2 stands firing applies to all units, Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery

How do you adjudicate line of sight - is it the same as arc of fire?

Yes

CLOSE COMBAT

Page 21 Contact - A unit can make contact with one of its front corners. If this happens do both units fight as if all of the unit's frontage is in contact?

Bear in mind that the advancing unit also has to square up to the unit (if possible) (advance, page 13; examples page 22). Units that end up contacting only by a corner (see squaring up examples) still fight using the whole unit; the number of stands that actually make contact is immaterial, because unit-based (not stand-based) combat factors are used. In ME the whole unit counts all the time.

Should routers suffer any negatives in combat – have we missed something? We had one situation where a completely fresh infantry unit continued to fight against a very weak infantry unit.

If they have routed then they will be disordered. Bottom of P21 points out that Routers cannot inflict casualties on an enemy but they can still win the combat. If you hit them in the rear they will be at a disadvantage as well.

If both units in combat cause no hits do routers lose, as by the way I read it, they did not win – or does the combat continue next turn? Routers can seemingly be quite tough which sounds a bit odd.

The combat is a draw and would continue. Don't forget they are disordered and I would expect you to have hit them in the rear, so they will be at a disadvantage. If they are running away but have a full unit then I would expect them to still be reasonable at fighting if attacked.

Do routing units apply any combat factors – if so which ones?

-1 for disordered and then the usual factors if attacked in the front for stands in the front rank.

If a unit is victorious in combat and destroys all its opponents does it have the same Winner's options of pursuit, retire and hold?

It can retire or hold but there is no unit to pursue.

Fliers have a combat factor. Combat with who?

Good question. Fliers may be forced to land as a result of a vehicle failure or damage, and therefore they need a combat factor in the event that they are attacked. However, they can also combat other fliers (who are at the same altitude). In an Imperial Martian vs Imperial Martian game, both sides will have fliers.

Fliers are either at low, medium or high altitude. Can a ground unit make contact with a flyer?

Only if the flier has landed because of a failure or damage. At Low altitude it would still be "just" out of reach.

For force back tests, when the rear rank has less stands than the front rank will the "+1 if unit is in more than one rank and undisordered".

I have always played that you do get a rear rank bonus if you are in two ranks, even if the rear rank only has one stand in it. It simplifies matters without having to add extra provisos about the number of stands in the rear rank, etc.

Units leaving the table due to a "force back" are they considered destroyed?

Yes, any unit that leaves the table through rout or forcebacks is considered destroyed.

If artillery survives a melee and routs, do they abandon the guns or rout with them?

We always rout them - I know that the crew would abandon the guns, but it makes it simpler if all units rout and can then be rallied.

If a square of 4 British stands has no rear or flanks, does it count as having 4 stands in the front firing rank and get +2, albeit at 15cm range?

A square only has 1 base in the front rank (of each of 4 directions) , so would get no pluses for ranks.

Squares derive any benefit against irregular foot the way they do against cavalry – what happens to a square in combat if it has to fall back? Can it ignore the first 10-15-20cm of fallback, like in cover, but if it exceeds the amount the square routs?

No, a square doesn't get an advantage against irregular foot - foot is much more likely to break a square than cavalry. Yes, letting it ignore the first lot of fallback as per cover is a good idea.

Am I right that cavalry cannot charge infantry deployed in buildings?

Yes, Cavalry cannot charge infantry deployed inside buildings – Cavalry cannot occupy buildings, so you need to use other infantry to fight them.

RALLY AND REPAIR

What can disordered units do? Can they move, shoot, fight etc? I know we can undisorder/order them by remaining still etc, but is this mandatory for the next turn? Can they advance into combat if disordered? Retire?

For clarity - Disordered units can still be ordered forward, fire, enter combat, etc. They receive a -1 in firing and combat for being disordered and if forced back from combat will automatically rout.

OTHER RULES

What happens when a building with a deployed infantry unit is charged by an enemy unit? Does the enemy have to win a melee to break in? Does the deployed unit automatically lose its deployment status? Or maybe it has to be routed or lose by enough to be pushed back to lose its status?

When fighting a unit in a building, the unit leaves the building if it is pushed back or routed when it is no longer deployed in the building. The victorious unit can then deploy into the building on their next turn.

How do formations work for units that are in a building terrain piece but not "deployed"? Can they be in any formation or must they form some kind of column or loose formation that restricts them to the streets?

The section on formations in built up areas is under buildings on page 28. Units in March column can move full speed through the streets, Infantry in other formations move at half speed. Cavalry and artillery can only enter built up areas in march column and cannot change formation while within built up areas.

Do Cephalod Smoke Projectors have a range? When they fire is the smoke emitted from their position and then drifts 25cm) or do you target a unit and 'drop smoke' on their position on a successful roll of 7 or less?

They are artillery pieces (as noted on page 30) and so have a range of 80cm. You target the unit and drop smoke onto them.

ARMY LISTS

Brits Guard cavalry have only 2 hits per stands, instead that 3 for French and Prussians, at the same point cost.

This is a typo - Brits Guard cavalry should have 3 hits per stand.

Gatlings in Home Guard list have FF 7 instead than 6 for the Brit Expedition. Also CF is 5 in Home Forces, but only 4 on the expedition. Point cost is the same? Home Forces' artillery have FF 7 and CF 5; Expedition have FF 6 and CF 4. Again, point cost is equal.

This is deliberate - the Artillery and Gatlings are less effective on Mars than at home.

The French Heavy flyer is charged 160 points; being regular, and with same movement and weapons range, and a net rate of 8 in Hits, FF, CF and Morale...,it's cheaper than a Martian 2-man

flyer (hits 7, FF, CF and MF 7), charged 170 points.

French Flyer technology is superior so they their designs have more firepower for the same points values.

What is the range for Gatling Guns?

We thought that it should be nearer that of Infantry rather than Artillery. I have always classified it as artillery, so it has the same range as an artillery piece. If you think otherwise feel free to change it...