

Multiplayer-Plus Ruleset (MP+)

Statement of Purpose:

The mission of Multiplayer-Plus is to take Multiplayer rules and fix imbalances, bugs, and mistakes. There is a commitment to be conservative and avoid controversial decisions where possible. The goal is to improve the oversights and flaws that years of play-testing discovered, but only when it's possible to do so without major change to the feel and mechanics of the game.

MP+ is generally identical to the Multiplayer ruleset. Many contributors deserve credit. The result is a familiar Multiplayer experience that is improved by fixing the mistakes that limited ideal playability. Most changes are subtle, but in synergy create a total experience with noticeably more integrity, balance, and stability.

Guidelines and Principles for Changes to this Ruleset Branch:

The principles for what changes find their way into the MP+ ruleset come from the design goals of Multiplayer itself. No ruleset should claim to be MP if it's not aware and loyal to all those design goals. We put extra emphasis on four goals which become the requirements and talking points for every proposed change:

1. **Be conservative** about changing flawed balance/mechanics. Perfect the intent of the original mechanics *without creating new dynamics that don't feel classic. Respect tradition and maintain classic familiarity.*
2. **Historical changes to balance that failed, may be fully or partly restored** to Classic/Civ, but *“Devil's advocate awareness”* must balance in the reasons for why the change had been attempted.
3. **Feel like the completion of Multiplayer** – Feel just like a Multiplayer game that had the problems ironed out but no strange new characteristics or side effects. *“This feels like what Multiplayer was always trying to be.”*
4. **No private party.** This isn't about personal private pet preferences in play styles. It doesn't favor or disfavor different styles of play. A group of accomplished players who often disagree, creates this ruleset under Agreement that *“This does not represent every desired change of every contributor. We realize many proposals have counter-proposals wanting the opposite. We agree that when taken as a whole, this ruleset is much better than before. This is preferable to allowing deadlocks from preventing an improved standard.”*

SUMMARY OF MP+ ADJUSTMENTS:

Patches and fixes:

1. Land units on Mountains get +1 vision radius.
2. Illegal Action movement penalty bug removed.
3. Air and missile units can't be bribed or sabotaged.

Tech balance:

4. Bulb Costs of technologies equalize the pace of discovery throughout the game.
5. Philosophy won't work after T85 or discovering Conscription, Industrialization, or Electricity.
6. Darwin's Voyage does not award free tech. It increases Trade in a single city, similar to Colossus.

Buildings and Wonders:

7. Lighthouse: +2 moves, +1 vision, cost 170, obsolete: Miniaturization.
8. Pyramid was restored to its Classic effect. +25% food storage in every city.
9. Copernicus' Observatory costs 100 shields.
10. Mass Transit: 60 shields, +2T. Recycling Center: 70 shields, 1 upkeep, +2P.

Unit dynamics:

11. Air Units exert no ZoC over adjacent tiles.
12. Restrictinfra=ON makes enemy rails act only like roads. (*Restrictinfra=OFF is unchanged.*)
13. Bug fix: Bribe Cost for non-military units now applies to all infra units.

Naval balance:

14. Fix to Submarine (*attack strength was incorrectly same as a Battleship.*) Now attacks at 9, at Civ1 / Civ2 strength.
15. Move ratios of Battleship:Cruisers:Destroyer set to 10:11:12 moves.
16. Transform time for Swamp to Water changed from 36 to 12: enables more naval action in continental games.

Justifications, Explanations, and Details on next page:

DETAIL LIST OF ADJUSTMENTS:

- 1. Land units see farther when on top of mountains.** Units on a mountain can see +1 tile. *Effect:* This provides more realism and tactics to the game. It is also a mechanism to provide some balance for the halving of the vision/movement ratio under 2x movement.
- 2. Illegal Action movement penalty removed.** The command “[H]ome City” sometimes had a bug giving a penalty when legally performed, and making a unit lose $\frac{1}{2}$ move after an accidental key-press was needless.
- 3. Aircraft, nukes, helicopters, and missiles can't be bribed or sabotaged.**
Explanation: Developers made an “Unbriable” flag to fix this bug, but Classic and Multiplayer rules never received the fix.
Effect: For example, your nuke or cruise missile can't be bribed and turned around to go attack you.
- 4. Fine-tuned the Bulb Costs of Technologies to equalize tech pace throughout the game.**
Explanation: Previously, a formula did tech costs. It did well until late-game, then tech pace surpassed game pace.
Effect: First techs cost 4 bulbs less ($28-4=24$). Next techs are unchanged until Democracy/Gunpowder, with a gentle rise in costs finally ending with Stealth costing 50% more. After mid-game, new units can get used before going obsolete.
- 5. Philosophy gives a free advance, but coalition abuse is curbed.** Free tech awarded if discovered **before Turn 85** (Socrates' death), but *only* if the player has none of the following: **Industrialization, Electricity, Conscription.**
Explanation: This solution preserves different play-styles without ruining MP balance. Some wanted to restrict Philosophy, justifiably claiming “gangs of backwards nations” got better late-game techs than developed nations. Removal is problematic: players familiar with MP know that **Philosophy re-balanced lost trade routes**. This solution fulfills all the MP requirements. Keep in mind that late-joiners and others use Philosophy as a bargaining chip to get influence, alliance, and protection. It helps them survive and learn to play. It keeps the community growing. It increases cooperation, diplomacy, and interaction.
Effect: Before 400BCE (T85), Philosophy gives bonus tech if you **have none** of the first mid-game techs. This prevents mid- and late-game abuse. Philosophy continues to enhance diplomatic strategy, surprise, fun, and depth. MP design goals are not lost: Philosophy still compensates for lost of trade routes. Notifications begin warning of the coming expiration starting on T79.
- 6. Darwin's Voyage changed to increase Trade like Colossus.**
Explanation: Philosophy and Darwin could finish the tech tree on 0% science. Some players wanted Darwin gone or One-player-only. Player-only awards from Great Wonders and Huts were long ago forbidden from Multiplayer design principles to eliminate “ruleset luck” from deciding the game. The solution is to make Darwin do something else. Darwin becomes a replacement for Colossus going obsolete, simulating the effects on trade and commerce from scientific advancement.
Effect: Previously, most late-game tech was not being used: new tech too rapidly replaced old tech. Now, the 4 stages of late-middle, early-late, late-, and end-game are exciting distinct phases of the game that can actually be experienced and enjoyed.
- 7. Lighthouse improved and adjusted. +2 move, +1 vision, obsolete: Miniaturization. Cost: 170.**
Explanation: Lighthouse was OP in Classic rules. 200 shields gave ships +1 move and +1 vet. MP1 overcorrected: it removed the vet bonus, accelerated pace to go obsolete sooner, but kept the same cost. Then 2x moves came to MP1 without giving 2x to Lighthouse. The most valuable bonus was eliminated, the secondary bonus was half strength, the cost was the same, and it expired sooner. Thought is needed to save this Wonder. Reducing cost is a no-brainer – but with only $\frac{1}{4}$ of its original value intact, the cost would be so cheap that Lighthouse would be too common. To fix it right, the cost was slightly reduced to 170, the bonus corrected for 2x moves, the expiration delayed, and +1 vision replaces loss of +1 vet. These corrections make Lighthouse usable. Mission accomplished. Obsolete by: Miniaturization.
- 8. Great Pyramid restored to its Classic effect: Food storage +25% in every city. Cost 160.**
Explanation: MP1 re-purposed Pyramid & Great Library to lessen the gap between rapture/non-rapture governments. Giving rapture to one city was well-intended but it sadly proved to be overpriced and less effective than the original effect. Because overpriced under-poweredness was the reason for the original attempt to improve the Pyramid, it reverts back to Classic but gets a price reduction.
Effect: The classic Pyramid restores lost balance to non-rapture nations. It may provide a “vertical alternative” for nations who can't expand horizontally. In the early game, for the cost of 4 Granaries or 4 Settlers, you get a “half Granary” in all cities. In the late-game, the effect of the Pyramids may be different. *For late-game non-rapture governments, this Wonder is almost a “viability patch.”* Even so, the Pyramid is not meant to give equality to all governments, and it doesn't. It corrects a “widening of the gap” that MP1 unintentionally worsened. Perhaps it allows more strategies and more flexible timing of revolutions, improved balance and playability, government variety.
- 9. Copernicus' Observatory reduced to 100 shields.**
Explanation: This Wonder was meant to enable an early science strategy. It was basically a Library that costs 200 shields. Early science was 333% better served by making **three** Libraries, saving 20 shields, and discovering a more important technology first.
Effect: Copernicus now costs 1.7x a Library. *Maybe* it's now possible to sacrifice an important key tech to risk Astronomy for Copernicus.

10a. Mass Transit costs 60 shields and increases base trade by +2.

Explanation: Mass Transit was broken: 120p and upkeep similar to 2 Engineers. It cut the Pollution from Population but not Production. Let's compare that to an Engineer. One Engineer can clean pollution from Population OR Production in **any** nearby city. Mass Transit *might* prevent Population Pollution in one city (but it usually comes from Production.) When there is no Pollution, an Engineer can irrigate, road, fort, etc. Too many Engineers were cleaning pollution while pollution prevention was never bought. The Engineer is cheaper and has other benefits, so it remains a strong alternative: no classic strategies get broken. But the Mass Transit option gives: **a)** +2 trade from increased mobility and revenues from tickets, very slowly recouping the extra cost over an Engineer; **b)** Preventative pollution control **c)** Increased playability.

Effect: Overall play remains the same. You can pay extra to have less annoyance and get a tiny return on investment.

10b. Recycling Center costs 70, upkeep 1, increases base production by +2.

Explanation: Recycling Center was broken for the same reasons as Mass Transit. Recycling generates raw materials which aid production. It very slowly pays for itself with +2 shields to city output. A useless building now becomes a modest investment that increases playability.

Effect: Very little. The game remains the same. Some people might use this improvement. Some won't.

11. Air Units block land units from the tile they're on, but don't exercise ZoC on adjacent tiles.

Explanation: Rulesets allow two options. Fighters can be: **(a)** impotent – unable to defend a Worker from a vet Warrior, or **(b)** unreachable – able to block 10 Armors from a Worker. This was always a dirty compromise. In MP, air superiority and defensive air support got represented by choosing **(b)**, even if it creates possibility for exploits. Defensive air support and correctly representing the difficulty of land-to-air access were more important than disallowing rare exploits. Nevertheless, trimming back ZoC to greatly reduce the exploits makes perfect sense.

Effect: Fighters remain 'Unreachable' but no longer exert ZoC over 8 other unoccupied tiles.

12. Restrictinfra re-balance. Enemy rails only act like roads, while roads can still be used by all. **OPTIONAL SETTING.**

Explanation: A balance for *Restrictinfra* was achieved. Before, our choice was between two extremes. Some claimed that it's ridiculous for armies to travel at light speed conquering dozens of nations in a single turn, and that it's easy to knock out a rail. Others claimed that disabling enemy rails and roads is even more unrealistic and makes stalemates. Both sides were right. Behold the sweet spot in the middle.

Effect: Late game strategy was dominated by paranoia over rail systems. Rail invasions ended the game right as players were getting to “the good part of the game.” Now there is an option. (*Restrictinfra*=OFF preserves Classic behavior settings.)

13. Bribe cost ½ correctly adjusted to include all civilian units, not just Settlers.

Explanation: Bribing civilians is easier than bribing military. The ½ bribe cost rule goes back to when Settlers were the only infra unit. Failure to properly port the “Unit Flag” resulted in Workers having the same doubled bribe costs as military units.

Effect: Workers wandering very far from home are realistic bribe targets again.

14. Fix to OP Submarine. Now attacks at 9, restored to classical Civ I/II strength.

Explanation: Classic ruleset committed to creating the best possible synthesis of **Civ I** + **Civ II**. But for no good reason, the 50p Submarine got altered to attack like a 160p Battleship. By comparison, this would be the same as buffing Armor to be invisible, 12A FP2, Cost:50s, yet available 24450 bulbs sooner – **cheaply** able to **slaughter** every more advanced more expensive unit for the rest of the game. This was absolutely wrong. It lowered attrition ratios on expensive/more technological sea units by **many multiples**. The Submarine now returns to its rightfully balanced Civ I/II strength. This fixes a massive mistake that absolutely mutilated the naval balance of Sid's Civ I/II. Fortunately, this was the only violation of the Classic ruleset's Mission to be faithful to Civ I/II, and now it's fixed.

Effect: **Submarines are still the only unit in the game with vastly superior positive attrition ratios vs. more expensive more advanced units.** This change doesn't alter this – it only makes it less preposterously exaggerated.

15. Move ratios of Battleship:Cruisers:Destroyer adjusted to 10:11:12.

Explanation: A Battleship is just barely slower than a Cruiser. But because 1x units can't be set to half movement points, this was represented by the loss of a whole move point. Then, 2x moves doubled the surplus range of the Cruiser and other sea units. Ironically, a solution is built into 2x moves, as it creates a doubled scale that can tune units with "half moves." This is great for fixing units with lop-sided movement ratios. Battleship:Cruiser:Destroyer ratios now change from 4:5:6 (1x) to 10:11:12 (2x). This yields the same **difference in tile range** as 1x and gives almost the exact ratios for real life speeds. A magnified imbalance created by 2x gets changed into a balanced ratio even better than 1x had. MP+ uses the finer tuning capabilities of 2x to achieve improved naval balance and playability.

16. Transform time for Swamp to Water changed from 36 to 12. Map Generator gives two extreme choices. You can create a map of many islands, or a continent with unconnected lakes. The first choice favors naval units over land units; the second, land over naval. Ideally, all units could participate in a game. Before, landlocked nations couldn't participate in sea wars, often due to about 4 tiles blocking their lake's connectivity to other water. Assuming these are swamp tiles, we had $4 \times 36 = 144$ worker-turns. On the other hand, $4 \times 12 = 48$: completed by 3 Engineers in 8 turns. This change lets sea units rise in importance, a step closer to balanced land/sea games. Let's analyse realism. Before, making a hill under a city took ⅓ the time as dredging a swamp. But dredging swamps takes less time and was **done even before the industrial age**. The easiest transformation was set as the hardest! If a change is more realistic, more playable, **and** is a small step toward “the Holy Grail” of land/sea balance, then it's a no-brainer.