

Yet Another BattleTech Reading List

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Introduction

(You can skip this this.)

I started my journey into BattleTech universe 30 years ago with [Lethal Heritage](#). I found the book in a news stand on the train station and recognized that it has something to do with this PC game “MechWarrior”, which we played a lot. This led to playing the BattleTech tabletop with my friends and from there we escalated to ShadowRun and all the other RPG stuff. So long story short: Thanks to BattleTech, I’m a nerd now ;)

During the 1990s my teenage self has read all the BattleTech books available in Germany. Which in today’s terms (back then, there were no eras): Succession War era till end of the Clan Invasion era.

We stopped playing the tabletop regularly, when Clan-Tech hit the tables.

So, when we do get the old Unseens out for a few rounds of mayhem on a hex-map, we stick to 3025-Tech. Therefore, I am missing the last 20 years of the BattleTech timeline.

Which is why I started the project to (re-)read all the most important or interesting BattleTech books and created this reading list to have any chance to navigate the uncountable amount of BattleTech stories out there.

To get started, this reading recommendation is based on the **Humble Bundle: BattleTech Fiction Collection April 2024** and the recommendation of [Battletech Essential & Suggested Reading List : u/Insaniac99 \(reddit.com\)](#). Anything in *cursive* are the original comments from Insaniac99.

It will be updated while I’m going thru all the books. The red bar shows my current progress.

Note regarding the Eras

I use the eras more to sort the books thematically, than to adhere to the BattleTech timeline. Therefore, my categorization of eras and books can differ a little bit from the official timeline.

Pre-Succession Wars



Recommendation when to read these books:

I did read these books after the Twilight of the Clans to have concluded the Clan Invasion Arc.

But I think they will be more fun after finishing the The Legend of the Jade Phoenix Trilogy. I can imagine that the contradiction between the “we are Clan and the pinnacle of evolution” and the beginnings of the Clans, will be fun to discover.

[Founding of the Clans Trilogy](#) – 2784-2815

> I did enjoy these, but in the same time absolutely loathed the main character. You have to be able to cope with a whiny push-over as the anchor point for the trilogy. Yes, I hoped more than once that he dies.

Otherwise the Founding of the Clans is a good lesson in hubris and what kind of person you need to be to create such a warrior cult.

- Fall From Glory
- Visions of Rebirth
- Land of Dreams

2. [Betrayal of Ideals](#) – 2821-2840

> About the unnamed clan and its use of atomics. Wonderful end to the founding of the Clans. Do read the Author’s note afterwards. That’s a fun little tidbit of real-world BattleTech history.

Succession Wars Era

3. **The Grey Death Trilogy** – 3024-3028

> Traditional the recommended start into the BattleTech universe

It offers the viewpoint of a small mercenary unit and a small peek into the overall scheming.

1. [Decision at Thunder Rift](#)
2. [Mercenary's Star](#)
3. [The Price of Glory](#)

4. **The Warrior Trilogy** – 3022-3029

> Good Trilogy into the scheming of the great houses and the 4th Succession War.

I would recommend this as a start, if you’re more into nations-vs-nations, instead of small unit tactics.

1. Warrior: En Garde
2. Warrior: Riposte
3. Warrior: Coupé

5. **Wolves on the Border** – 3021-3028

> How the beef between Draconis Combine and the Wolf Dragoons started.

6. **Heir to the Dragon** – 3004-3040

> The story of Theodor Kurita and how he took over the Draconis Combine.

Clan Invasion Era (3050-3060ish)

7. [The Blood of Kerensky Trilogy](#) – 3049-3052
 - > Start of the Clan Invasion.
 1. Lethal Heritage
 2. Blood Legacy
 3. Lost Destiny
8. [The Legend of the Jade Phoenix Trilogy](#) – 3030-3050
 - > *If you're into the Clans*. Learn about the culture and laws of Clan Jade Falcon ...and how to break them.
 1. Way of the Clans
 2. Bloodname
 3. Falcon Guard
9. [Wolf Pack](#) – 3053-3055
 - > *Conclusion/continuation of "Wolves on the border" and "Heir to the Dragon"*.
10. [Ideal War](#) – 3054-3055
 - > Highly Recommended: A story on the Marik-side and completely different from other BT books, as it has a Vietnam War/Apocalypse Now-vibe.
I recommend reading it at this point, to have a little break, before we go into all the FedCom drama.



Skip 11-14, if you want to continue with the Clan Invasion story arc.

These books focus on the beginning of the FedCom civil war. If do like political drama and scheming: Read on!

11. [Natural Selection](#) – 3054-3055
 - > Kell Hounds and Clan Wolf hunting "Clan Pirates". Oh, and the start of the FedCom civil war.
12. [Assumption of Risk](#) – 3055-3056
 - > *Continuation of the story arc(s) from Natural Selection*, but with more Kai Allard-Liao on Solaris VII. Has major plot points relevant to events in upcoming novels and civil war plot lines.
13. **Black Thorns novels** – 3054-3057
 - > Not recommended: But can act as a quick breather, before we go on with the FedCom drama. It's "The Grey Death Trilogy we have at home" but set during the Clan Invasion era. Can be skipped, as it does not forward the overall story arc and is a bit boring.
 1. [Main Event](#)
 2. [D.R.T](#)
14. **The "2nd Grey Death Trilogy"** – 3056-3058
 - > Deep dive into the start of the Civil War with focus onto Skye March. Also, the story focuses more on Alex Carlyle, the son of Grayson.
 1. [Blood of Heroes](#)
 2. [Tactics of Duty](#)
 3. [Operation Excalibur](#)
15. **Camacho's Caballeros trilogy** – 3034-3058
 - > Interesting story arc, does not forward the overall timeline. To be honest, the 'llos did annoy me and the anti-mech fighting is a bit over the top (like some of the characters). I did like the view into the Combine low level culture. Also, too much talk about rape.
 1. [Close Quarters](#)
 2. [Hearts of Chaos](#)
 3. [Black Dragon](#)

16. [I am Jade Falcon](#) – 3057
 - > Start into the Clan-scientists-conspiracy arc and got starter for the next two books by providing a “sneak peek” into the following story and details regarding a death.
17. **Companion books to “I Am Jade Falcon” – 3057-3058**
 - > Read these after “I Am Jade Falcon”. Mayor plot lines to shape the Inner Sphere for the Twilight of the Clans. Deeper view into Clan politics and some more scheming.
 - o [Bred For War](#)
 - o [Malicious Intent](#)
18. [Freebirth](#) – 3058-3059
 - > Part of the Twilight of the Clans series, but a much better fit after “Malicious Intent”, because it continues from its last location and continues the plot lines started in “I Am Jade Falcon”.
19. [Star Lord](#) – 3057 (Not in Humble Bundle)
20. **Northwind Highlanders books – 3057-3058**
 - > I enjoyed these. Easy, relaxing read before getting into the Twilight of the Clans. Old school BattleTech stories with clearly marked baddies and some light moral dilemmas with clear answers.
 1. [Highlander Gambit](#) – 3057-3058
 2. [Impetus of War](#) – 3058
21. [Double Blind](#) – 3058
 - > Skipped this one, because I want to finish the Clan Invasion Arc. Probably read it later.
22. [Binding Force](#) – 3058
 - > Skipped this one, because I want to finish the Clan Invasion Arc. Probably read it later.
23. [Twilight of the Clans](#) – 3058-3062
 - 1) [Exodus Road](#)
 - > Starts with the Battle of Tukayyid (3052) and tells the story of a disgruntled employee ...erm, Smoke Jaguar mech warrior and how to not handle such situations by management. All joking besides, a great start into Twilight of the Clans.
 - 2) [Grave Covenant](#)
 - > The start of the big push against the Clans is ...Politics!
A lot of it during the Whitting Conference, afterwards some battle action from Operation Bulldog. Still, a good read and at least only a minimum of FedCom drama.
 - 3) [The Hunters](#)
 - > Story of Taskforce Serpent and the moral dilemmas they encounter on their way to their target. Another easy read with a good mix of drama and action.
 - 4) ~~[Freebirth](#)~~
 - > Would not recommend this as part of the Twilight of the Clans series.
See [18. Freebirth](#)
 - 5) [Sword and Fire](#)
 - > Sword and Fire and Shadows of War finalize the travels of Taskforce Serpent and cover the war on Huntress. Includes some cool space battles and a really long campaign on the ground.
 - 6) [Shadows of War](#)
 - > See Sword and Fire
 - 7) [Prince of Havoc](#)
 - > Finale of the Twilight of the Clans series. The second part of the book has a completely different vibe by diving into politics, spying and scheming, as it completes some open ends and opens some new threads.

- 8) Falcon Rising
> Continues the story arcs from "I Am Jade Falcon" and continues after Freebirth. I personally think it does not fit and do not see it as part of the Twilight of the Clans series, but you should read it afterwards, otherwise you get some massive spoilers. If you do not care about the Twilight of the Clans series (especially Taskforce Serpent and the final tests), then read it directly after Freebirth.

Back to the Pre-Succession Wars

I started to read the Pre-Succession Wars books, after I finished the Twilight of the Clans series.

It was a nice break before going into the Cappellan Solution, but you could also start reading the Pre-Succession Wars book after the The Legend of the Jade Phoenix Trilogy.



24. [The Capellan Solution](#) – 3060-3062
> Sun Tzu is First Lord of the Star League and you can be assured, he will milk this title for Cappellan gains till the last drop. This means, he goes for the St. Ives Compact with more than just scheming.
1) Threads of Ambition
2) The Killing Fields
25. [Dagger Point](#) – 3061-3062
Part of the Capellan Solution. Reads like the Vietnam war of the Eridani Light Horse: Send to liberate a planet and are unwanted by the locals. It has a very interesting viewpoint and story for a BattleTech novel.

FedCom Civil War Era (3060ish-3067)



I probably skip these

Not sure if I want to read more about the FedCom brother and sister drama.

26. [Illusions of Victory](#) – 3062
> Solaris VII, Grand Tournament and a civil war: Great opportunities for schemers, media and even mech' jockeys. Has all the Solaris VII boxes ticked: The big arenas, Valhalla, media and also include street fighting. I enjoyed this one.

--- **Current reading progress. Will update rest of the list, when I get there. ---**

27. Flashpoint
28. Measure of a Hero Blaine Lee Pardoe
29. Path of Glory Randall N. Bills
30. Test of Vengeance Bryan Nystul
31. Patriots and Tyrants
32. Storms of Fate
33. Operation Audacity Blaine Lee Pardoe
34. Endgame

Word of Blake Jihad (3067-3081)



Looking forward to these

I started reading the first Jihad novel and was disappointed. I will try to find more novels/stories before attempting the Jihad era again.

In the mean time I will read the skipped books from the Clan Invasion and maybe even dive into the FedCom Civil war.

35. [Embers of War](#) – 3066-3077

> Was disappointed of this one. I was hoping for cyborgs assassins, high-tech battles and religious fanatics, but only got two mercenary regiments trying not to fight over a backwater planet, will be instigated by 2½ Blakist agents.

36. [Isle of the Blessed](#) – 3071-3073

37. [Operation ICE STORM](#) – 3071-3072 (Not in Humble Bundle)

38. [Icons of War](#) – 3071-3147

Clan focused: Wars of Reaving)

Dark Age Era (3130-3150)

39. Ghost War Michael A. Stackpole

40. A Call to Arms Loren L. Coleman

41. Ther Ruins of Power Robert E. Vardeman

42. Proving Grounds Trilogy -

> *Some major problems lore-wise, but also establish a ton of important characters*

1) A Silence in the Heavens

2) Truth and Shadows

3) Service for the Dead

43. By Temptations and by War Loren L. Coleman

44. Fortress of Lies

45. Flight of the Falcon

46. Blood of the Isle

47. The Scorpion Jar

48. Target of Opportunity

49. Sword of Sedition

> *You might be able to dive in at this point instead of the earlier novels for the Dark Age*

50. Fortress Republic

51. Principles of Desolation

52. Surrender Your Dreams

53. Masters of War

54. A Rending of Falcons

55. Pandora's Gambit

56. Fire At Will

57. The Last Charge

58. To Ride the Chimera

59. A Bonfire of Worlds --

> *It ends up being the book that takes the setting from To Ride the Chimera to the ilClan lead-up. Like Heir to the Dragon, it covers a long period of time and is not just a smooth narrative of a focused event. This leads right into the intro fiction of Field Manual: 3145*

60. Children of Kerensky
>Another Heir to the Dragon style novel that follows characters over a long period.
61. Splinter of Hope/The Anvil
>Might want to read Era Report 3145 first, though, as some time passes between A Bonfire of Worlds and these stories
62. Redemption Rift
63. Rock of the Republic
>Mostly fleshes out what we see in Shattered Fortress. Including important Fidelis stuff.
64. Hunting Season

ilClan Era (3151-)

65. Hour of the Wolf
66. (not DA) Forever Faithful
> Set in the 3060's, but is really best read after reading the Dark Age era, or at least getting as far as Surrender Your Dreams
67. Redemption Rites
68. A Question of Survival

Anthologies

(no reading order)

- No Greater Honor (The Complete Eridani Light Horse Chronicles – all eras), edited by John Helfers and Philip A. Lee
- BattleCorps Anthologies
 - Front Lines (BattleCorps Anthology, Volume 6), edited by Jason Schmetzer and Philip A. Lee
 - Kill Zone (BattleCorps Anthology, Volume 7), edited by Philip A. Lee
 - Slack Tide (A BattleCorps Anthology), edited by Jason Schmetzer and Philip A. Lee
- Marauder by Lance Scarinci – Stories about the Black Marauder (3073-3080?)
- Fox Tales by Bryan Young – The story of the mercenary unit Fox Patrol (3143-3148?)

Interesting reads outside this Humble Bundle

(no reading order)

- [List of original German BattleTech novels | BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
>Non-canon, because they were released in Germany first.
- [The Quest for Jardine - BattleTechWiki](#) - 3067
> Set in during the Jihad and has something to do with the Word of Blake
- Jihad Hot Spots
>Stories and game material related to Word of Blake Jihad.
 1. [Blake Ascending - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
 2. [Jihad Hot Spots: 3072 - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
 3. [Jihad Hot Spots: 3076 - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
 4. [Jihad Hot Spots: Terra - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
 5. [Jihad: Final Reckoning - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
- Interesting BattleCorps Anthologies
 - [Fire for Effect - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#)
>mostly Jihad related stories
 - [Legacy - BattleTechWiki \(sarna.net\)](#) - 2779-3090
> 13 short stories following one Grasshopper 'Mech from construction till end
- Far Country
>Real aliens in BattleTech. Timeline is not relevant, as it is situated outside of the Inner Sphere.