

# Table of Contents

Introduction	0
Gameplay	1
Movement	1.1
Combat	1.2
Units	2
Officers	2.1
Skirmishers	2.2
Cavalry	2.3
Pikemen	2.4
Square Infantry	2.5
Line Infantry	2.6
Set Up and Scenarios	3
Basic Battle	3.1

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# Dice Tactics

## Introduction

**Dice Tactics** is a tactical dice game for two players that plays more like Chess than Yahtzee. Dice are used to represent six types of units on a square grid battlefield rather than their traditional role as random number generators. Each player will compose their army and face off, looking to maneuver into a superior position and achieve their objectives.

When a die is placed on the field, the face showing "up" determines the unit's type. Each unit type has unique behaviors and attributes that can contribute to a given army in a variety of ways, making force composition a key part of each game. As each battle develops, expert commanders will look to use these specialized units to exploit weaknesses and tactical errors in the pursuit of victory.

# Gameplay

At heart, all tactics games are about two things: movement and combat. **Dice Tactics** is no different, but the simple rules for each lead to complex plays and counter-plays between skilled players.

During each turn, players will have a specific number of actions they must use to order their units around the battlefield before passing the turn to their opponent. Turns will pass this way until one player wins, either by destroying all their opponent's officers or by achieving some other objective decided before the game started.

# Movement

Movement in **Dice Tactics** is relatively simple. A command may spend one action to move a unit they control into an unoccupied square of the battlefield. Movements cannot be made diagonally or off the battlefield. Some types of units may have more stringent limitations on their movement, but those will be explained in the detailed unit explanations below. When units move, they must remain in the same orientation after the move is complete, that is, they may not rotate as part of a single movement action.

Units may also be rotated in place by spending an action. While this is not especially useful for symmetrical units, other units may have movement restrictions or combat penalties based on their orientation, making it paramount to ensure they are oriented in the correct direction during battle.

# Combat

Combat in **Dice Tactics** can be thought of as "movement against opposition". Like a regular movement action, attacks are made by spending an action to move a unit into a square that is occupied by an enemy unit. Like movement, attacks may not be made diagonally. To determine if the attack is successful, both players will compare the *combat strength* of the attacker and the defender.

A unit's *combat strength* is determined by how many "die pips" are present on the die edge facing the attacker or defender. Each pip that is directly adjacent to the edge contributes 2 *combat strength* to the unit, while pips in the center of the die face contribute 1 *combat strength*. Other pips do not contribute any strength to a given attack, though they can be used during attacks that involve the relevant die edges.

If the attacker has *combat strength* greater than or equal to the defender, the defender is forced to *retreat* to the square directly opposite the source of attack. The attacker moves into the previously occupied square immediately after the attack is resolved. If the *retreat* square is occupied by another unit or would be off the battlefield, the defending unit is removed from the battlefield instead of *retreating*, making flanking and surrounding enemy units a very powerful maneuver.

If the defender has greater *combat strength* than the attacker the attack fails and both units remain in their original position.

# Units

Each unit on the battlefield is a given type, determined by which die face is facing up when the unit is placed during setup. Units of a given type can have unique movement rules, combat strengths, or other properties, allowing commanders to tailor their force composition to their overall strategic goals. Units may not change type during the course of a battle.

# Officers

Officers are the weakest individual units in any **Dice Tactics** army, but provide enormous bonuses to the force as a whole. They are represented by the "one" face of the die, showing a single pip.

## Combat

Officer units have a *combat strength* of 1 on all edges due to the single pip in the center of the die face, meaning that any other unit may successfully attack an officer. Officers should be considered extremely delicate and protected closely!

## Movement

Officers do not have any restrictions on movement.

## Special Rules

Each officer under a commander's control gives that commander an action to use during each turn, meaning an army with more officers can perform more movement and attack actions each turn. However, a force with more officers could be considerably weaker than their opponent. Officers that are removed from the battle no longer contribute an action each turn. An army with no officers is considered *routed* and its commander loses the game.

# Skirmishers

Skirmishers are flexible, maneuverable units well suited to breaking up tightly packed formations of more powerful units. They are represented by a "two" face, showing two pips at opposite corners of the die.

## Combat

In traditional combat, skirmishers have 2 *combat strength* on all edges since each edge has a single pip adjacent to it. Skirmishers may also perform a special ranged attack against units 1 square away from them. The ranged attack is made using both face pips at strength 4 and requires the attacker and defender to move as they would during a normal attack. Defenders may not use unit specific defensive bonuses when defending against a skirmisher's ranged attack.

## Movement

In addition to the normal movement action, skirmishers may make a diagonal movement along the line defined by the two pips on the unit face. The other diagonal is still restricted and may not be used for movement.

## Special Rules

Skirmishers do not have any additional special rules.



# Cavalry

Cavalry are fast units that are strongest when used as a group but can be picked apart easily when separated. They are represented by a "three" face on a die.

## Combat

When alone, a unit of cavalry attacks and defends at *combat strength* 3 on all sides per the normal pip calculations. When cavalry are adjacent to other friendly cavalry, however, they can double their strength to 6 on one of their edges. Specifically, a cavalry unit that is adjacent to a friendly cavalry unit such that the two units form a "wedge" with their pips have a *combat strength* of 6 on the edges that form the "point" of the wedge.

## Movement

Cavalry do not have any specific restrictions or bonuses to their movement.

## Special Rules

Cavalry units may take a single free action, either an attack or a move, at the beginning of each turn.

# Pikemen

Pikemen are the ultimate defensive unit and serve as difficult obstacles for commanders to maneuver around. They are represented by a "four" face on a die.

## Combat

Pikemen may attack at strength 4 based on the two pips adjacent to each die edge, but may use all pips on the die face when defending. This means that pikemen have *combat strength* of 8 when defending all attacks, excepting ranged attacks made by skirmishers.

## Movement

Pikemen have no restrictions on movement.

## Special Rules

Pikemen have no special rules.

# Square Infantry

Square Infantry are relatively strong and relatively mobile units that are flexible in nearly any position. They are represented by a "five" on the die face.

## Combat

Square Infantry attack and defend at strength 5 on all edges based on the die's pip pattern.

## Movement

Square Infantry have no restrictions or bonuses to their movement.

## Special Rules

Square Infantry have no additional special rules.

# Line Infantry

Line Infantry form the backbone of an army. They are very strong when in position, but require lengthy maneuvering and are vulnerable to flanking attacks. They are represented by a "six" face on a die.

## Combat

Line Infantry are strength 6 on each edge with 3 pips but only strength 4 on the edges with 2 pips.

## Movement

Line Infantry may make attacks without restriction, but may only move in the direction of their edges with 2 pips. This requires commanders to spend an action rotating line infantry in place before moving them in a new direction.

## Special Rules

Line Infantry have no additional special rules.

# Set Up and Scenarios

**Dice Tactics** may be played in a variety of settings, ranging from a simple one on one battle to more complex scenarios with multiple objectives to accomplish. Beginners should stick with basic battles before moving on to more complex scenarios.

# Basic Battle

A basic battle is played between two players with 12 units on each side. The board is a standard chess board, 8 spaces by 8 spaces.

To begin, players should roll a die to determine who is the first player and set the board between them.

Once determined, the first player places 3 units of any type on his half of the board. The second player then places 6 of her units on her half of the board. The first player places an additional 6 units, followed by the second player placing another 6 units. Finally, the first player places his 3 remaining units.

With setup complete, play begins and the first player may begin taking his first turn.