

Britannia reduX Core Rules

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1 Game Components

1.1 The Game Board

The board represents the island of Britain, divided into 37 land areas. Six sea areas surround the island. Some land areas, shaded more deeply, represent difficult terrain — rough, hilly, or swampy areas that impede movement.

Britain itself is divided into three regions by heavy lines, as follows:

Wales (7 areas): Clwyd, Cornwall, Devon, Dyfed, Gwent, Gwynedd, Powys.

Scotland (10 areas): Alban, Caithness, Dalriada, Dunedin, Hebrides, Mar, Moray, Orkneys, Skye, Strathclyde.

England: The remaining 20 areas.

Britannia reduX can be played on a game board from any edition of Britannia. On a Gibson or Avalon Hill game board, players should note the rule for Skye below, and may treat Cumbria as connected to Lothian.

1.1.1 Islands and Coastal Areas

The Scottish areas of Hebrides and Orkneys each consist of a cluster of islands. The area of Skye includes both the island and the portion of the mainland that formed the ancient kingdom of Skye; it borders both the Icelandic and the Irish Seas, while Dalriada borders only the Irish Sea. Hwicce is a coastal area, bordering the Atlantic Ocean.

Parts of Ireland and Normandy are shown in the left and lower-right areas of the map, although they are not involved in the game.

1.2 The Unit Markers

There is only one type of unit — the infantry army — in the game. Each nation's armies are represented by cardboard markers.

1.3 Other Components

1.3.1 Timeline

On the Timeline, players will find a list of armies to be placed as reinforcements during each game round, as described in section 5.2.

1.3.2 Play Order List

This list shows the order in which nations take their nation turns, described in section 4.1, as well as how many armies are available to each nation.

1.3.3 Holding Areas Table

This table summarizes the primary way in which nations may score victory points, described in section 3.1.

1.3.4 Population Markers

Each nation has a population increase marker, which is used to track the nation's progress on the Population Track, as described in section 5.1.

1.3.5 Round Marker

The round marker is placed on the Timeline to track the current game round.

2 Game Setup

Place the round marker in the space for the first round on the Timeline.

Determine which player will control each colored set of nations. Each player should take the pieces for the nations he or she controls.

Place the starting armies on the map. When all pieces have been placed, the first game round begins.

2.1 Three and Five Player Games

When playing with three or five players, the division of the nations among the players is different from the four-player game.

In a three-player game, the nations are divided as follows:

Player 1: Welsh, Picts, Angles, Norwegians, and Jutes

Player 2: Brigantes, Caledonians, Irish, Dubliners, and Saxons

Player 3: Romano-British, Scots, Norsemen, Danes, and Normans

In a five-player game, the nations are divided as follows:

Player 1: Picts, Angles, and Jutes

Player 2: Caledonians, Irish, and Saxons

Player 3: Brigantes, Norsemen, and Danes

Player 4: Romano-British, Scots, and Norwegians

Player 5: Welsh, Dubliners, and Normans

3 Winning the Game

At the end of the game each player adds together the victory points that each of his or her nations has scored; the two ways in which nations may score are described below. The player with the most victory points wins the game.

3.1 Holding Areas

The primary way for a nation to score points is by **holding** areas: being the sole nation with armies in the area (thus **owning** the area) **at the end of each game round** (not just the end of the nation turn, as explained in section 4.3). Each nation has three **scoring centers** (which may or may not be adjacent to each other) listed in the Holding Areas table, and scores the indicated number of points for holding these areas and for other areas. Of course, some nations score for the same areas, and this is a major source of conflict in the game.

3.2 The King of England

At the end of the final game round, the King of England is determined. The nation which holds the most areas in England, south of and including York and Cheshire, is declared the King of England, and is awarded eight (8) victory points. If two or more nations tie for the most areas, the victory points are divided evenly between them, and any points left over are lost.

4 A Game Round

The game is played over several game rounds. A **game round** consists of all nations taking their **nation turns**, each of which consists of three **phases**.

At the beginning of each round, players should consult the Timeline and note the armies to be placed as reinforcements for each nation in that round. Those which appear in sea areas, as described in section 5.2.1, may be placed at this time, but a shortage of armies is not resolved until the Population Increase and Reinforcements Phase of the nation's turn, as described in chapter 5.

4.1 The Nation Turn

In the game, the order of play depends on nations, not players. During each game round, each nation takes its turn in the order stated in the Play Order list. Thus, the Romano-British play first, completing all of the phases of their nation turn, then the Welsh take their turn, and so on. In many rounds some nations will have no armies on the board. If a nation has not yet entered the game — or has already left the game — skip its nation turn.

During each nation's turn, the controlling player will perform the following three phases, in this order:

Phase 1: Population Increase and Reinforcements

In this phase, the player may place new armies received as population increase or listed on the Timeline on the board, as detailed in chapter 5.

Phase 2: Movement

In this phase, the player moves the nation's armies, possibly initiating battles, as described in chapter 6.

Phase 3: Battles and Retreats

In this phase, battles and retreats are resolved, as described in chapter 7.

4.2 Restrictions During a Game Round

At various points during the phases of each nation's turn, as described below in the rules for each phase, a nation's armies may be subject to either or both of the following restrictions:

4.2.1 Stacking Limit

The number of armies of one nation allowed in a single land area is strictly limited. Each nation may normally have **no more than three armies in a non-difficult terrain area, or two in a difficult terrain area**. As an exception to this restriction, each nation may have a single **overstack**. This overstack consists of one (and only one) group of either up to **six** armies in a non-difficult terrain area or up to **four** armies in a difficult terrain area.

4.2.2 Population Limit

The population of a nation (the total number of armies the nation has) may **not be greater than twice the total number of land areas** containing the armies. Armies at sea do not count towards the population limit. Areas with unresolved battles and the armies in them are not counted if the nation has fewer armies in the area than the opponent; otherwise, subtract one less than the number of opposing armies in each area from the number of the nation's armies.

When a nation's population exceeds the population limit, the **number of excess armies** is the difference between the nation's current population and the population limit.

4.3 End of the Game Round

After all nations have taken their nation turns, nations score points for holding areas, as described in section 3.1. After scoring is complete, the game round is over. The round marker is moved to the next round on the Timeline and the next game round begins.

5 Phase I: Population Increase and Reinforcements

Nations gain more armies in two ways; first by increasing population through owning areas, and then by receiving reinforcements listed on the Timeline.

Nations may ignore the population limit calculated in section 4.2.2 when placing armies gained through population increase or reinforcements. Nations may not refuse to increase population or place reinforcements.

Each nation is limited in the number of armies it may have in play, as listed in the Play Order list. If there are not enough armies available when increasing population or placing reinforcements, the number of armies received is reduced accordingly (in the case of a shortage of reinforcements, the player may select which armies do not appear), and the nation's population marker is moved to the highest value on the Population Track.

5.1 Population Increase

If the nation owns no land areas, it receives no population increase, and its population increase marker is moved to zero on the Population Track.

Otherwise, to calculate a nation's population increase, the controlling player first adds any population points left over from the previous game round (indicated on the Population Track) to the population points provided by the areas owned by the nation; clear terrain areas provide two population points, while difficult terrain areas provide only one. For every four population points in the total, the nation receives one new army. Any points left over are saved until the next turn by moving the nation's population increase marker to the appropriate space on the Population Track.

If the nation's population exceeds the population limit calculated in section 4.2.2, then the number of armies received as population increase is reduced by the number of excess armies. If the number of excess armies is greater than the number received as population increase, the controlling player must remove a number of armies equal to half the difference without removing the last army from any area, the nation receives no population increase, and the nation's population increase marker is moved to zero on the Population Track.

5.1.1 Placing New Armies

New armies gained through population increase are placed in land areas which the nation already owns. Nations may not exceed the stacking limit described in section 4.2.1 when placing these armies, and no more than one army may be placed in any area unless there is no other alternative. If there is nowhere to place an army received as population increase owing to stacking limits, the army is not placed, and the nation's population marker is moved to the highest value on the Population Track.

5.2 Reinforcements

The Timeline lists the number of armies a nation receives as reinforcements in each round. Invaders are listed with a sea area or areas where they are placed, while other reinforcements are listed without a starting area. The Timeline may also list the name of an important leader for the nation during the time period; these names are purely to familiarize the player with the historical setting, and have no effect on game play.

5.2.1 Placing Invaders

Reinforcements listed in the Timeline with a sea area represent invaders; in broad terms, the peoples who landed on the shores of Britain at a particular time in history. Place the number of armies listed for the nation in the indicated sea area; reinforcements which are listed with two adjacent sea areas are placed on the border between the two areas.

5.2.2 Placing Other Reinforcements

Reinforcements not listed with a sea area are placed in any land area which the nation already owns. They must be placed together, but may ignore the stacking limit in section 4.2.1 during placement.

If a nation receiving reinforcements not listed with a sea area owns no land areas, it receives a minimum of two armies, even if the Timeline specifies fewer. The reinforcements may be placed in any one of the nation's scoring centers, even one containing armies of another nation. If the armies are placed in an area which contains armies of another nation, only armies in excess of the number of opposing armies in the area may move.

6 Phase II: Movement

During a nation's Movement Phase, the controlling player may move any, all, or none of the nation's armies. Armies may move up to **two** land areas per turn, but may not move into a sea area.

All armies must stop when moving into an area containing another nation's armies, **attacking** that area and causing a battle to take place, unless they are able to **overrun** through the area as described in section 6.3 below. When moving into an area containing another nation's armies, it is customary to place the moving armies at or near the border of the area from which they entered to note this for the purposes of retreats, which are described in section 7.2.

A nation which begins the Movement Phase over the population limit described in section 4.2.2 **must** move into empty areas or attack other nations during the Movement Phase.

6.1 Invaders

Armies which begin their turn in a sea area **must** move directly to a bordering land area, which may be empty, contain armies of the same nation, or contain armies of another nation. This move counts against the number of areas moved; thus, they may choose to move one additional land area, following normal movement rules and restrictions.

Armies listed on the Timeline as appearing in two adjacent sea areas, as described in section 5.2.1, may move to any land area bordering either of the two sea areas.

6.1.1 Things to Note About Invaders

A nation's armies at sea are not required to all move to the same land area.

Any number of armies from any number of nations may be in the same sea area. Stacking limits are ignored, and no battles occur at sea.

6.2 Straits

The double-ended arrows between land areas on the board, such as the one

between Hebrides and Skye, represent **straits**. Armies may move across a strait as though the destination area were adjacent, traveling from one of the connected areas to the other despite the intervening water. However, this move takes all of an army's movement, so the army must begin the movement in one of the two areas and end the movement in the other.

6.3 Overruns

When a player moves one or more armies into an area which contains armies of another nation (attacking that area), all the armies moving into the area must usually stop and fight in a battle. However, in some cases some of the moving armies may be able to continue moving: this is called an **overrun**.

If the number of armies moving into an area of clear terrain is greater than twice the number of defending armies in the area, or greater than the maximum number allowed in an overstack (described in section 4.2.1), the excess armies may move through the area without stopping (overrun), provided they are otherwise legally able to continue moving. Armies may not overrun through areas of difficult terrain.

Regardless of whether any overruns occur or not, all movement must be completed before any battles are resolved.

6.4 Restrictions at the End of a Movement Phase

A nation's armies are subject to the stacking and population limits described in section 4.2 at the end of every Movement Phase, but **not during movement**.

In addition, a nation must own (be the sole nation with armies in) at least as many areas at the end of each Movement Phase as it did at the beginning of the same Movement Phase.

7 Phase III: Battles and Retreats

When a land area contains armies of two different nations at the end of a Movement Phase, a battle must take place (even if the same player controls both nations). Combat at sea is not possible.

The nation that moved into the area is the **attacker**, and the nation that was already there is the **defender**. If multiple battles need to be fought during a nation's turn, the attacker chooses the order in which they are resolved.

7.1 Start of a Battle

The controlling player for each nation rolls one die for each army they have in the battle to determine how many opposing armies are eliminated. An army eliminates an enemy army on a die roll of 5 or higher, except that a defending army in a difficult terrain area is only eliminated on a roll of 6 or higher.

The controlling player for each nation (not the player who rolled the dice) chooses which of their armies are to be eliminated (which may make a difference for the purpose of retreats), and these armies are removed from the area of the battle.

7.1.1 Things to Note About Battles

Die rolls are considered to be simultaneous, regardless of which player rolls the dice first.

A player may find that his or her nations seek to conquer the same areas. It is

legal for two nations controlled by the same player to attack each other. The controlling player makes all decisions regarding eliminating armies and retreats, but may have another player roll the dice for one of the nations.

7.2 Ending a Battle

Battle continues until all the armies of one nation are eliminated (or both nations are eliminated simultaneously), or until one nation **retreats** all of their armies as described below.

After both players have rolled dice and eliminated armies according to the results, if both sides have at least one surviving army in the area, the defender chooses whether or not to retreat before the attacker chooses. When retreating, a player may choose to retreat some or all of the armies involved in the battle. Armies may never retreat to a sea area, and a player may not retreat armies if this would exceed the stacking or population limits described in section 4.2, or would increase the number of excess armies if the nation already exceeds the population limit. If no legal retreat area is available, the armies must remain in the battle area and continue the battle.

If both sides have armies in the area after the opportunity to retreat, another round of battle is fought, starting again as described in section 7.1.

7.2.1 Where the Defender Retreats

The defender may retreat to any adjacent land areas (including areas connected by a strait) which contain only the retreating nation's armies, or which are vacant and from which no opposing armies entered the battle area (**not** including armies which passed through as part of an overrun). When the defending nation retreats, its armies may have a choice of areas to retreat to, and some may retreat to one area while others retreat to another.

7.2.2 Where the Attacker Retreats

When the attacking nation retreats, its armies must retreat to the adjacent land area(s) from which they entered the battle area. Armies which attack directly from a sea area may not retreat. If the armies were placed in the battle area as reinforcements without moving, they may not retreat.

If the area the attacker entered from contains an army of another nation, the attacker cannot retreat to that area; this can occur as a result of previous battles or retreats, or a group of attacking armies moving through an area containing opposing armies via an overrun.

7.3 Reduced Randomness in Battles (Optional Rule)

Players may wish to use this rule to reduce the randomness of battles, at the cost of increasing the time each battle takes.

Instead of rolling one die for each army in the battle, roll two dice for each, and eliminate one enemy army for each two successful rolls (or **hits**). All hits must be used to eliminate armies whenever possible; if an odd number of hits is rolled, the unused hit can be carried over from the current round of battle to the next. After a battle is completed, any remaining unused hit is lost and does not carry over to the next battle.