

Warfare in Britain from Roman departure (410 AD) until the English installed a Briton of Strathclyde as King of Scotland (1054 AD).

Armies and the battlefield

All distances are in **base widths (BW)**.

Armies comprise 6-24 **units** of 200-400 men. Every unit has a single rectangular base (1 BW). Units are one of **heavy infantry** (HI), **light infantry** (LI), **heavy cavalry** (HC) or **light cavalry** (LC). Some units are missile armed: **javelin**, **sling**, **foot bow**, or **horse bow**. **Curses** are a missile weapon unique to priests, druids and magicians. Heavy units have optional attributes: **armoured**, **aggressive**, **undisciplined**, and **well drilled**. Units are rated brave (+1), epic (+2), or legendary (+3).

Heroes are not units. Instead they command a **warband** within the army (typically 3 to 7 units). Heroes are involved in combat when **attached** to units in their warband (bases touching at both the start and end of player turn). The heroes rating of brave (+1), epic (+2) or legendary (+3) improve the morale, melee ability and attempts at actions by attached units. One hero is the army's overall **warlord**, often of a higher rating. Heroes are mounted on a bases $\frac{1}{2}$ BW across.

Groups are ad hoc formations with two or more units of same warband, touching both corner to corner and edge to edge. A **shield wall** is a group entirely of heavy infantry.

Games are played on a 15 BW x 15 BW **table** (e.g. 1.2m for 8cm bases) with whatever terrain suits you. **Deployment zones** are 5 BW apart and 5 BW deep. Dice for who goes first, then players alternate in deploying a hero and their warband.

Fighting the Battle

Dice for who goes first, then players alternate turns. The active player goes through this sequence of play for every friendly unit:

1. Light unit may try **evade** action, if attacked
2. Must **test morale**, if attacked
3. Must **recoil**, if failed any morale test
4. Undisciplined unit, if either shot at or when enemy has broken contact, may try **hold** action or must **impetuous advance**
5. May try an **action** (except evade or hold)

6. May **simple move** (unit or group)

In a single player turn, a unit can only do one of an action (of any type), an impetuous advance, recoil or a simple move. To help keep track of which units have acted, either use markers or go from right to left.

Attack: Shooting, Melee, Threat

Attack means shooting, melee and cavalry threatening foot. First determine which units are attacking. A unit can attack only one enemy unit per turn; if an unit can attack more than one enemy unit, the owner picks one. Determine results of attack by testing morale.

If a unit is in physical contact with an enemy unit then they are in **melee**. Allocate attacks so as many units as possible test morale for being in melee. **Overlap** is where a friendly unit in same group is also considered in melee with the same enemy because it is extending the original unit's frontage and not in contact itself. A unit in melee cannot be shot at, nor can units exposed after a melee because opponents routed.

Units with missile weapons are assumed to be **shooting** if facing enemy, within range, and not in melee. Shooting range is 1 BW for javelins, 2 BW for slings and horse bows, 3 BW for foot bows and curses. Arc of fire is to front, extends 1 BW to each side of their front base edge, and is blocked by units.

Cavalry threaten foot: Foot in the open must test morale when threatened by enemy cavalry. The cavalry must be within 2 BW and not in melee. Cavalry must also be entirely behind flank or rear to threaten a unit in a shield wall.

Morale

A friendly unit must **test for morale** for each attack. Roll 2d6 and add the tactical factors. A modified score of 8 or more is a pass; a lower score is a failure. Failing a morale test means the unit takes a **hit** (place a hit marker); an unmodified score of 2 means the unit takes two hits not one. A unit must recoil once if it fails any morale tests in the player turn, regardless of hits taken. Units rout and are removed when they suffer multiple hits: Heavy infantry 4, heavy cavalry 3, light cavalry and light infantry 2. **Cascading morale**: When a unit routs, one friendly unit in the same warband must immediately take an additional

hit; this is the unit with the most hits (enemy choice if more than one). A hero can become a **casualty** if the attached unit takes a morale test. On an unmodified score of 2 the hero is a casualty and removed.

The **tactical factors** are:

+1, +2, +3	For unit's rating
+1, +2, +3	For attached hero's rating
+1	Heavy infantry in shield wall (unless enemy to flank/rear within 2 BW)
+1	Heavy infantry uphill in melee
+1	Heavy unit attacked by light unit
+1	Shot at in cover (buildings, woods)
-1, -2, -3	Subtract attacker's rating
-1, -2, -3	Subtract attacker's hero rating
-1	Attacked by enemy entirely behind flank
-2	Attacked by enemy entirely in rear
-1	Unsupported (lack a second friendly unit in the same group immediately behind)
-1	Have just been charged
-1	In melee with heavy cavalry
-1	Cavalry unit being shot at
-1	Unarmoured unit in melee with armoured
-1	Heavy unit in difficult terrain

Movement

A **simple move** by a unit is directly straight ahead, unless following a road, and cannot contact enemy. **Heroes move** in any direction. Movement is measured from the centre point of the unit. Movement is reduced if the unit moves in **difficult terrain** (woods, marsh, buildings, steep slopes and rivers) at any point during a move/action. Movement in **open terrain** is faster. Light infantry and heroes can **interpenetrate** friendly units freely but other units require an interpenetrate action. **Group move:** A group in the open can make a simple move at the speed of the slowest unit.

Movement (BW):	Open	Difficult
Hero	5	5
Light Cavalry	5	2
Heavy Cavalry	4	2
Light Infantry	3	3
Heavy Infantry	2	2

Undisciplined units must **impetuous advance** when either under missile fire or when enemy in contact rout, recoil or move backwards. Impetuous advances do not require an action roll, are straight forward, and to the full movement allowance unless stopped by contacting friends or enemy. An impetuous

advance that contacts enemy is a charge. A player can prevent a impetuous advance with a successful hold action.

Failing any morale tests forces a single **recoil** directly to rear, 1 BW for infantry and 2 BW for cavalry; end facing the original direction. Failing to recoil the full distance inflicts an additional hit. Units only providing rear support also recoil, but take no hit if blocked.

Actions

Each **action** takes one player turn and replaces other movement. Possible actions are:

- **Charge:** Move straight forward into contact with enemy (with any rear support); light unit cannot charge front of heavy unit
- **Hold:** prevent an undisciplined unit from impetuous advance, when under missile fire or when enemy has broken contact; fail means they impetuous advance
- **Evade:** Light unit moves directly away from attack and ends facing away
- **Backwards:** Move directly to rear, at half movement allowance, ending up facing the original direction
- **Spin:** Rotate any angle around unit's centre point then move straight ahead; if necessary up to three of the unit's corners can interpenetrate friends in the rotation bit
- **Interpenetrate:** Cavalry and heavy infantry move straight forward and entirely through friendly unit(s)

Roll 2d6 for each action attempt and add the action modifiers. A modified score of 8 or more is a pass and the units takes an action; a lower score is a failure so the unit does nothing. The **action modifiers** are:

+1, +2, +3	For hero's rating if attached
+1, +2, +3	For unit's rating
+1	Light unit attempting to evade
+1	Well drilled unit
+1	Aggressive unit attempting to charge
-1	Undisciplined unit unless attempting to charge
-1	Heavy unit in difficult terrain

Victory

Total your units and heroes, then divide the total by 3 and round up; this is the **army breakpoint**. At the end of the player turn in which you have lost units/heroes to reach your army breakpoint your army withdraws (the other side is the victor).

Army Lists

We know relatively little about armies of this period so these army lists are indicative at best. They should, however, provide enough national flavour to make the games more interesting. Change them as you wish.

Armies comprise 6-24 units. If you are using points, then agree a maximum number of points (small 40; medium 60; large 80) and both players select troops up to the maximum. The majority of any large army will be brave heavy infantry, reflecting a general levy.

Smaller armies will rely on better troops. Legendary heroes and units should be very rare; the clue is in the name.

An army must have at least one hero, the warlord. An additional hero is allowed if there are 6 to 10 units; up to two additional if more.

Priests can be pagan (e.g. druids) or Christian. The transition from paganism to Christianity took a while and for a long time armies would have a mixture of religions. Even a nominally Christian army could have pagan priests.

Romano-British (407-470 AD)

The armies of Sub-Roman Britain as the Romans were leaving. Many troops were Roman trained.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
2	3	Roman Cavalry (Equites)	HC	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Well Drilled, Javelin	4	
0	1	Roman Light Cavalry (Equites Dalmatae)	LC	+2	Aggressive, Well Drilled, Javelin	3	
3	6	Roman Infantry	HI	+2	Armoured, Well Drilled, Javelin	4	
0	1	Briton Noble (Uchelwyr) Cavalry	HC	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
2	12	Briton Spearmen (Pedyt)	HI	+1	Undisciplined	3	
1	2	Roman or Briton Archers	LI	+1	Well Drilled, Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Druids or Magicians	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 600
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	≥ 430

English (429-1075 AD)

This list covers the Angles (*Ængle*), Saxons (*Sahson*) and Jutes (*Kentings*) from Hengist and Horsa's arrival in Kent (about 429), through their amalgamation as the English, until Norman subjugation. Armies were pretty consistent throughout the period, although shields got bigger about 800 AD and, under Danish influence, the Norse style Huscarls replaced the Hird about 1014.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
0	1	Mounted Hird	HC	+1	Armoured	3	≤ 1013
2	2	Hird	HI	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined	4	617 - 1013
2	2	Huscarls	HI	+2	Aggressive, Armoured	4	≥ 1014
1	4	Select Fyrd	HI	+2	Armoured	4	
2	12	Great Fyrd	HI	+1	Undisciplined	3	
1	3	Archers	LI	+1	Foot Bow	2	
0	1	War dogs	HC	+1	Aggressive, Undisciplined	3	
0	1	Pagan Priest	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 700
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	≥ 600

We know the Anglo-Saxons had horse so I give them the option of cavalry like other Germans.

Briton (471-580 AD) and Northern Briton (580-1054 AD)

This list covers all Britons (Cymry) once they forgot Roman ways until the English conquered the lowland about 580 AD. It also covers the Clyd folk (Cludwys) / Cumbrians (Cumbri) of the northern Briton kingdom of Alt Clut (Rock of Clyd), later Strat Clud (Valley of Clyd / Strathclyde), who fought on against the English. The list ends when Duke Siward of Northumbria (a Dane serving the English King) placed his Briton client, Máel Coluim the son of the King of Strathclyde, on the throne of Scotland. King Macbeth quickly returned and we don't hear of independent Strathclyde again.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord or War Leader	Hero	+2		4	
0	1	Legendary Warlord ('Arthur')	Hero	+3		5	518-537
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
1	3	Comitatus	HC	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined	4	
0	4	Light cavalry	LC	+1	Javelin	2	≤ 580
3	6	Pedyt	HI	+2	Armoured	4	
2	12	Peasants	HI	+2	Undisciplined	3	
1	1	Javelinmen	LI	+1	Javelin	2	
0	1	Archers	LI	+1	Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Slingers	LI	+1	Sling	2	
0	1	Druids or Magicians	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 600
0	1	Legendary Druid or Magician (Merlin, Morgana or Nimue)	LI	+3	Curses	4	518-537
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	≥ 430

Amongst other things, this is Arthur's army. My guess Arthur was active 518-537 AD. Other heroes from his legend are Lancelot, Gawain, Geraint, Percival, Bors the Younger, Lamorak. Kay, Gareth Merlin, Morgana and Nimue provide the magical part of Arthu's legend. If you going down the legendary route then consider bumping up the Comitatus to legendary as well.

Western Briton (580-1149 AD)

Apparently Britons (*Cymry*) of the western highlands, what is now Wales, relied more on javelins.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
0	1	Noble (Uchelwyr) Cavalry	HC	+2	Armoured, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
3	6	Noble (Uchelwyr) warriors	HI	+2	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
2	12	Lower class warriors	HI	+1	Undisciplined, Javelin	3	
1	3	Javelinmen	LI	+1	Javelin	2	
0	1	Druids or Magicians	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 600
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	

Gewissei

The mysterious Gewissei are integral to the origin story of Wessex. 'Gewissei' was probably a Saxon term used to distinguish "good" Britons from "bad". "Good" because the Gewissei fought on the side of the invading Saxons. The bad Britons being, of course, the *wealas* (foreigners / Welsh) i.e. the patriots. So Cerdic's followers were probably locals, making the origins of the English monarchy treasonous Britons. However, you might believe the Wessex origin story and decide the Gewissei were English (actually Jutes from Kent). A Scots-Irish origin is also possible. All are plausible explanations and we'll probably never know. Just pick an army list that fits your version of history, one of Briton, English, or Scots-Irish.

Picts (211-900AD)

The Picts (Cruithni) armies of the extreme north of Britain until the formation of Scotland.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
1	2	Noble Chariots	HC	+2	Undisciplined, Javelin	4	≤ 500
1	1	Noble Heavy Cavalry	HC	+2	Undisciplined, Javelin	4	≥ 501
0	2	Noble Light Cavalry	LC	+2	Javelin	3	
0	1	Atecotti	HI	+3	Aggressive, Undisciplined	5	≤ 500
3	6	Noble Warriors	HI	+2	Undisciplined	4	
2	12	Lower Class Warriors	HI	+1	Undisciplined	3	
2	3	Archers	LI	+1	Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Javelinmen	LI	+1	Javelin	2	
0	1	Druids	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 700
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	≥ 500

The Atecotti had a legendary origin in Irish mythology but were savage mercenaries in Scotland. I reason that the long spears of the Picts made them tactically more defensive (hence less aggressive) than their enemies, but you can decide for yourselves.

Scots-Irish (55BC-900AD)

The Irish of Ireland were called Scotti, hence Scots-Irish. This list covers the Scots-Irish of mainland Ireland (841 AD), the colonies in Britain (to 900AD), and raiders.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	1	Legendary Hero	Hero	+3		5	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
0	1	Noble Chariots	HC	+2	Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
0	3	Noble Chariots	HC	+2	Undisciplined, Javelin	4	≤ 432
0	1	Legendary Warriors: Fiana or Atecotti	HI	+3	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	5	≤ 432
3	6	Nobles / Free clients (soer-chele)	HI	+2	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
2	12	Peasants / Unfree clients (doer-chele)	HI	+1	Undisciplined, Javelin	3	
1	3	Javelinmen and/or Slings	LI	+1	Javelin or Sling	2	
0	1	War dogs	HC	+1	Aggressive, Undisciplined	3	
0	1	Druids or Magicians	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 600
0	1	Legendary Druid or Magicians	LI	+3	Curses	4	≤ 600
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	≥ 430

The commonly known legendary characters all come from the Ulster Cycle of Irish mythology. You can only have them if you are flexible with dates, as they likely date from about 200 BC. The most famous hero is Cú Chulainn. The dark haired hero is best depicted fighting from his chariot yoke, with one black pony and one grey, and the driver should have red hair. Conall Cernach and Fergus mac Róich are also candidates for the legendary hero. The magical contingent could be Cathbad the Druid, the three daughters of Calatan, or perhaps the Morrigan (the goddess of war). Fiana are small, semi-independent warrior bands in Irish mythology and often used as king's guards. In medieval reality they were bands of landless aristocratic young men specialising in hunting and raiding and were often mentioned in raids on Britain. The Atecotti also had a legendary origin in Irish mythology but were savage marauders; they also appeared in Scotland. Mainland Ireland adopted Christianity fairly quickly. The Scots-Irish colonies in Britain held onto paganism longer.

Scots (900-1124 AD)

Scots, as distinct from Scots-Irish, appeared with the merger of the Picts and Scots-Irish colonies to form the Kingdom of Scotland (Gaelic *Rioghachd na h-Alba*).

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
0	1	Noble Cavalry	HC	+2	Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
0	1	Noble Light Cavalry	LC	+2	Javelin	3	
3	6	Thegns	HI	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
2	12	Lower Class Warriors	HI	+1	Undisciplined	3	
0	2	<i>Gall-Gaidhil</i> / Galwegians	HI	+2	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	3	
2	3	Archers	LI	+1	Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Javelinmen	LI	+1	Javelin	2	
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	

Gall-Gaidhil literally means ‘Foreigner Gaels’, but is better translated as ‘Viking Gaels’. In this case from their stronghold in Galloway hence Galwegians.

Norse-Irish (842-1300 AD)

Armies in Ireland when the native Irish and Hiberno-Norse were collaborating.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
3	6	Nobles / Free clients (<i>soer-chele</i>) and <i>Dibernach</i>	HI	+2	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
2	12	Unfree clients (<i>doer-chele</i>)	HI	+1	Undisciplined, Javelin	3	
0	1	Ostmen	HI	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined	4	
0	1	<i>Gall Gaidhill</i>	HI	+2	Aggressive, Undisciplined, Javelin	4	
1	3	Javelinmen or Rising Out	LI	+1	Javelin	2	
0	1	Slingers or archers	LI	+1	Sling or Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	

Northmen (790 – 1280 AD)

Norse and Danish armies in Ireland and Britain, whether settled or going a Viking.

Min	Max	Name	Type	Rating	Attributes	Pts	Dates
1	1	Warlord	Hero	+2		4	
0	2	War leaders	Hero	+1		3	
3	6	Huscarls and well equipped Hird	HI	+2	Aggressive, Armoured, Undisciplined	4	
2	12	Hird	HI	+1	Undisciplined	3	
0	1	Berserkers	HI	+3	Aggressive, Undisciplined	4	
1	3	Archers	LI	+1	Foot Bow	2	
0	1	Pagan Priests / Magicians	LI	+2	Curses	3	≤ 1050
0	1	Christian saint or monks	LI	+2	Curses	3	

I reckon Berserkers count as legendary.