

CHAIN OF COMMAND



FRANCE 1940

THE INFANTRY PLATOON

The French Infantry Platoon is firmly based on the experience of the Great War and an understanding that whilst the maxim "Firepower Kills" is correct, victory cannot be won without an advance and manoeuvre.

All French infantry count as Regular.

PLATOON FORCE RATING:

Regular: +1

Command Dice: 5

PLATOON HEADQUARTERS	
Lieutenant, <i>Senior Leader</i> , with pistol	
Sergeant, <i>Junior Leader</i> , with rifle	
VB COMMAND	
V.B. Caporal, <i>Junior Leader</i> with pistol	
One V.B. launcher with one crew	

SECTIONS ONE TO THREE	
Sergeant, <i>Junior Leader</i> , with rifle	
LMG TEAM	RIFLE TEAM
Chatellerault M24/29 with three crew Three riflemen	Four riflemen One V.B. launcher with one crew

FRENCH SUPPORT LIST

LIST ONE

Satchel Charge
Two Bouteilles incendiaries
Medical Orderly
Engineer Mine Clearance <i>Team</i> , 3 men
Engineer Wire Cutting <i>Team</i> , 3 men
Engineer Demolition <i>Team</i> , 3 men
Minefield
Barbed Wire
Adjutant
Entrenchments for one <i>Team</i>

LIST TWO

Roadblock
Fusil anti-char <i>Boys Team</i> , two crew
Lorraine 38L with trailer

LIST THREE

Canon de 25mm L/72 AT gun with 5 crew and a <i>Junior Leader</i>
Escouade de éclaireurs motocyclistes
Hotchkiss M1914 MMG with five crew
Sniper <i>Team</i>
Pre-Game barrage
60mm mortar team, four crew and a <i>Junior Leader</i>
Citröen Kegresse P19 VDP
Panhard 178 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
AMC Schneider P16 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
FT17 MG with <i>Junior Leader</i>
FT17 37mm with <i>Junior Leader</i>
Forward Observer <i>Team</i> with 81mm mortar battery off-table.

LIST FOUR

Hotchkiss H35/H39 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
AMR 33/35 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
Renault R35/R40 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
FCM 36 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
Regular Rifle section with <i>Junior Leader</i>

LIST FIVE

Canon de 47mm L53 AT gun with 5 crew and a <i>Junior Leader</i>
Renault Char D1/D2 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
AMC 35 with <i>Junior Leader</i>

LIST SIX

Somua S35 with <i>Junior Leader</i>
Renault Char B1/B1 bis with <i>Junior Leader</i>

FRENCH NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

TROMBLON VB

The French had planned to replace their ageing rifle grenade launchers with the new 50mm M-37 light mortars; however, the German invasion of May 1940 happened before this process had occurred, and the trusty weapon of the Great War remained in service. Each section had one VB launcher, but in practice these were combined together with the single launcher in the Platoon headquarters and commanded by a Corporal specifically allocated to that role.

To reflect this arrangement the French player may combine all four VB launchers together as a single Team under the command of a Junior Leader. When thus organised all four weapons may fire when the Team is activated on a Command Dice roll of 1, or when activated by the *Junior Leader* using one Command Initiative.

LA BATAILLE CONDUITE

Like many armies the French in 1940 had trained to fight according to the lessons of the last war. The *Bataille Conduite*, literally “battle by guidance” but more normally referred to as “Methodical Battle” by Anglophones, was a reflection of Marshall Foch’s belief in an orderly and structured approach to warfare. In practical terms this led to a doctrine which placed an emphasis on following an established plan rather than one which encouraged leadership and initiative among junior officers and NCOs.

To reflect this doctrinal embracement of the importance of central command, the French Platoon Sergeant is rated as a Junior Leader, although he is able to influence any troops within the Platoon.

Most of the support options on the list will be self-explanatory and their qualities covered by the National Arsenal Table.

BOUTEILLES INCENDIARIES

As a nation which is historically produced large numbers of empty bottles, it is unsurprising that the French troops used “Molotov Cocktails” in extreme situations. A maximum of two such impromptu weapons may be used in any one game. These should be allocated to specific sections before the game begins.

How the charge works is detailed in Section 9.3.4, *Tank Hunters*.

VB LAUNCHERS

The VB Launcher has a minimum range of 18” and a maximum range of 60”. It may target any unit which can be seen by friendly troops but it counts any target which it can see as being in close range, and it cannot see as being at effective range. In the first round of fire at a target (even one it has fired at previously) it will roll half of the normal firepower dice.

LORRAINE 38L WITH TRAILER

These were designed to transport a maximum number of ten men, four in the vehicle itself and six in the trailer. They are unarmed, but an LMG may be mounted on the open compartment to the rear of the vehicle.

ESCOUADE DE ÉCLAIREURS MOTOCYCLISTES

The Regimental scout troop was made up of three men crewing a Chatellerault M24/29 LMG and a Corporal *Junior Leader*. They are equipped with four motorcycles. Motorcycles operate as wheeled vehicles but re-roll any 1’s rolled.

If two of these support options are selected a Sergeant-Chef *Senior Leader* and a VB grenadier may be added on a further two motorcycles.

81MM MORTARS WITH FOO

With just two mortars present in the battalion, a French mortar bombardment covers a square area 10” by 10” with the aiming point at the centre.

60MM MORTAR TEAM

The 60mm Brandt mortar has both smoke and H.E. rounds. It has a minimum range of 24" and no maximum range limit. At shorter ranges the crew can use their rifles.

THE FRENCH ARSENAL TABLE

The Arsenal Table below covers a wide range of French support options. For French infantry weapons see Table Four, *The Master Arsenal Table*

FRENCH ARSENAL TABLE					
ARMoured VEHICLES					
VEHICLE	ARMOUR	A.P.	H.E.	SPEED	NOTES
FT17 MG	2	-	MG	Slow	No Hull MG
FT17 37mm	2	3	3	Slow	No Hull MG
FCM 36	5	3	3	Slow	No Hull MG
Renault R35	5	3	3	Slow	No Hull MG
Renault R40	5	4	3	Slow	No Hull MG
Hotchkiss H35	5	3	3	Slow	No Hull MG
Hotchkiss H39	5	3	3	Average	No Hull MG
Renault Char D1	5	5	4	Slow	
Renault Char D2	6	6	4	Slow	
Renault Char B1	5	5/4	4/6	Average	
Renault Char B1 bis	6	6/4	4/6	Slow	
Somua S35	5	6	4	Fast	No Hull MG
AMC 35	4	6	4	Fast	No Hull MG
AMR 33/35	3	-	MG	Fast	No Hull MG
Panhard 178	3	3	2	Wheeled	No Hull MG
AMC Schneider P16	2	3	3	Fast	
TRANSPORT VEHICLES					
Lorraine 37/38L	2	-	-	Average	
Citroen Kergesse P19 VDP	2	-	As Weapon	Fast	
ANTI-TANK GUNS					
ANTI-TANK WEAPONS	A.P.		H.E.		
Canon de 25mm L/72	3		2		
Canon de 47mm L53	6		4		
14mm Boys Anti-Tank Rifle	3		1		