AUTARCH

ADVENTURER CONQUEROR KING SYSTEM
DOMAINS AT WAR

FREE STARTER EDITION

Written by **ALEXANDER MACRIS**

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DOMAINS AT WAR

EXPANDED OPTIONS FOR THE *ADVENTURER CONQUEROR KING SYSTEM*

ADVENTURER CONQUEROR KING SYSTEM™
DOMAINS AT WAR

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Tomorrow you will bring the battle to the foe. Tonight you walk among the troops you'll lead. The mercenaries are veterans and sleep while they can, but the anxious peasants levied from your lands seek comfort in recounting your victories. You sit at their campfire, wearing your ring of invisibility *so that you can listen instead of command. Remember when you were like them? Back when you first entered the dungeon, you wielded a sword and fought for gold, glory, and the favor of the gods. Winning these earned you a throne. Now you wield an army, and fight for the right to rule the domains at war.*

Domains at War (D@W) is a supplement for the *Adventure Conqueror King System™ (ACKS)* as well as two wargames in its own right - one for strategic campaigns, another for tactical battles. This *Free Starter Edition* focuses on the basics your fantasy RPG characters need to raise armies, conquer domains, and fight pitched battles. It also serves as an introduction to the *Complete Domains at War Set* which includes *D@W: Campaigns* and *D@W: Battles*, plus maps and counters for playing conflicts in more detail. The *Complete Set* is available separately from Autarch, but you don't need it to enjoy the following rules. References to *D@W: Campaigns* and *D@W: Battles* are provided to help those who are using the Starter Edition to learn the Complete rules.

BASICS OF THE GAME

In *ACKS*, player characters (PCs) aren't just dungeon crawlers – they are **leaders** who rule **domains** and **realms**. A **domain** is an area secured by a fortified structure, known as a **stronghold**. A collection of domains under control of one powerful leader is known as a **realm**. A realm's leader personally controls one domain within his realm, known as his **personal domain**. The others are **vassal domains** governed by the leader's **vassals**, who may have vassals of their own.

In *Domains at War*, leaders raise **armies** and maneuver them in **campaigns** to defend their lands or conquer new territories. *Domains at War* uses hex maps to chart the movement of armies at the strategic level. The **map scale** for strategic maneuver in *Domains at War* is 1 hex = 6 miles, the same scale used in your *ACKS* campaign for wilderness travel and mapping the region in which the characters typically seek adventure.

Usually the PCs will be controlling one army and the Judge will be controlling the other, but campaigns that pit different PCs

against each other are also possible. Each army will be organized into one or more **units**. Each unit represents a company of around 120 infantry, 60 cavalry or ogres, or 20 giants. A typical Domains at War army will have 10 to 25 units, representing a force of around 600 to 3,000 combatants. This is a perfect size army for war-mongering barons, earls, counts, and dukes, such as most adventuring player characters. For larger forces, see the section in *D@W: Campaigns* on **Organization and Command in Very Large Armies**.

When two opposing armies move into the same hex, a **battle** results. The *Free Starter Edition* and *D@W: Campaigns* both focus on the strategic level of warfare and present an abstract system for quickly resolving battles. *D@W: Battles* presents a detailed but fast-playing system for mass combat at the tactical level.

RAISING AN ARMY

In order to wage war and fight battles, a leader must have an **army**. An army is made up of all the soldiers from all sources that are under the command of a particular leader. Because every domain must maintain a garrison, every domain leader has at least a small army available to him.

When the leader of a realm finds his army insufficient for his military needs, he may make a **call to arms** to his vassals. When a call to arms is issued, the vassal must muster a force at least equal to ½ the garrison of his realm. If desired, the leader can call for the vassal to send their full garrison, but doing so counts as demanding two duties and may provoke a Henchman Morale roll as described in **Realms and Vassals** in Chapter 7 of *ACKS*. The Henchman Morale roll can be avoided by offering a boon of some sort to the vassal, as usual.

Note that when a leader makes a call to arms to a vassal, the vassal is required to muster forces based on the garrison of the vassal's *realm*, not the vassal's domain. The vassal will be expected to muster more than just the forces of his personal domain - it is the vassal's responsibility in turn to issue calls to his own vassals. These sub-vassals may, in turn, call upon their own vassals for troops, and so on. In this way, the forces of an entire kingdom can be mobilized, one tier at a time.

Any particular domain's garrison will be made up of some mix of followers, mercenaries, and other troops. The exact mix will be determined by the Judge or the player character who rules the domain.

Vassal Troops by Realm Size						
Title	Number of Domains	Overall Realm (families)	Average Personal Domain Garrison (wages/ month)	Maximum Realm Troops (wages/ month)	Maximum Realm Troops (approx. number)	Time Period
Emperor	4,096-46,656	1.5M − 11.6M+	25,000gp	3,000,000-24,000,000gp	125,000-1,000,000+	Season
King	1,024-7,776	364K − 2,000K	25,000gp	728,000-4,000,000gp	30,000-160,000	Season
Prince	256-1,296	87K − 322K	15,000gp	175,000-645,000gp	7,300-27,000	Month
Duke	64-216	20,000 − 52,000	3,000gp	40,000-104,000gp	1,700-4,300	Month
Earl/Count	16-36	4,600 − 8,500	1,500gp	9,600-17,000gp	400-700	Week
Marquis	4-6	960 − 1,280	640gp	1,920-2,560gp	80-100	Week
Baron	1	120-200	320gp	240-400gp	10-16	Day

VASSAL TROOPS BY REALM SIZE

The value and number of troops available to realm leaders of various sizes is listed below on the Vassal Troops by Realm Size table. This table can be used to quickly determine the armies that can be fielded by realms of various sizes.

In most cases, a leader will not muster the maximum number of vassal troops, for several reasons. First, doing so would require him to either provoke a substantial number of Henchman Loyalty rolls or offer a substantial number of gifts to vassals to avoid those rolls (See **Realms and Vassals** in *ACKS* for details on this). Second, huge armies are expensive to supply, being effectively cities on the march. Mustering a huge army can bankrupt a realm. Third, in the unfortunate event that the realm's army is destroyed, the leader will have no forces with which to continue the war or maintain his rule. Most leaders will muster the minimum force necessary for a given conflict, or even better, allow the conflict to be settled by forces available to a vassal at the point of conflict.

The Vassal Troops by Realm Size table assumes garrison expenditures of 2gp per peasant family each month. Borderlands and wilderness domains may have larger garrisons of 3-4gp, as may highly militarized societies. A realm engaged in "total war," such as Germany during the 30 Years War, or Rome during the Punic Wars, might have a garrison 50-100% larger than listed.

TIME REQUIRED

When a call to arms is issued, one half the requested troops (rounded up) will arrive within the first time period after the leader begins mustering troops. One quarter (rounded down, minimum 1) will arrive during the second time period. The remainder of the troops becomes available in the third period.

The lengthy amount of time required to muster troops must be weighed against the costs and risk of doing so. The long period of time required for vast empires and kingdoms to raise all their forces is another reason why many leaders opt to have battles settled by lower-rank vassals close to the action.

Troops called to arms will generally muster at the realm leader's stronghold, unless ordered to muster elsewhere. If the realm is high dispersed geographically, or its constituent domains have been isolated by enemy troops, troops may not be able to muster in one place. The Judge should use his discretion in determining where troops will rendezvous in these cases.

MERCENARIES, CONSCRIPTS, AND MILITIA

A realm's garrison is always its most convenient source of troops, and the size of its garrison determines the number of troops its leader must dispatch if he receives a call to arms from his vassal. However, a leader may draw troops from sources other than the garrison when he responds to a call to arms or wages war on his own behalf.

Mercenaries are an attractive source of troops for leaders who have the gold to hire them and access to the places in which they can be recruited. See the **Mercenaries** section of *ACKS* Chapter 3 for details of recruiting and hiring troops from individual markets. Because adventurers in Domains at War generally hire large numbers of mercenaries at once, the Judge should divide the mercenaries into units (120 infantry or 60 cavalry) and roll once per unit on the Reaction to Hiring Offer table instead of once per mercenary. *D@W: Campaigns* offers rules for hiring mercenary specialists and additional types of military equipment.

The leader of a domain can permanently **conscript** peasants into his army. Up to 1 conscript per 10 peasant families can be conscripted. If conscripts are killed, they can only be replaced through population growth, so leaders should track conscript casualties. Conscripts may also be lost to decreases in the number of peasant families, while adding more families will make more conscripts available.

Leaders requiring still more troops can levy a **peasant militia** at the cost of a reduction in domain revenue and morale. Up to 2 peasants per 10 families can be levied into the militia. Domain revenues are reduced by 1 family for each peasant levied. Domain morale is also reduced by 1 point by levying 1 or fewer peasants per 10 families, and by 2 points by levying 2 peasants per 10 families. These penalties remain until the militia is sent home. If militia are killed, the loss of domain morale and family revenue is permanent. Should the domain's morale ever become Turbulent, Defiant, or Rebellious (as described in **Keeping the Peace** in Chapter 7 of *ACKS*), any rebels will be drawn from the militia.

When peasants are added to the leader's army via either of these routes, they fight and are paid as the Conscript/Militia troop type described below. Characters with the Manual of Arms proficiency may train conscripts or militia, converting them to more effective troop types but also increasing their monthly cost and requiring the purchase of the arms and armor used by their new type. *D@W: Campaigns* provides a **Training and Equipment Time and Cost** table that summarizes these expenses when military specialists are hired to train entire units at once.

VAGARIES OF RECRUITMENT

Raising an army can be an uncertain, challenging task. Some rulers find that peasants flock to their banners and mercenaries bid to serve them. Other would-be conquerors are abandoned by conscripts, cheated by mercenaries, betrayed by commanders, and preemptively attacked by rivals. Each month that a leader is recruiting mercenaries, conscripts, militia, or vassal troops, the Judge is encouraged to introduce such situations. *D@W: Campaigns* has a **Vagaries of Recruitment** table to aid this process.

ORGANIZATION OF ARMIES

Once an army has been raised, it should be organized into **units** for game purposes. The *Complete Domains at War Set* has complete rules on creating units of different sizes. For purposes of the *Free Starter Edition*, units should consist of 120 man-sized creatures, 60 cavalry or ogre-sized creatures, or 20 giant-sized creatures.

WAGING WAR

Once a leader has raised and organized an army, he may begin to wage war. War is fought in a series of **military campaigns**. A military campaign begins when an army's troops are taken out of their garrisons, and ends when the army's troops return to garrison. A short military campaign will last one month. Longer campaigns can last seasons or even years. Hannibal of Carthage fought a ten year campaign against the Romans during the Second Punic War.

Encounter Movement	Daily Movement	Weekly Movement
Feet per Turn	Miles / 6-Mile Hexes	Miles / 6-Mile Hexes
30′	6 / 1	24 / 4
60′	12 / 2	48 / 8
90′	18 / 3	72 / 12
120′	24 / 4	96 / 16
150′	30 / 5	120 / 20
180′	36 / 6	144 / 24
210′	42 / 7	168 / 28
240′	48 / 8	192 / 32

Armies campaign within **regions**, consisting of one or more domains or realms. Regions should be mapped on sheets of hex graph paper beforehand, using a scale of 1 hex = 6 miles, so that the Judge knows the layout of the land. The regional map should show the terrain type in each hex, and indicate the location of major domains, urban settlements, navigable waterways, and roads. In an ongoing *ACKS* campaign the Judge will likely have already generated region maps that are perfect for *Domains at War*.

When on campaign, armies take actions in time increments of **weeks**. During the week, armies make **long-distance movement** across the regional map. Whenever one army gets within 24 miles (4 6-mile hexes) of an opposing force, the action shifts to time increments of days to allow for close maneuver of the opposing forces.

The long-distance movement rates of an army are related directly to encounter movement rates of individual troops, as shown on the accompanying table. Apply standard modifiers for terrain as per *ACKS*. When moving over long distances, armies are required to rest for three days out of every seven in order to re-supply and care for their pack animals. The weekly movement rates above include this mandatory rest period.

SUPPLY COST

In most cases, field armies that campaign in well-populated areas along roads and waterways can easily maintain their lines of supply. The Judge should simply deduct a gold piece cost from its leader's treasury each week. The weekly supply cost is 60gp per infantry unit and 240gp per cavalry unit. These gold piece costs are inclusive of fresh bread, wheat, water, and pack animals.

In hostile or inhospitable regions, the Judge should trace a **line of supply** from the army on the march to the nearest friendly market through which supplies might be routed. An army's supply line may be **blocked** if an enemy army occupies a six-mile hex through which this supply line is traced. D@W: Campaigns also details rules for determining if an army's supply line is **overextended**; in the Starter Edition this is left to the Judge's discretion and how the situation is role-played.

An army is **out of supply** if its line of supply is blocked, overextended, or it can no longer pay its weekly supply cost. Troops which are insufficiently supplied lose 1 hit point per day and suffer a cumulative -1 to attack throws and damage rolls. Furthermore, they lose the ability to heal wounds normally, though magic will still work.

If troops eat enough food for a day, they regain the ability to heal, recover 1 hit point lost to hunger, and reduce by 1 any penalties to attack throws and damage rolls from hunger. Thus, troops that receive rations every other day (or half rations daily) can function physically almost indefinitely. However, an army's psychological survival is quickly threatened by lack of supplies. Each week a unit is partially or completely unsupplied counts as a calamity, which forces it to roll on the **Henchman Loyalty** table given in *ACKS* Chapter 3. In the *Starter Edition*, the Base Morale modifier given in that section is assumed to apply to non-mercenaries as well. Results of Resignation or Hostility (5 or less) indicate that the unit deserts the army.

FIGHTING BATTLES

RECONNAISSANCE, MANEUVER AND ENGAGEMENT

Once armies are within eight 6-mile hexes of one another (approximately 100 miles), they may attempt to gain information about the location, composition, capabilities, and intentions of the enemy forces. Since the means of intelligence gathering that might be employed, and the counter-measures against them, are as limitless as the imagination of players, the *Starter Edition* relies on the discretion of the Judge to resolve the outcome based on the imagined scene, the actions described by the players, and such dice rolls as he decides are necessary. (*D@W: Campaigns* abstracts these factors into **reconnaissance rolls**). Based on the intelligence gathered, an army's leaders may seek to avoid a superior force, or hurry to attack a foe whose weakness is known.

The *Starter Edition* assumes that if armies enter the same 6-mile hex, they will immediately engage in a pitched battle where all units are fully deployed on a mutually agreed battlefield. The *Complete Set* uses each army's strategic stance and awareness of the foe to generate a range of engagements including skirmishes, envelopments, and ambushes. These alternate engagements may award surprise and/or dictate that some units are unable to participate in the battle. Similar conditions may be applied by the Judge when the situation resulting from intelligence gathering and roleplaying makes a pitched battle seem unlikely.

BATTLE PROCEDURES

When a battle occurs, the Judge should run a series of **battle turns** following the procedure below. Each turn represents approximately 10 minutes of hard fighting.

1. Each army leader selects one or more units to participate in the battle. Units participating in the battle are called **participating units**. Units that do not participate in the battle are in the **reserve**.

2. Each army leader calculates his army's battle rating. An army's battle rating is equal to the sum of the battle rating of all units participating in the battle. The battle rating of various units is detailed in the **Battle Rating** section.

3. Heroic PCs and NPCs may make **heroic forays** to influence the battle rating in favor of one army or the other. All heroes' heroic forays are revealed and resolved simultaneously. See the **Heroes in Battle** section.

4. Each army leader simultaneously rolls a number of attack throws equal to his army's battle rating. The target value for the attack throws is 16+, modified by the **Attack Throw Modifiers** listed in the section below. For each successful attack throw, one hit is scored.

5. Each army leader tallies the hits scored against his army. Each army leader then removes units from his army with a combined battle rating equal to or greater than the total hits scored against his army. These units are defeated. Hits scored in excess of the amount required to defeat all the opposing army's units are ignored. Hits are applied simultaneously.

6. The Judge now checks to see whether either army has reached a **break point** and if so resolves **morale rolls**, as explained in **Ending Battles**. If, after resolving morale, all units of one army have routed or been destroyed, then the battle is over.

7. Either army may now voluntarily withdraw. The army leader with fewer ranks of Military Strategy proficiency must decide first. If either army voluntarily withdraws, the battle ends. If neither army wishes to withdraw, then another battle turn is fought, starting with step 1.

When the battle ends, the losing army must **retreat**. The winning army may **pursue** the defeated army. After pursuit, **casualties** are calculated. The winning army then seizes the **spoils of war**. See the **Aftermath of Battle** section.

ATTACK THROW MODIFIERS

During a battle, each unit's attack throws are modified by the following factors:

Attack Throw Modifiers	Modifier
Opposing army surprised (first battle turn only)	+2
Opposing army occupies advantageous terrain (hill, ridgeline)	-2
Opposing army occupies highly advantageous terrain (cliffs, river bank)	-4

BATTLE RATINGS

An army's **battle rating** (BR) is equal to the sum of the battle rating of all the units in the army, rounded down. The battle rating of various units is listed in the Battle Rating table. Note that the battle ratings are for regular-sized units of 120 infantry or 60 cavalry or ogres. Smaller-than-normal units should have their BR reduced proportionately. Larger battles with huge units can be fought by increasing the battle rating proportionately. The battle rating of a unit composed of veterans (1st level fighters) is increased by 0.5 points.

Battle Rating for Other Units: The following formula can be used to determine a battle rating for other units:

$$\text{(Number of Creatures)} / \text{(2 x \# of Infantry per Regular Unit)} \times \text{(Creature's HD)} \times \text{(Creature's HD + 1)} \times \text{(1 + Creature's \# of Special Abilities)}$$

The number of infantry per regular unit is normally 120, unless unit size has been adjusted for a particularly large or small battle. The creature's number of special abilities equals the number of asterisks next to its Hit Dice (e.g. 4** HD means two special abilities). Most creatures in *ACKS* have no special abilities. However, the Judge may at his discretion change the number of special abilities based on the creature's possession of long-range weapons, armor, or other advantages or disadvantages in mass combat. (This is why, e.g., heavy infantry are BR 2 while light infantry are BR 1.)

Battle Rating											
Troop Type	**Man**	**Dwarf**	**Elf**	**Goblin**	**Orc**	**Hob.**	**Gnoll**	**Bugbear**	**Ogre**	**Skeleton**	**Zombie**
Conscript/Militia	.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Light Infantry	1	-	1.5	0.5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slinger	1	-	-	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heavy Infantry	2	2.5	2.5	-	2	2.5	4	6	5.5	2	3
Crossbowman	2	2.5	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mounted Crossbowman	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bowman	2	-	2.5	1.5	2	2.5	-	-	-	2	-
Longbowman	2.5	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Light Cavalry	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Horse Archers	4	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medium Cavalry	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heavy Cavalry	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cataphract Cavalry	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wolf Riders	-	-	-	6	-	8	-	-	-	-	-

Strategic Ability: Great strategic ability demands either great cunning or keen intuition, and no military leader can afford to be lacking in either. A leader's strategic ability score equals his bonus from either high Intelligence or Wisdom (whichever is better, minimum 0), less his penalty from low Intelligence or Wisdom (whichever is worse, maximum 0). For each rank of Military Strategy proficiency the leader possesses, his strategic ability is increased by 1. The minimum strategic ability is -3 and the maximum strategic ability is +6.

In the *Starter Edition*, a leader of great strategic ability increases the BR of all units in his army. (The *Complete Set* has different commanders for each division of an army and sets a limit on how many units each can influence). At strategic ability +3 or better, each unit's BR is increased by 0.5. At strategic ability +6 or better, each unit's BR is increased by 1.0.

SURPRISE

The Judge may decide, based on the strategic situation, that one army has surprised the other. The surprised army may not make any attack throws during the first battle turn of the battle. In addition, units attacking the surprised army gain a +2 bonus on all attack throws against it during the first battle turn. Heroes may still enter the fray even if their army is surprised. See **Heroes in Battle**, below.

MAGIC ON THE BATTLEFIELD

In the fantasy setting of *ACKS*, the tide of battle depends on supernatural forces as well as martial might. The tactical scale of *D@W: Battles* allows for detailed consideration of how spells like **fireball** affect massed troops. In the abstract resolution system of the *Starter Edition*, individual spellcasters may affect a battle's outcome through heroic forays, as described below. Units which have been given substantial magical abilities, such as cavalry equipped with **drums of panic**, should be considered as having additional special abilities when calculating their battle rating.

HEROES IN BATTLE

Great warriors, powerful wizards, and monstrous creatures can influence the outcome of battles far more than lesser mortals. In *Domains at War: Free Starter Edition*, the activities of heroes are resolved by "zooming in" on a particular fight between the heroes and their foes, called a **heroic foray**.

QUALIFYING HEROES

To qualify as a **hero**, a PC, NPC, or monster must be present at the battlefield and meet one of the following criteria:

- » The character is a PC (i.e. all player characters can act as heroes); or
- » The character is a monster possessing at least eight hit dice; or
- » The character is an NPC with at least eight levels of experience; or
- » The character is the henchman of a qualifying hero, and has at least four levels of experience

BR Staked	Hero is …
0	Entering the foray
0.5	Leading from the front
1	Heroically charging into battle
1.5	Attacking in front of the vanguard
2	Cutting a swath of glory
2.5	Carving his name into the epics
3	Seeking glorious death!

HEROIC FORAYS

A heroic foray is a fight between participating heroes and a selection of foes drawn from the opposing army. All heroes fight in the same foray. To foray, a hero stakes between 0 and 3 points of battle rating. The amount of BR staked represents the risk the hero is taking during the battle. Each hero chooses how many points of battle rating he will stake. The total amount of BR staked by all the heroes will determine how many foes the heroes face.

The Judge should select foes for the fray from among the units and heroes of the opposing army. Foes enter the fray in 1-4 separate groups. The Judge should allocate foes to the groups however he deems appropriate, but each group should be approximately equal in size. If desired, the Judge may have the heroes face partial units, reducing both BR and number of creatures proportionately.

When the foray begins, consult the Battlefield Encounter Distance table to determine how many yards separate the heroes and their foes. Roll separately for each group.

Battlefield Encounter Distance	
Terrain	**Encounter Distance (yds.)**
Badlands or Hills	2d6x10
Desert or Plains	4d6x10
Fields, Fallow	4d6x10
Fields, Ripe	5d10
Fields, Wild	3d6x5
Forest, Heavy or Jungle	5d4
Forest, Light	5d8
Marsh	8d10
Mountains	4d6x10

The foray between the heroes and their foes should be resolved using the standard combat rules of *ACKS* (initiative, morale, etc.) The participating heroes may use any desired spells, magic items, or other powers they wish. The heroes may leave the foray by using Defensive Movement, but may not re-enter the same foray thereafter. The foray ends when all heroes or foes have been defeated, voluntarily withdraw, or fail morale rolls.

If the heroes win the foray, the opposing army loses units with a combined battle rating equal to the total BR lost in the foray.

HEROES VERSUS HEROES

If there are heroes present in both armies, they will often end up foraying during the same battle turn. In this case, the heroes of each army will face each other in the foray. The highest total BR staked by either side is used. The heroes from each army will be supported by the staked BR worth of allies drawn from their

army. The foray ends when all of the heroes and creatures on one side have been defeated. Whichever side lost the foray loses units with a combined battle rating equal to the total BR staked in the foray. The winning side suffers no penalties, regardless of any casualties suffered.

LULLS IN THE FIGHTING

In between each battle turn, there is a lull in the fighting during which PC and NPC heroes can treat injured comrades, use magical healing, or take other actions to prepare themselves for the next battle turn. If heroes from either army make any attacks or cast any spells affecting the opposing army, however, this immediately interrupts the lull and begins another battle turn. If not interrupted, the lull will last for 1 turn (10 minutes).

VAGARIES OF BATTLE

The confusion and tumult of the battlefield affords many different environments, situations, and hazards for heroic forays. The Judge is encouraged to invent details which may help or hinder the foray and allow for the glory, terror, and pathos of war to be role-played. *D@W: Campaigns* offers a **Vagaries of Battle** section to assist the Judge's creativity in creating these scenes.

ENDING BATTLES

A battle ends when all of the units of one army have voluntarily withdrawn, routed, and/or been destroyed.

ANNIHILATION

A battle immediately ends if all of the units of either army are destroyed. Such an outcome is rare unless the army's leader has a very high morale modifier. In most cases, a battle will end from voluntary withdrawal or rout long before this occurs.

VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

A battle immediately ends if either of the armies voluntarily withdraws. Armies which suffer a morale collapse are very vulnerable to pursuit, so a wise leader will conduct a voluntary withdrawal before this occurs.

MORALE COLLAPSE

Armies do not, as a rule, fight to the last man (or elf, or orc). Instead they suffer a gradual loss of morale, becoming increasingly disordered as casualties mount, until eventually the army is swept away in a route. These effects are simulated with **morale rolls**.

During the Morale Phase, every unit in an army must make a morale roll if:

- » One or more units in the army were destroyed during the preceding combat round; and
- » The total number of units destroyed is equal to or greater than the army's **break point.** An army's break point is always 1/3 of the army's starting number of units, rounded up.

Unit Morale	
Adjusted Die Roll	**Result**
2-	Rout
3-5	Flee
6-8	Waver
9-11	Stand Firm
12+	Rally

MORALE ROLLS

To make a morale roll, the unit's commander rolls 2d6, adds the unit's morale score, and consults the Unit Morale table. The die roll should be modified based on the army and unit modifiers listed on the Morale Modifiers table below.

Rout: The unit immediately **routs** off the battlefield. It will play no further part in the battle, and counts as destroyed for morale purposes.

Flee: The unit is retreats in disorder. It may not attack next battle turn. If the battle ends before the unit can attack again, it counts as routed.

Waver: The unit's morale is wavering. Its BR is halved when attacking next battle turn.

Stand Firm: The unit remains steady. No effect.

Rally: The unit rallies under the pressure of battle. Its BR is increased by half when attacking next battle turn.

Morale Modifiers	Modifier
Army Modifiers	
Army leader	+ CHA bonus
Army has lost between 1/2 and 2/3 of its starting BR	-2
Army has lost 2/3 or more of its starting BR	-5
Army has destroyed more BR of units than opposing army	+2
Army has lost more BR of units than opposing army	-2
Unit Modifiers	
Unit is wavering	-2
Unit is fleeing	-5

The army's general determines the order in which his units will make morale rolls. The effects of each morale roll are resolved before rolling for the next unit. It is possible for the results of earlier morale rolls to impact those of later rolls, causing a cascade of flight off the battlefield.

AFTERMATH OF BATTLES

When a battle ends, the defeated army immediately **retreats**. The victorious army has the opportunity to **pursue** the defeated army. After pursuit is resolved, each army determines **casualties** and gathers the **spoils of war**. Finally, each army calculates **experience points** for its leaders, heroes, and troops.

An army that fights a battle may not make any further movement that day, apart from retreating.

RETREAT

After a battle, the defeated army must retreat. A retreating army generally retreats 1 6-mile hex. If there is a friendly stronghold or urban settlement in the same 6-mile hex, the army may retreat into the stronghold or settlement.

PURSUIT

As the defeated army retreats, the victorious army is eligible to pursue. Pursuit is handled with a series of **pursuit throws**. The victorious army receives one pursuit throw per **eligible** pursuing unit. Pursuing occurs within the same 6-mile hex that the battle took place in. The pursuing army does not follow the retreating army into its new hex.

Pursuit Eligibility

Determine which units from the victorious army are eligible to pursue as follows:

1. Did the defeated army end the battle with all of cavalry or flyer units routed or destroyed? If yes, then *all* units in the victorious army are eligible to pursue.

2. In all other cases, only cavalry units in the victorious army are eligible to pursue.

Pursuing Unit	Pursuit Throw
Light Cavalry or Flyer	11+
Other Cavalry	14+
Light Infantry	14+
Other Infantry	18+

Pursuit Throws: For each eligible pursuing unit, the victorious army's commander makes a pursuit throw against the appropriate value from the table below. Add +4 to the pursuit throw if all of the defeated army's cavalry or flyer units were destroyed or routed. Each successful throw eliminates one enemy unit. If all of the defeated army's cavalry or flyer units were destroyed or routed, the victorious army commander may choose which unit(s) are eliminated. Otherwise, the defeated army's general may choose which unit(s) are eliminated.

Pursuit against Evading Armies: As explained in **Types of Battles** earlier in this chapter, certain battles (rear guard actions, rear guard envelopments, and skirmishes) involve offensive armies fighting evading armies. The longer it takes to defeat an evading army, the harder it is for the offensive army to pursue. Each battle turn imposes a cumulative -1 penalty to subsequent pursuit throws against a defeated evading army. A natural roll of 20 always eliminates a unit, regardless of any modifiers.

CASUALTIES

After pursuit, each army's leader will determine his army's casualties, using the following rules.

Unit Loss: For each unit that was destroyed, 50% of its troops (rounded up) are crippled or dead, while the other 50% (rounded down) are lightly wounded. The victorious army's wounded troops return to their unit in one week. The defeated army's wounded troops become prisoners.

Routed Units: For each unit that was routed, 25% of its troops (rounded up) leave the unit. A victorious army's routed troops become deserters, while the defeated army's routed troops become prisoners.

Half-strength units may be consolidated to form a smaller number of full-strength units, if desired.

SPOILS OF WAR

Historically, most soldiers fought for the spoils of war. Those spoils could come in the form of booty from a pillaged city, food, wine and women from plundered cities, land captured in combat, or ransoms from captured nobility, but it was ultimately the prospect of economic gains that motivated ancient and medieval fighters. It was the nobility and leadership that were most motivated by the prospect of glory and renown from winning battles. To reflect this, *Domains at War* rewards leaders and heroes for the army's valor at arms, while the common soldiers are rewarded only for their personal material gain.

The spoils of war from a victorious battle are equal to one month's wages of each defeated unit. In addition, each prisoner captured is worth 40gp if sold as a slave or ransomed. (Higher level NPCs, monsters, and similar creatures can be ransomed for greater sums, at the Judge's discretion.)

Experience Points from Spoils: Each participant (whether a commander, a hero, or a creature in a unit) earns 1 XP for each gold piece he collects from the spoils of war. Troops will expect that at least 50% of any spoils captured will be shared on a pro rata basis in relation to their wages. If this does not occur, the Judge should make a morale roll for any unpaid troops.

For ease of play, troops' XP can be tracked on a unit-by-unit basis. 0th level characters can be advanced to 1st level as per the rules in *ACKS* under **0th Level Characters and Experience from Adventuring** (q.v.). In general, it requires 100XP for a 0th level character to become a 1st level fighter.

Experience Points from Combat: The army's commanders earn XP equal to the value of enemy units defeated, less the value of friendly units defeated. 50% of the XP goes to the army's leader, while the remaining XP is divided proportionately among the commanders based on the number of units each commander led. (This is why ambitious commanders always demand to lead more troops!) Characters also earn XP for the creatures they personally defeated. Troops organized in units (i.e. non-heroes) do not earn XP from fighting, only from spoils of war.

SIEGES

Units defending a domain against an invading army may avoid battle by sheltering behind the walls of a stronghold or fortified settlement. To conquer the domain, the invader must lay **siege** to these defenders. Sieges give rise to many of the most challenging and dramatic engagements in *Domains at War*, and are given extensive coverage in *D@W: Campaigns* and *D@W: Battles*. The *Free Starter Edition* presents a greatly simplified system that allows players and Judges to answer the questions most essential to an *ACKS* campaign: how many troops should be allocated to defend or besiege a specific stronghold, and how long will the siege last.

CONQUERING DOMAINS

In order for a leader to rule a domain, he must build a new stronghold or claim an existing one, as described in *ACKS* Chapter 7, **Securing the Domain**. It follows that seizing control of a domain's strongholds is an essential goal for the army of an invader seeking to seize new territories. In the *Free Starter Edition*, a domain is **conquered** when all strongholds and

settlements within it have been captured. (*D@W: Campaigns* covers the dangerous intermediate stage in which a domain has been successfully occupied but is not yet conquered because resistance forces still occupy uncaptured strongholds). A stronghold or settlement is captured when no opposing units are present within. Ungarrisoned strongholds or urban settlements may thus be captured automatically. However, if the strongholds or settlements are garrisoned by troops, then the invading army must besiege them.

HIT POINTS AND UNIT CAPACITY OF STRONGHOLDS

The first step in resolving a siege is to estimate the **structural hit points** (**shp**) of the fortification being besieged by dividing the stronghold or urban settlement's gp value by 8 and rounding up. Structural hit points are then used to estimate the the number of units that can effectively defend a stronghold, or **unit capacity**. For every 1,000 shp, a stronghold can be defended by 1 unit (rounded up). Units in excess of this value cannot man the walls and do not count when calculating the unit advantage, below. These estimates assume that the stronghold or urban settlement is protected by stone walls. Wooden strongholds have fewer structural hit points but the same unit capacity. For wooden walls, follow the calculations above but then divide shp by 10 to obtain the actual value.

When a map or schematic of a fortification has been prepared, Judges using the *Starter Edition* are encouraged to adjust this estimate of its structural hit points. If the players or the Judge have exercised care or ingenuity in devising the plans of a stronghold, its shp may be increased by 10% or 20%. Incomplete strongholds, or those which suffer from a structural or situational weakness, may have their shp reduced by a similar factor. *D@W: Campaigns* allows for precise determination of a stronghold's shp based on its construction using the rules in *ACKS* Chapter 7, **Stronghold Structure Costs**. *D@W: Battles* offers even more detailed considerations, including the unit capacity of individual elements of a stronghold and the resistance of different types of building to attack by siege engines or spells.

SIEGE DURATION

In the *Starter Edition* the necessary conditions for a siege are that there are enemy units in the same six-mile hex as a stronghold which contains defending units, and that these defenders choose to endure the siege rather than engage in a battle. If at any time this situation changes – for example, if reinforcements bring relief to the defenders or units are called away from the besieging army – then the defenders may choose to end the siege and instead resolve the conflict using the standard rules for a battle, above. Alternately, the defenders may negotiate terms of surrender with the opposing leaders at any point in the siege.

If the situation that produces a siege remains constant, the next step is to determine the **duration of the siege**. The simplified system that follows simulates the outcome of the entire course of a siege. The *Complete Set* divides sieges into the phases of blockade, reduction, and assault, each of which presents players with strategic and tactical choices including encirclement, sapping, and the destruction of fortifications by artillery, magic, or monstrous units.

On the **Duration of Siege** table below, cross-reference the besieged stronghold's structural hit points with the besieging army's unit advantage. A numerical result indicates the number of days it will take the besieging army to capture the stronghold. A result of "0" indicates the stronghold is captured without a fight. A result of "-" indicates that the besieging army is not strong enough to capture the stronghold and can hope only to starve out the defenders with a blockade.

Artillery	Bonus Units
2 Ballistas	1
1 Light Catapult	1
1 Heavy Catapult	2

Unit Advantage: Unit advantage is calculated by subtracting the number of units in the defending army (up to the maximum set by the stronghold's unit capacity) from the number of units in the besieging army. Artillery on either side count as bonus units, as shown on the adjacent table.

Stronghold's Structural HP	1-2	3-4	5-10	11-15	16-30	31-50	51-75	76-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-600	601+
1-3,000	45	23	9	6	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
4-6,000	90	45	18	12	6	4	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
7-9,000	135	68	27	18	9	5	4	3	1	1	1	1	0	0
10-12,000	180	90	36	24	12	7	5	4	2	1	1	1	1	1
13-15,000	225	113	45	30	15	9	6	5	2	2	1	1	1	1
16-20,000	-	150	60	40	20	12	8	6	3	2	2	1	1	1
21-30,000	-	225	90	60	30	18	12	9	5	3	2	2	2	1
31-50,000	-	-	150	100	50	30	20	15	8	5	4	3	3	2
51-75,000	-	-	225	150	75	45	30	23	11	8	6	5	4	3
76-100,000	-	-	-	200	100	60	40	30	15	10	8	6	5	4
101-125,000	-	-	-	250	125	75	50	38	19	13	9	8	6	5
126-150,000	-	-	-	-	200	120	80	60	30	20	15	12	10	9
151-200,000	-	-	-	-	250	150	100	75	38	25	19	15	13	11
201-250,000	-	-	-	-	-	180	120	90	45	30	23	18	15	13
251-300,000	-	-	-	-	-	210	140	105	53	35	26	21	18	15
301-350,000+	-	-	-	-	-	240	160	120	60	40	30	24	20	17

Duration of Siege — Besieging Army's Unit Advantage

Stronghold Site	Duration Modifier
Mountain (Sogdian Rock, the Acropolis)	x5
Island (Tyre, Mont. St. Michel)	x4
Peninsula (Constantinople)	x3
Riverbank (Rhine river castles)	x2

Inaccessible Strongholds: A stronghold situated on a mountain, island, or similar piece of inaccessible terrain is harder to capture than its structural hit points would indicate. Modify the duration of the siege as shown on the table below.

Player characters involved in a siege will no doubt seek inventive ways to tilt the balance. The *Complete Set* offers extensive rules for actions carried out during a siege; for example, *D@W: Campaigns* covers hijinks during sieges and *D@W: Battles* is ideal for conducting assaults on specific buildings within a fortification or night forays by defending troops against the encircling forces. Judges using the *Starter Set* may treat schemes intended to reduce the number of units on either side using the rules for heroic forays given above. Other schemes may be resolved through roleplaying, perhaps choosing a few scenes to play out in detail and extrapolating their success or failure to a change in structural hit points, duration modifier, or unit advantage.

CONSEQUENCES OF A SIEGE

Once the time established by the **Duration of Siege** table has elapsed, the attacking forces can launch an assault through the breaches they have created in through the defender's fortifications. The final stage in resolving a siege is to **assess the casualties** from this assault. To determine how many losses are suffered by each force following a completed siege, just resolve a battle between the besieging army and defending army. *D@W: Battles* allows for detailed consideration of the effects of cover, obstacles, artillery, and siege equipment in these assaults, but the *Starter Edition* assumes that the final assault takes place once the stronghold has been so reduced by artillery, sapping, magic, and/ or hijinks that it no longer affords any benefit to the defending units. Play the final battle as normal, with two exceptions related to morale collapse. Defending units which suffer a **Flee** result are assumed to be cowering in the rubble rather than actually putting any distance between themselves and the encircling attackers. Defenders which suffer a **Rout** result are considered to have surrendered to the besieging army, whose commander may determine the unit's fate.

Once the stronghold no longer contains any defending units, the domain it secured is conquered. When a leader conquers a domain, he may be able to add it to his personal domain. In order to be eligible to assimilate the conquest into his personal domain, the newly conquered domain must be adjacent to his personal domain, and his personal domain must not yet be at maximum size. Otherwise, the newly conquered domain may simply be added to the conqueror's realm, to be ruled by a vassal (or sub-vassal) according to the rules in *ACKS* Chapter 7. *D@W: Campaigns* further provides rules for the pillaging of conquered domains, allowing determination of the spoils of war as well as the subsequent effects on domain morale.

READY FOR MORE WAR?

When you've mastered *Domains at War: Free Starter Edition*, you're ready for the *Complete Domains at War Set*. At the time of this writing, the D@W rules are already written and we're gearing up to support their publication through Kickstarter. If you're reading this while that campaign is still running, you're in luck. The backer rewards include all the products that the crowd-funding will soon let us offer for sale – the books in PDF, softcover, and hardcover; the map on paper or as a vinyl battlemat; full color counters; and wipe-erase army trackers. What's unique about getting in during the Kickstarter is that the rewards also give you the chance to influence the final product, from reading and making suggestions about the drafts to having our artists create illustrations for the game based on the visions it evokes in you. Here's an early example of a backer's art request for *Domains at War*:

> *I want one of those "this side about to clash with that side" kind of war pictures. On one side, warg riders and shamans. On the other side, a barbarian swinging his two-handed axe while a dire squirrel leaps off his shoulder, fangs bared.*

We love Ryan Browning's illustration of this concept and we hope that you'll have your own chance to put your mark on *Domains at War*! But even if you miss out on our Kickstarter, we're confident that this *Complete Domains at War Set* will be a valuable addition to your gaming shelf. Please visit our forums at autarch.co and let us know how you'll use it in your campaign. Thanks for being a part of the hobby that we love!