A Fistful of TOWs 3

INTRODUCTORY RULES FOR WORLD WAR 2

Miniature Wargame Rules
Modern Mechanized Warfare
1915–2015

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FFT3 Introductory Rules for World War 2

Note: This is a VERY simplified version of FFT3. Many FFT3 concepts have been omitted or simplified, but it does allow you to play a full game and get the flavor of FFT3.

Start a Fight

Get some figures and get to it. The Soviets should get 2-3 times as many tanks and infantry as the Germans in a meeting engagement. The Americans need about twice as many tanks and about the same number of infantry and halftracks in a meeting engagement.

If attacking a reasonably prepared defender, double the numbers above.[1]

Mount infantry on penny sized stands for micro scale miniatures.

The Forces

Here are the stats for the vehicles and explanations of what the abbreviations mean.[2]

Type	Mov	Arm	Gun Pen	Gun ROF	Gun Rng	Gun AI	Special AT Ammo Pen	Special AT Ammo ROF	Special AT Ammo Rng
Panther-D	8	7-4	8	3	10"	-1	9	3	8"
T-34/76	9	6-4	6	2	10"	-1	7	2	6"
Sherman	8	5-3	6	3	10"	-1	-	-	-
Halftrack	8	0-0	-	1	6"	-1	-	-	-
Truck	7	s	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Type: The type of vehicle. The Panther is a German heavy tank, circa 1943. The T-34/76 is a Soviet medium tank circa 1943. The Sherman is an American medium tank circa 1943. The halftrack represents American and German halftracks. The Soviets had a few halftracks, but they were very uncommon. The truck represents a variety of trucks used by the belligerents in WW2.

Mov: The number of movement points the stand has.

Arm: The stand's armor rating. The first number is the front armor rating and the second is the flank armor rating.[3] An "s" means that the armor rating is 0 for anti-vehicle attack purposes. It *also* means that the stand can be attacked with anti-infantry fire. Trucks are treated as infantry when hit by artillery.

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[1] These are <u>very</u> rough guidelines for balancing a game. FFT3 has an extensive point values system and guidelines for how to balance different types of games.

[2] FFT3 has rules for all kinds of technology and systems – NBC systems, stabilization, night vision systems, etc. But this was omitted from the introductory rules.

[3] FFT3 has elegant and detailed rules for special armor types and their effect on shaped charge weapons. But since all the vehicles represented here have basic armor, these rules were omitted.

Pen: The gun's penetration.[4] A "-" means that the weapon can only make anti-infantry attacks.

ROF: The gun's rate of fire (i.e., the number of shots it gets per turn).

Rng: The gun's effective range. Close range is ½ effective range and long range is 1½ effective range.

AI: The gun's anti-infantry rating.

Here are the stats for infantry stands and explanations of what the abbreviations mean:

| Type | Mov | --Anti-Infantry-- | | | --------LAW-------- | | |
		AI	ROF	Rng	Pen	ROF	Rng
American Infantry	4	+1	3	4"	6	1	4"[5]
German Infantry	4	+1	2	4"	4	1	2"
Soviet Infantry	4	+1	2	4"	4	1	2"

Type: Type of stand. The infantry stand represents a typical armored infantry platoon circa 1943.

Mov: The number of movement points the stand has.

AI: The stand's anti-infantry rating.

ROF: The weapon's rate of fire (i.e., the number of shots it gets per turn).

Pen: The antitank weapon's penetration.

Rng: The weapon's effective range. Close range is ½ effective range and long range is 1½ effective range.

LAW: Light antitank weapon. This is the infantry platoon's manportable antitank weapon.

Sequence of Play

Attacker

- Attacker Artillery Phase: Attacker places artillery templates and resolves artillery strikes against any stand touched by a template.
- Attacker Movement Phase: Attacker moves his stands. Defender conducts overwatch fire if applicable.
- Attacker Fire Phase: Attacker's stands fire.
- Quality Checks: Units that have suffered at least 2/3 casualties this turn make a quality check.

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[4] FFT3 has rules for different warhead types – kinetic energy, HEAT, etc. In these rules, guns are assumed to fire kinetic energy rounds and missiles/LAWs to have HEAT warheads.

[5] FFT3 has more detailed rules for infantry antitank weapons. In these rules, they are abstracted for ease of play. The Americans have 2.36" bazookas, while the Germans and Soviets have antitank rifle grenades. In reality, the latter weapons would only be used at very close range, but since these rules omit close combat, their range has been exaggerated. The same is true of the 2.36" bazooka.

Defender

Same sequence as above but reverse the roles (i.e., where it says "attacker" substitute "defender" and vice versa).

Game Basics

Scale

1 turn represents about 12 minutes. 1" represents 100m. A stand is about a platoon of infantry or about 5 vehicles.

Units

A unit is a group of stands organized together. Typically Western units are companies while Soviet units are battalions. Units must generally keep together (see Cohesion below).

American and German units are companies of 0-3 tanks and 0-3 HALFTRACKs (each with an infantry stand). Maximum of 4 tanks and halftracks in a unit.

Soviet units are either (a) tank battalions of 4-6 tanks and 4-6 infantry stands that ride on the tanks (or that have trucks); or (b) motorized rifle battalions of 6-9 trucks (each with an infantry stand) and 1-3 tanks.

Range

A weapon's effective range is listed in the data. Short range is ½ effective range. Long range is 1½ times effective range.

Quality Checks

A quality check is a d6 roll. If the roll equals or exceeds the stand's quality rating, there's no effect. If the roll is less than the stand's quality rating, the stand is eliminated. Actually, it's merely out of the current fight due to demoralization, damage, fatigue, etc. If a unit takes a quality check, make one roll for the whole unit. Remember: Stands are always destroyed if they fail a quality check.

Quality checks can occur due to:

- Anti-vehicle fire
- Anti-infantry fire
- Artillery fire
- Casualties

A stand can take a maximum of one quality check per turn from artillery fire.

A stand can take a maximum of one quality check in a turn from enemy fire. A stand that passes a quality check from enemy fire ignores additional quality checks from enemy fire for the remainder of the current turn.

A unit can take a maximum of one quality check for casualties per turn. A unit takes a casualty quality check when it first loses 2/3 of its stands (round up). The unit takes a casualty quality check in any subsequent turn if it loses one or more stands.

Quality levels can also give a to-hit bonus for anti-vehicle and anti-infantry attacks, as well as for rate of fire (ROF). The ROF bonus applies to guns, LAWs and to anti-infantry fire.[6]

Side	Quality Rating	To Hit Bonus	ROF Bonus
German	3+	+1	+1
American	4+	+1	-
Soviet	5+	0	-

Movement

Each stand has the number of movement points indicated on its data line above.

Each stand can spend up to all of its movement points and fire. A stand can use strategic movement which doubles its movement points, but it can't fire and it can't move within 10" of an enemy stand.

Stands in open terrain move 1" per movement point.

Vehicle stands in difficult terrain – forests, towns, rocky fields, swamps, etc. – move ½ inch per movement point.

Infantry stands in difficult terrain move 1" per movement point.

Stands on roads move 2" per movement point. Trucks move 3" per movement point on roads.

Friendly stands cannot move within 1" of enemy stands.[7]

Cohesion

A stand is **in cohesion** if it begins and ends its movement phase within 2" of at least one other stand in its unit. Stands that are in cohesion function normally in the game.

A stand that is not in cohesion has a -1 to its quality check. If it moves, it must attempt to move in cohesion. Stands can be moved out of cohesion if a player wishes, but remember that it must try to move in cohesion if it moves again.

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[6] FFT3 has seven quality classes from Poor to Superb. In this game the Americans are Good, the Germans are Excellent and the Soviets are Fair.

[7] FFT3 has rules for **close combat**, a very fast and deadly form of combat for use when stands move within 1" of enemy stands.

Carrying Infantry[8]

Each halftrack or Soviet tank can carry 1 friendly infantry stand. To pick up infantry, the carrier must be (or move) next to the infantry stand and spend 2 movement points. To debark (drop off) an infantry stand, the carrier must spend 2 movement points. The infantry stand loses 2 movement points when it debarks.

If a halftrack is destroyed, its infantry stand survives if the infantry stand can make a quality check. Otherwise the infantry stand is destroyed.

If a tank carrying infantry is attacked by anti-vehicle fire, the infantry must make a quality check if a hit is scored (regardless of its actual effect on the tank).

A tank carrying infantry can be attacked by anti-infantry fire. In that case, the tank is unaffected, but the infantry is attacked as though it were in the open.

When artillery affects a tank carrying infantry, make a single roll. The tank is treated as an armored vehicle and the infantry is treated as infantry in the open.

Terrain

There are two terrain types – open and difficult (forests, swamps, towns, etc.)[9]

Open terrain has no effect on stands.

Difficult terrain increases the movement cost vehicles moving through it (see Movement above). It also gives stands a Terrain Saving Throw against Anti-vehicle attacks, missile attacks and Anti-infantry attacks. See the combat sections below for details. Finally, difficult terrain blocks line of sight. Stands that are in difficult terrain can see 2" into that terrain. Stands on the edge of difficult terrain can see (and be seen) outside the terrain.

Roads have the same combat effects as the terrain adjoining the road.

Armor and Facing

Tanks and halftracks have an armor rating in their data lines. Trucks have an armor rating of 0 for anti-vehicle fire, but can also be attacked by anti-infantry fire.

A vehicle's front is the 120 degree arc in front of the stand. Any fire from an enemy stand that is wholly or partly in the vehicle's front arc is taken against the vehicle's front armor.

A vehicle's flank is the remaining 240 degree arc. Any fire from an enemy stand wholly in the vehicle's flank arc is taken against the vehicle's flank armor.

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[8] FFT3 has more sophisticated rules for infantry transport (including APCs, trucks, helicopters, amphibious craft, etc.). These rules are streamlined.

[9] FFT3 has rules for numerous terrain types. To keep things simple, we cut them down to 2 types.

Combat

There are 3 kinds of combat: anti-vehicle, anti-infantry and artillery. A vehicle can make only one type of attack per turn. An infantry stand can make an anti-infantry attack and an anti-vehicle attack with its LAW.

Anti-vehicle Attack

Anti-vehicle attacks are made by tanks (using their main guns) or infantry (using LAWs). The target must be an enemy tank or HALFTRACK. Here's how it works:

First, **designate the firing stand(s) and the target stand**. All fire against a stand must be declared before any shots are resolved. There must be a clear line of sight between the stands (trace from any part of the stand to any part of the stand). Determine whether the attack will hit the target's front armor or flank armor.

Second, **measure the range** (from any part of each stand). If the target is outside long range, the attack misses. Otherwise determine if the attack is at close, effective or long range.

Third, **roll to hit**. Roll a number of dice equal to the stand's ROF. Apply the following modifiers:

- +1 if target is at Close Range
- -1 if target is at Long Range
- +Quality "to hit" modifier
- -1 if firing stand is suppressed
- +1 if firer is using a missile[10]
- -1 if firer is conducting an overwatch attack

Each die that is 4+ (taking modifiers into account) is a hit.

Fourth, **make terrain saves**. If the target is in difficult terrain, roll 1d6 for each hit. On a 5+, the hit is avoided.

Fifth, **resolve hits**. For each hit remaining, roll a number of d6s equal to the firing stand's penetration less the target's armor.

If a gun attack is at close range, the weapon's penetration is increased by 2. If a gun attack is at long range, the weapon's penetration is decreased by 2. LAWs and missiles do not use this rule.

If the firing stand's penetration is equal to the target's armor, roll 1 die. If the firing stand's penetration is less than the target's armor, roll 1 die and apply the difference between the firing stand's penetration and the target's armor.

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[10] FFT3 has different rules for various generations of missile guidance. These rules assume all missiles are second generation.

For instance, an HALFTRACK scores 2 hits on a Soviet tank in its front arc. The HALFTRACK penetration is 7, the Soviet tank's front armor is 10. 7-10 = -3. Two penetration dice are rolled and a -3 applied to each ones. Since the maximum modified roll is 3, the HALFTRACK cannot hurt the Soviet tank.

- A roll of 6 means that the target is destroyed.
- A roll of 4-5 means that the target takes a quality check (maximum on one per firing phase).
- A roll of 3- is no effect

Special AT Ammo

Some tanks have limited quantities of special antitank ammunition. If the players agree, these tanks can use this ammunition for one fire phase (at full ROF) in the game.

Anti-infantry Fire[11]

Tanks, halftracks and infantry stands may conduct anti-infantry fire against enemy infantry stands and trucks. Here's the procedure:

First, **designate the firing stand(s) and the target stand**. All fire against a stand must be declared before any shots are resolved. There must be a clear line of sight between the stands (trace from any part of the stand to any part of the stand). Determine whether the attack will hit the target's front armor or flank armor.

Second, **measure the range** (from any part of each stand). If the target is outside long range, the attack misses. Otherwise determine if the attack is at close, effective or long range.

Third, **roll to hit**. Roll a number of dice equal to the stand's ROF. Apply the following modifiers:

- +1 if target is at Close Range
- -1 if target is at Long Range
- +Quality "to hit" modifier
- -1 if firing stand is suppressed
- -1 if firer is conducting an overwatch attack

Each die that is 4+ (taking modifiers into account) is a hit.

Fourth, **make terrain saves**. If the target is in difficult terrain, roll 1d6 for each hit. On a 5+, the hit is avoided.

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[11] FFT3 has a far more sophisticated anti-infantry combat system.

Fifth, resolve hits. If any hits remain against the infantry stand, the infantry stand must make a quality check. The quality check die roll is reduced by 1 for every additional hit after the first in that phase.

Artillery

For every 3 units on a side, the owning player gets 1 artillery template (a 2" diameter circle; use a US quarter for the center point if you want) to place in his artillery phase.

An artillery template may be placed anywhere as long as a friendly stand can trace an unblocked line of sight to some part of the template.

Roll one die for any stand wholly or partially within the template:

- 6: Infantry in the open is destroyed. Tanks, HALFTRACKs and infantry in difficult terrain make a quality check. If the quality check is passed, the stand is suppressed.
- 4-5: Infantry in the open makes a quality check. If the quality check is passes, the infantry is suppressed. Tanks, HALFTRACKs and infantry in difficult terrain are suppressed.
- 1-3: No effect.

The template remains until the owning player's next artillery phase. Any stand that touches it during movement takes an immediate attack as above.[12]

Suppression

A stand that is suppressed from enemy artillery fire stays suppressed until the start of the enemy's next artillery phase. Suppressed armored vehicle stands have a -1 to-hit modifier. Suppressed infantry stands have a -2 to-hit modifier. Suppressed stands lose 2 movement points.

Overwatch

Any stand that is eligible to fire and that does not move in its movement phase may instead take an Overwatch marker. This allows the stand to fire during its opponent's next movement phase. However, all overwatch attacks are at -1 to hit.[13]

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[12] The FFT3 artillery system is _far_ more sophisticated. This greatly simplified process gives the flavor of the full system.
[13] FFT3 has several additional options to make the sequential turn sequence more realistic. These include Hold Fire, Pivot and missile overwatch.

Examples

Anti-vehicle Attack

A Panther fires at a T-34/76 that is on the edge of a town (difficult terrain). There is a clear line of sight and the Panther is in the T-34's front arc.

First, this attack and any others against this particular target are declared.

Second, the range is measured. The T-34 is 9 inches away. The Panther's effective range is 10". Since the attack is greater than 5" but not greater than 10", this is an effective range anti-vehicle attack.

Third, roll to hit. The Panther has a ROF of 3. This is increased by 1 due to German quality. The German player rolls 4 dice, getting a 1, 4, 5 and 6. The following modifiers apply:

- +1 quality to hit modifier for Germans

   Each die that is 4+ (taking modifiers into account) is a hit, so 3 hits are scored

Fourth, make terrain saves. The target is in difficult terrain, so its player rolls 3d6 – one for each hit – getting a 2, 4 and 6. A 5+ saves, so one hit is avoided.

Fifth, resolve hits. For each hit remaining, roll a number of d6s equal to the firing stand's penetration less the target's armor. Since the Panther is in the T-34's front arc, the T-34's front armor is used. The Panther's penetration is 8. The T-34's front armor is 6. 8 – 6 = 2 dice per hit. The German player rolls 4 dice and gets a 1, 2, 4, and 5. Since a roll of 6 means that the target is destroyed, a roll of 4-5 means that the target takes a quality check (maximum on one per firing phase) and a roll of 3- means no effect, the T-34 takes a single quality check. The Soviet player rolls 1 die. He needs a 5+ to pass, but rolls a 2. The T-34 is destroyed.

Anti-infantry Attack

A Panther fires at a Soviet infantry stand on the edge of a town. The range is 12", which is long range. The Panther's ROF is 3, plus 1 for German quality, so the German player rolls 4 dice to hit, getting a 1, 4, 5 and 6. The following modifiers apply to each die:

- -1 because target is at Long Range
- +1 for German quality "to hit" modifier
- -1 for the Panther's AI rating

Two of the modified dice are 4 or higher, so 2 hits are scored. The infantry gets 2 saving terrain throws. The Soviet player rolls two dice and gets a 2 and a 4. Neither is a 5+ so no hits are avoided. The Soviet infantry stand must make a quality check and the check is reduced by 1 for each hit after the first. Since 2 hits are scored, the infantry stand must subtract 1 from its quality check roll. It rolls a 5, which is reduced to a 4. This fails (a 5+ modified roll was required to pass the quality check), so the infantry stand is eliminated.