

Advanced Squad Leader "The Great War 1914 -1918" v 0.1.1

This work is dedicated to all those who served on all sides and to all those who lost their lives during the Great War. We remember...

Foreword

Those rules are still under heavy work, so if you test them and think that something is wrong (or is good! Who knows?) just send me some feedback with your advice, your ideas or anything that might help me writing something that runs smoothly.

The important idea is to keep the number of modification to the original ASL system as low as possible. So playing ASL "The Great War" (ASLGW) is exactly like playing classic ASL with the exception of the rules described hereafter.

These rules v 0.1 present the infantry rules and some special Terrain rules. They should be enough to start playing simple scenarios.

The next step (aka v0.2 of the rules) will cover the OBA missions, tanks and mining.

The paragraphs in red represent the changes with the precedent version

Do not hesitate to submit any useful comment at the e-mail indicated at the bottom of this page¹.

Classic ASL- Rules to be ignored.

A few rules are better if ignored since they don't fit the time period. Here is a listing of the few ASL rules, which should be taken out.

A1.21 & A7.36 Assault fire
A1.22 & A7.34 Spray fire
A.22.6 Molotov Cocktails (could be reintroduced by SSR in some cases)
A.23 Demolition Charges (DC weren't quite as handy in 14 -18 as they were in 39-45. They can be used by SSR and will generally be *placed* particularly in tunnels)
A.24.1 Smoke placement exponent
A.24.3 White Phosphorus
C.12 Recoilless rifles
D.13 Vehicular smoke dispenser
D.16 DD tanks & amphibians

That seems to be all!

1 Infantry and basic rules

1.1 Platoons:

During most of the Great War, the platoon was the basic tactical unit and was composed of about 60 men. So in ASLGW a platoon is made of 6 squads of the same type of unit and same nationality. Half-platoons are composed of 3 squads of the same type of unit and same nationality. Half-platoons can exist only if a platoon has undergone enough casualties to be reduced to a half-platoon. But players during the set-up can also choose to convert up to 25% of the platoons present in the OB in half-platoons. SSR can also create half-platoons as required. The rules applying to platoons also apply to half-platoons even if the word half-platoon is not always mentioned.

1.2 Combat Groups

At the end of 1917 (September for the French army) a big change occurred throughout the battlefields. The battlefield and the weapons were very different from those of 1914. The armies now needed well-trained soldiers able to survive and fight independently. The infantry tactical rules were completely renewed. The squads worked by pairs, forming a Combat Group of about 20 men supported by a MG or a submachine gun. This evolution was also partly due to the fact that the modern battlefield asked for very wide deployments and a platoon leader could not possibly control the whole platoon alone anymore, so the other leaders (mainly NCOs) were given more responsibility.

¹ Send all comments at ww1@cote1664.net

1.2.1

In terms of ASL rules, a Combat Group is a pair of squads (2 squads) generally equipped with a SW. Combat Groups work exactly like ww2 squads, but the pair of squads must always remain stacked together or at least adjacent. Though they are versatile, they are not as versatile as WW2 squads.

1.2.11

The use of Combat Groups is limited to Elite troops and exists only by SSR.

1.2.12

The Germans started experimenting those small unit tactics as early as 1915. So German Combat Groups can exist during a scenario occurring in 1915-1917 if specified by a SSR.

1.3 Platoon Leaders:

Each platoon normally comes with a leader. During WW1, the role of the leader was crucial. Since he was to lead the charge, literally, at the head of the troops. The officers and NCOs suffered heavy casualties. Most of the heroes and good leaders were short lived on the battlefield with such a doctrine and poor leadership was the direct consequence as well as a real problem during the Great War. However more often than not, their spirit were high. So the basic leaders will often be 7-0, 8-0, 9-0, 9-1, 10-0, 10-1 or even 6+1 leaders.

Each leader represented by a SMC can control up to a platoon; that means the equivalent of 6 squads. All the squads being controlled by a leader and in platoon formation can have the benefit of the bonus MF provided by the leader, even if not stacked with him. However the leader applies his Leadership during a fire phase or MC/Rally only to the units stacked with him.

1.3.1 Deployment and command radius:

Depending of the period of the war, the leaders have a variable command radius. All the squads of in this radius are considered to be "**In Command**".

1.3.11

1914 – January 1916: Close formation is the rule during combat (one man every meter was the way to do things during combat). A leader at this period has a command radius of one hex.

1.3.12

1916: The platoon formation was beginning to get a bit looser and the leaders have a command radius of 2 hexes. Elite German can use this deployment as early as January 1915.

1.3.13

January 1917 – 1918: The reality of modern warfare was finally understood. The leaders have a command radius of 3 hexes. Elite German can use this deployment as early as January 1916.

1.3.2 No Leader Penalty

If no leader is present, the unit is considered "**Out of Command**". Any unit that is not in command must pass a NTC to move during any movement phase (other than Rout phase) or to fire during the Prep fire phase or the Defensive First Fire Phase (exc: if enemy unit is ADJACENT or in same hex). If the NTC is past the unit acts normally for the remainder of that player's turn.

1.3.21

If there is a Hero with any units, those units do not suffer from the No Leader Penalty. Heroes act as leaders in regard of the command radius (and only in this regard). Heroes always have command radius of 1 hex, no matter the time period.

1.3.22

1.3.2 is n/a while units are in their own trenches (and not trenches captured during the course of the ongoing scenario)

1.3.3 Recombining

Leaders can rebuild platoons with remnants of other platoons so long as they don't have more than 6 squads under their control. Recombining platoons works exactly as recombining half-squads in classic ASL except that it is done with squads. That also means that the squads being recombined must be in the command radius of the leader.

1.3.4

Some platoons might not have any leaders represented by a SMC (as given in the OB or after having suffered a Leader Loss). Such platoons still work has platoons in all purposes, but they do not have the 2 extra MF provided by the leaders, they can't recombine with free squads and suffer from the No Leader rule (see 1.3.2).

1.4 Movement

Movements in ASLGW cannot be handled as usual. In fact during the Great War, the basic infantry unit www.cote1664.net

was the platoon (*section* in French) and composed of 60 men. The platoon could exceptionally be used as two half-platoons (30 men). This is especially true for the 1914 -1917 period. It is only during the last year of the war that squad tactics were really used in the field. Though the Germans started experimenting assault squads as early as 1915.

1.4.1 Platoon movement:

Platoons and half-platoons move in Impulses as one unit (or as a "multihex stack") or pay penalties as per 1.4.13. All the moving units of a platoon or half-platoon must have moved at least one hex before being First-Fired at the end of that Impulse. The moving units of the platoon or half-platoon spends the same number of MF as the unit which expends the most during the Impulse. Not all units of a platoon have to be in LOS of each other as long as they are adjacent or in the same hex with another member of the platoon at the end of each impulse.

1.4.11

Each squad of a platoon or half-platoon must set up or enter adjacent to at least one other squad of the platoon or half-platoon or to a leader. Not all the squads need to move during an impulse provided that at the end of the impulse the squad formation is maintained

If a squad/half-squad of a platoon is destroyed or broken it is no longer considered part of the platoon and the remaining units continue to act as a platoon, closing the range to each other, if necessary, by the end of the next impulse.

1.4.12

During platoon movements, the units can Assault Move, Dash, Search, carry more than their IPC or use column movement as long as the platoon formation is maintained.

1.4.13 Non-platoon movement:

A squad can be isolated from the rest of the platoon during the course of the game or by the player's choice. If it is the case, the squad becomes free and its remaining movement is dealt with, only once the movement of the platoon from which it originated has been done. A free squad can attempt to rejoin its platoon or it can wander off alone. Its movement becomes normal squad movement as described in classic ASL. However, in order to move during a MPh a free squad must pass a NTC with a +1 DR modifier since it is Out of Command and isolated from its platoon.

A free squad can also try to join a platoon different than the one from which it originated, as long as the leader of this new platoon can control it (see 1.3.3).

1.4.14

1.4.13 is n/a if a leader is stacked with a free squad, which is, in fact, not free anymore and In Command.

It is also to be noted that a squad can be free and In command if it is in the radius of a friendly leader with whom it has not recombined. In this case the squad takes the NTC but the +1 does not apply to the DR.

1.4.15 Entrenchments

Platoon movement is not used while a platoon is entrenched. However as it gets out of its entrenchment it must achieve formation as soon as possible. 1.4.13 is n/a while in trenches.

1.5 Bayonet Charge

A Bayonet Charge (BCh) represents the infantry movement that was used to assault an enemy position. In terms of rules it is a quite similar to a Human wave that is resumed hereafter.

The ATTACKER may declare a BCh during his MPh by selecting any Good Order infantry unit (even a single SMC, but not Crews), even if ADJACENT to an enemy unit; however, there must be an average of at least two participating MMC per hex in three contiguous adjacent hexes. Different units wishing to participate in the same BCh must still be ADJACENT to \geq one other such unit in order to be part of a contiguous chain of units. There must be at least one leader in each BCh containing one or more MMC.

At least one unit in the BCh must have a LOS to an enemy unit within the eight hexes the chain will move towards during that MPh OR at least one of the units must have a LOS to an enemy trench. The units participating in the BCh are named BCh Units; they lose any concealment and are exempt of heat of Battle, PAATC and any pin results [EXC: as per A25.23]. While they are part of the BCh; for the remainder of that player turn they have their moral level increased by one [EXC: if broken] and are Lax.

All the other rules of the Human Wave (A25.231 – A25.235) apply for a BCh.

1.6 Weapons of the Great War

1.6.1 Machine Guns

This part has been written with the help of the fine article by Geir Aalberg, "Reference Notes for SW" published in View from the Trenches 28-31.

MG in ASLGW work exactly the same as in classic ASL. However, the characteristics will be different.

Table 1 presents some of the MG used during the GW. It is to be noted that most MG are alike since they were in fact all based on the Maxim MG model.

Table 1:

Name	FP	Range	RoF	PP	B#/R#
Browning (US) ¹	6	<u>12</u>	3	5	12/3
Chauchat $(Fr)^2$	2	<u>7</u>	1	1	10/2
Hotchkiss (Fr) ³	4	<u>11</u>	2	4	12/2
Hotchkiss / HMG	6	<u>12</u>	3	5	11/3
Lewis $(Be - Br)^4$	2	<u>6</u>	1	1	11/1
MG08 $(Ger)^5$	6	<u>12</u>	2	5	11/3
$MG08/15 (Ger)^{6}$	2	<u>5</u>	2	1	11/1
Pul. Maksima (Ru) ⁷	4	10	2	5	11/2
St. Etienne (Fr) ⁸	4	<u>10</u>	1	4	10/2
Vickers (Br) ⁹	6	<u>14</u>	3	5	12/3

¹: is the M1917 model; availability: 1917

² : is one of the first LMG and not very good...

³: is the same as the French MMG/HMG in classic ASL. The HMG version is available only in 1916, with the arrival of "belt" ammunitions.

⁴: the famous Lewis gun LMG, availability: 1915

⁵ : the German improvement of the Maxim

⁶ : the LMG version of the MG08, availability: 1915

⁷: the Russian version of the Maxim

⁸ : Model 1907, was abandoned in 1916

⁹ : is the same as the British HMG in classic ASL. Probably the best MG of WW1.

1.6.2 Machinegun crews

During WW1, heavy and medium machineguns were not given to common infantry platoons. Instead the MG were regrouped in special MG companies composed of well-trained specialists. So in ASLGW, a MMG/HMG can only be operated by a Crew counter.

1.6.3 Browning Automatic Rifle and Maschinenpistole 18/1 (MP18)

For the sake of simplicity, those two weapons that appeared during the last year of the war will be treated as normal SW.

Only one man in a squad was carrying a BAR that was not the case of the MP18, which could equip a whole squad. However the BAR is closer to a light machinegun than anything else. So we will consider that a BAR counter (representing one BAR) is more or less equivalent to a MP18 counter (representing multiple MP18s).

1.6.31

The BAR and the MP18 are represented in ASLGW as some sort of MG with a firepower of 1, a range of 6 and no ROF and costs 0 PP.

1.6.32

The MP18 can't be abandoned, destroyed, captured or other, since it is not really a SW.

1.6.4 Flamethrowers

The Germans had flamethrowers available as early as October 1914. The British fielded theirs on the 1 July 1916 and removed them immediately, since the effectiveness of the FT had not convinced the headquarters of their utility. So the British can use FT only during the Somme offensive, in July 1916! The French also built their own FT called the Schilt, and they were quite successful. FT are available for the French in 1917.

1.6.41

All FT rules apply normally, except as modified below. Table 2 is a listing of the FT used during WW1.

Table2:

FT	FP	PP	Х
Kleinflammenwerfer (Ger) ¹	12	1	9
Wex Flammenwerfer $(Ger)^2$	16	2	10
British FT $(Br)^3$	16	2	10
Appareil Schilt (Fr) ⁴	20	2	10

¹: designed in 1900 and available to Germans in 1914. Has no long range (so it can only fire in an adjacent location).

²: this model is an improvement of the Kleinflammenwerfer and is available to the German in 1917.

³: this is the sole FT tested by the British and gave only local satisfaction. Available only during the Somme offensive in July 1916.

⁴: the French FT was the most successful of WW1 and was more efficient than the German version. Available to French in 1917.

1.6.5 Mortars

During WW1, no mortar was sufficiently light to be represented on a 1/2" counter. So mortars are treated as a 5/8" SW and discussed later. The German 50 mm Granatenwerfer, a light trench mortar, was an exception.

Table 3:

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Name	cal	Range	RoF	PP	B#/R#
Granatenwerfer	50	2-9	1	5	11/1
$(Ger)^1$					

¹: Available to Germans in 1916.

1.6.6 Grenades

Grenades were rapidly put back in service at the beginning of the war and their use increased once the trench war started. Special teams of grenadiers were in charge of the task of bombing the enemy. The typical bombing team usually consisted of nine men, an NCO, two throwers, two carriers, and two bayonet-men to defend the team and two 'spare' men for use when casualties were incurred.

1.6.61 Hand Grenades (HG)

Hand grenades were available among the troops only at the beginning of 1916 (exceptions can exist by SSR). So prior to 1916, units are under no the HG effect (see 1.6.62). This does not mean they had no grenades; they just had only very few.

In 1916 and after, all units on the western front are normally equipped with HG. On the other fronts it is not the case.

1.6.62 No HG Effect

If a unit has no HG its suffers the following effects: During a PBF, the units FP is multiplied by 1,5 only (and not 2) and the TPBF becomes a DPBF (Double PBF) with a FP multiplied by 2 instead of 3.

1.6.63 Viven-Bessiere tromblon

A lot of grenade-launching devices have been tested and used during the Great War. However, grenades were usually hand thrown. Most countries had their own rifle-grenade launchers but their use remained limited. The Germans even gave up the idea in 1916. The French VB tromblon was an exception and could be found in the allied armies.

Tabla	1.
Iable	4.

Name	cal	Range	RoF	PP	B#/R#
Tromblon VB	50	4	1	2	11/1
$(Fr)^1$					

¹: available in 1915

1.7 The French Garance trouser

From the beginning of the war until approximately may 1915, the French infantry was dressed with a red trouser, commonly called "le pantalon garance". This was the cause of quite a number of casualties during the first year of the war and it led to the adoption in 1915 of the blue uniform worn by all the Poilus.

1.7.1

To reflect this, when firing on French troops between 1914 and May 1915 the first hex of hindrance is ignored. If there is any hindrance of course. Example: A German platoon fires on French troops charging through the brushes (1 hex of Brush separates the French from the Germans). Normally they would be a +1 hindrance modifier, since the French are wearing their Garance trouser, there is no hindrance. If there are 2 hexes of brush between the two enemies, the hindrance modifier is +1 and not +2, etc.

1.7.2

The garance trouser prevents any unit wearing it from remaining concealed in an enemy LOS in Open Ground, even if located at more than 16 hexes of any enemy.

1.7.3

All the rules pertaining to the garance trouser (1.7) are n/a if a scenario takes place during winter (because of the winter coat) or if the weather conditions are mud or mist/fog or during Night scenarios.

1.8 Trench armor

Some assault troops were equipped with armors covering the chest. Though quite heavy, they were efficient in close combat.

- Units attacking armored infantry in CC suffer a +1 CC DRM

- Squads wearing trench armors loose 1 MF and 1PP.

1.9 Chemical warfare

Chemical warfare really started in April 1915 during the second battle of Ypres. The first protections were simple cotton pads. In June 1915 the first masks with filter-respirators were beginning to be distributed. In fact, deaths from gas attacks after that date became relatively rare (about 3% of the gas victims.). Even so, gas victims often suffered of highly debilitating after effects.

1.9.1 Reaction to a gas attack

1.9.11

From June 1915 and onwards, the troops are generally equipped with gas protections. This can be changed by SSR of course. For scenarios prior to this date the OB must precise if gas protection is available or not. In any case nobody can have any form of protection for scenarios that take place before the 22 April 1915.

1.9.12

If no information is given in the OB, the gas protection is considered has being a mask of some sort. During the month of April 1915, the allied gas protections can only be cotton pads.

1.9.13

We shall consider 2 types of gas, the irritants and the poison ones. An irritant chemical (i.e. tear-gas) usually does not have any lethal effects; this is not the case of a poison gas (such as phosgene or chlorine). The two types could be mixed during an attack; the irritant could cause enough coughing or vomiting to slow down the setting up of the protections.

1.9.14 Gas Normal Task Check

Has soon as a gas attack has been resolved (generally after OBA fire or by SSR) all troops equipped with protections in the area of effect or that have a direct LOS on the area of effect must pass a gas NTC to put their gas protection on. The modifiers given in table 5 modify the final DR of the NTC. This rules includes tank crews.

Table 5:

Situation	Modif.
Using cotton pads	+1
Irritants are used	+1
Gas is Chlorine ¹	-1
Gas is Yperite ²	+1

¹: was easy to detect

²: was difficult to detect

If the NTC is successful, the unit is pinned for the rest of the turn, but does not suffer any further effect from the gas.

1.9.15

While wearing the gas protections a squad is automatically CX at the end of the current turn and remains CX as long as the protections are on.

1.9.16 Removal

Gas protections can be removed at will at the cost of 1 MP during its MPh. The CX counter can then be removed at the end of that MPh.

1.9.2 Gas effects

If the gas NTC is failed, the unit has not managed to put its protections on in time and it suffers the ill effects of the poison used if it is located in the area of effect.

Units not in the area of effect can choose to continue trying to protect themselves. This is done by putting a labor marker on the unit. It can undertake another gas NTC during the next rally phase.

1.9.21 Irritants

Irritants break the unit immediately and it looses any concealment. A DM counter is put on top of it. The unit remains DM as long as it is in the area of effect of the gas.

1.9.22

At each rally phase that the unit spends in the area of effect of the gas, it can take a new gas NTC to get its protections on. If failed a gas NMC must be taken and the unit remains DM. (similar to rules on White Phosphorus A24.31).

If the gas NTC is passed the unit remains DM but it does not suffer from the gas anymore.

1.9.23 Poison gas

Poison gas break the unit immediately, it looses any concealment and it must pass a 2 MC or suffer a casualty reduction. If the gas is Phosgene or Yperite, the moral check becomes a 3 MC. A DM counter is put on top of it. The unit remains DM as long as it is in the area of effect of the gas.

1.9.24

At each rally phase that the unit spends in the area of effect of the gas, it can take a new gas NTC to get its protections on. If failed a gas 2 MC or 3 MC must be taken and the unit remains DM.

If the gas NTC is passed the unit remains DM but it does not suffer from the gas anymore.

1.9.25

There is no Heat of Battle on a gas MC.

1.10 Close Combat

Close combat was very common during WW1 and often the bayonets and even the hands were the main weapons of those fights. Close quarter fighting was violent, cruel and inevitable. All the armies trained their soldier for bayonet fighting, but none more than the French. The hand-to-hand fight was even given as the main and unique goal of the infantry in the French doctrine. This of course usually led to a slaughter in front of the German machineguns.

1.10.1

To reflect the natural inclination of the soldiers to get into Hand to Hand fighting, normal CC can only be declared if the fighting units are not in the same location (one is in a trench, behind a wire, ...) OR if all of the ATTACKING units are equipped with HG.

1.10.11

If the units are locked in Melee after their first CC phase and if the separated locations are directly accessible (like getting into a trench but **not** like crossing a wire), the CC transforms itself automatically in a HtH Melee. [exc: as above with HG equipped units]

1.10.12

All rules of Classic ASL CC are used normally except for the situation described in this document.

1.11 Nationality Distinctions

It is not (yet!) always possible to represent the troops with the right values on the counters, so the best is to use some counters of the same nationality, even if the counter markings are not used. A little memory effort or note keeping is required here. (We will do our best to make ASLGW counter sheets available for download)

The broken Morale Level is represented by the second morale number, after the slash.

1.11.1 German

*Stosstruppen:*4-4-<u>8</u>/8 [*half squad: 2-3-<u>8</u>/8*] (available after June 1915 – becomes 1st line after ELR failure) *Elite:* 4-4-8/8 [*half squad: 2-3-8/7*] *First Line:* 4-4-7/7 [*half squad: 2-3-7/6*] *Second Line:* 4-3-7/6 [*half squad: 2-2-7/6*] *Landwehr:* 3-3-6/5[*half squad: 1-2-6/5*]

Special rules:

Early Combat Group and wide deployment availability (see 1.2 and 1.3.1)

1.11.2 French

Elite: 3-4-8/8(prior to may 1915); 4-4-8/8 (after) [half squad: 1-3-8/8](prior to may 1915); [half squad: 2-3-8/8](after) *First Line*:3-4-7/7 (prior to may 1915);4-4-7/7 (after) [half squad: 1-3-7/6](prior to may 1915); [half squad: 2-3-7/6](after) *Second Line*: 3-4-7/7[half squad: 1-3-7/6] *Territoriaux*: 3-3-7/6[half squad: 1-2-7/6]

Special rules:

-1 bonus to HtH DR Can declare a BCh even if the required average of 2 MMC in three adjacent hexes is not met.

1.11.3 British Commonwealth

Elite:4-5-8/8 [half squad: 2-4-8/8] First Line: 4-4-7/7 [half squad: 2-3-7/6] Second Line: 4-3-6/6 [half squad: 2-2-6/5]

Special rules: A25.43, A25.44, A25.45 are applicable

1.11.4 US

Elite: 4-4-8/8 [half squad: 2-3-8/7] First line: 4-4-7/7 [half squad: 2-3-7/6] Second line: 3-3-6/6 [half squad: 1-2-6/5]

2 Terrain

2.1 Deep Trenches

The trenches represented in ASL do not correspond to wwl trenches. They were much more deeper and organized. The ASL trenches can be used as front line trenches used to warn an enemy assault or as temporary trenches dug just after a victorious attack.

Trenches of the WW1 main lines are called Deep Trenches.

2.1.1

Crest Status must be used for the units that want to have a LOS out of the trench.

2.1.2

All rules pertaining to Trenches apply to deep Trenches except as modified herein.

2.1.3 Movements

Infantry move INTO a deep Trench at the cost of two MF. Movement costs for entry INTO a Deep Trench are cumulative with the cost of Terrain in which is the trench.

Getting out of a Deep Trench doubles the MF cost (like any move to a higher elevation) but the squads are automatically CX at the end of the MPh without having the possibility to use Double Time Movement during the same MPh.

If a Ladder is present for the exit, then the unit is not automatically CX and it can Double Time. (Ladders were generally used in the parallels to launch the charge as quick as possible).

2.1.4 Stacking limits

The stacking limit of a Deep Trench is 2 squads.

2.1.5

To have a LOS INTO a Deep Trench a unit must be in the same hex as that Deep Trench.

2.1.6 TEM

Units with Crest Status in a Deep Trench benefits of a +3 TEM against direct fires and + 4 TEM against OVR and OBA.

Units IN a Deep Trench benefit of a +3 TEM against eventual direct fires and a +5 TEM against OBA.

2.2 Dugouts

Dugouts are bunkers in all respects except that once inside the troops are completely blind. They were used as sleeping places as well as shelters against the OBA.

[The pillbox counters can be used]

2.2.1

Units in a Dugout do not stack with those outside in the same hex. (The dugout was an underground shelter). In the same way troops in a Dugout cannot prevent enemy units from moving in their hex as long as those stay outside the Dugout.

2.2.2

A LOS can be traced in a Dugout only from its own hex

2.2.3

A Dugout has a +6 TEM against OBA and a +2 TEM against direct fires coming from its own hex. TPBF(DPBF) applies when firing into a dugout.

2.2.4

Units firing from a Dugout suffer a +3 TEM and TPBF(DPBF) is not used.

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