

AIRBORNE ASSAULTS

After months of training and preparation in England D-Day is finally here! Lead the men of your Airborne Company in a daring airborne attack as they spearhead the invasion of North-west Europe.

FORCES FOR AIRBORNE ASSAULTS

Although many of the airborne units of the Allied Airborne divisions have been converted from regular 'ground-pounders', all have received special training and equipment to enable them to undertake airborne operations. Once their airborne mission is complete they will be reinforced by supporting ground-based troops, containing much heavier equipment and landed in Normandy by sea.

Unlike their British counterparts, the US glider rifle companies, although landed from the air, are not trained to conduct airborne assaults. Rather they are delivered to the battlezone a few hours after the main paratrooper assault goes in, with the intention of providing reinforcements to the hard-pressed paratroopers.

Only a British Parachute or Airlanding Company or a US Parachute Rifle Company may conduct an airborne assault using the Seize and Hold mission.

When conducting an airborne assault your force must only contain support platoons that have Parachute, Glider or Airlanding in the title.

Additionally, no Snipers may be included in your force for an airborne assault as every rifleman is expected to engage in close combat!



PREPARE YOUR AIRBORNE FORCE

For months now your planners have been beavering away finalising force composition, aircraft payloads, timetables, and flightpaths. Every soldier and his equipment has to be accounted for in the plan. Because of the dangers of travelling by air to the battlefield, senior commanders were always transported in separate planes or gliders.

Before Deployment in an airborne assault you must assign all HQ support weapons to platoons. No platoons may make combat attachments for an airborne assault.

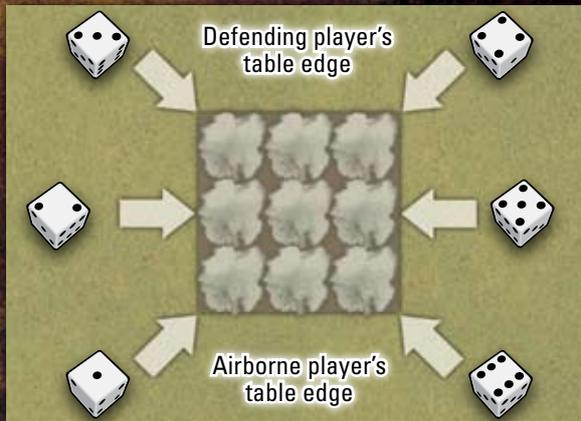
Each of the Independent teams in your force must join a platoon for the purposes of deployment. However, your Company Command team and 2iC Command team must join different platoons for an airborne assault.

PREPARATION

Before Deployment: Assign HQ support weapons and Join all Independent teams to platoons.

CONDUCTING AN AIRBORNE ASSAULT

WIND DIRECTION



ROLL FOR WIND DIRECTION

Despite the best efforts of meteorologists, wind direction is one of the least predictable aspects of airborne assaults. However, since your parachutes will be scattered by it and your gliders will make their landings in the face of it, the way the wind is blowing has a major impact on your airdrop.

To determine the wind direction, the airborne player chooses either long table edge as their own, then rolls a die and checks the Wind Direction Diagram to determine where the wind is coming from.



PATHFINDERS

A few hours ahead of the main airborne assault force small teams of highly trained paratroopers equipped with lights and radar guidance equipment are dropped on the target areas. The pathfinders quickly find the pre-planned landing and drop zones for the main party and set about marking them with lights and activating their Eureka radar beacons to guide the aircraft in.

During your deployment choose any table edge or corner and place your Pathfinder marker on it. During the game whenever you roll for Scattered Reserves any die roll of 2 or 5 will result in the platoon arriving on the table edge or corner marked by your Pathfinder marker. If the marker is located on a corner, any platoons arriving there must enter the table within 16"/40cm of the corner.



British pathfinder.



US pathfinder.

PATHFINDERS

Place Pathfinder marker on any table edge or corner. Platoons will arrive here from Scattered Reserves on roll of 2 or 5.

PARACHUTE LANDINGS

In preparation for the largest airborne assault in history the Allied airborne commanders have devised new tactics for their parachute forces. Instead of dropping the men 'on the objective' and relying upon the tough paratroopers to form themselves into small groups and launch somewhat haphazard attacks as they are able, drop zones have been carefully selected near the intended objectives. Around each drop zone is a series of rendezvous points (RV's) where each paratrooper must report upon landing. As soon as the unit commander has collected enough troops to begin their assault they get underway and make for their objective.

Parachute platoons do not deploy on table at the start of the game, instead each platoon will move on during the game as detailed in the mission rules.

DEPLOYMENT

Parachute platoons do not deploy on table.

CONTAINERS

Heavier weapons and equipment for the paratroopers, like machine-guns and mortars, have to be dropped in special containers and recovered after landing. This was priority number one for the paratroopers.

All Parachute platoons have collected their containers and are fully armed when they move onto the table during the game.

MARSHES

The coastal region of Normandy contains many tidal marshes, most notably in the area directly behind Utah Beach on the Cotentin Peninsula. These marshes were of major concern to the Allies because they restricted access inland to a few narrow but vital causeways. The capture of these causeways was one of the most important tasks assigned to the US airborne divisions on D-Day. Additionally, the German defenders flooded many fields in the surrounding area, and also in the area of the Orne and Dives Rivers, in an effort to counter possible Allied airborne assaults. The marshes created by the flooding, as well as the tidal marshes, proved to be a very effective defence as many heavily-laden paratroopers fell straight into them and, being unable to disentangle themselves from their equipment, drowned.



COUP-DE-MAIN GLIDER ASSAULT

The Rifle platoons of the British Airlanding Company were trained to conduct a coup-de-main, an airborne assault aimed directly at vital enemy positions, ahead of the paratrooper landings. Once the enemy position was seized the coup-de-main party would be reinforced by paratroopers as well as gliderborne reserves.

Only the Combat platoons of a British Airlanding Company may make a Coup-de-main Glider Assault. If they do so add +145 points to the cost of each platoon conducting the assault. If they do not, their glider is considered to have landed off-table and the platoon will move onto the table as detailed in the mission rules. All other Airlanding or Glider platoons land off-table and move onto the table as detailed in the mission rules.

Each Coup-de-main platoon is carried in a single Horsa glider. Independent teams that have joined the platoon are carried in the platoon's glider for no additional cost.

COUP-DE-MAIN

British Airlanding Platoons may Coup-de-main, if not, they arrive on table as per the mission rules.

CONDUCTING A COUP-DE-MAIN

The Coup-de-main gliders are always at the vanguard of the airborne assault. Unless they are unlucky enough to miss their landing zone.

Attempt to land all Coup-de-main gliders at the start of the first Movement Step.

Each time you attempt to land a Coup-de-main platoon you should complete the following steps for each glider before moving on to the next glider.

FIND THE LANDING ZONE

Several miles from the pre-planned landing zones, the tow planes release your gliders. Out of the blackness of the night sky the gliders swoop towards their objectives. The glider pilots have spent many hours studying aerial reconnaissance photos and maps of the target area. Their keen eyes scan the onrushing ground looking for familiar landmarks to guide them. It is all down to the skill of your pilots to find the landing zone.

For each glider conducting a Coup-de-main, roll a die.

- *On a roll of 2+ the glider finds the Landing Zone.*
- *Otherwise the glider misses the Landing Zone, the glider will land off-table and the platoon it is carrying is now in reserve.*

FIND THE LANDING ZONE

Roll 2+ for each glider to find the Landing Zone.

GLIDER LANDING RUN

Having successfully identified the landing zone, the ultimate test for your glider pilots is still to come. They must pick an area as free from obstacles as possible and attempt to land their flimsy wooden flying machine, and its valuable cargo of fighting men, safely.

Pick a landing point anywhere on the table, place the glider on that point facing into the wind. To find the length of the glider's landing run, roll a die. Move the glider forward 2"/5cm for each point on the die roll.

On a landing run roll of 1, the glider crash lands due to pilot error or enemy fire.

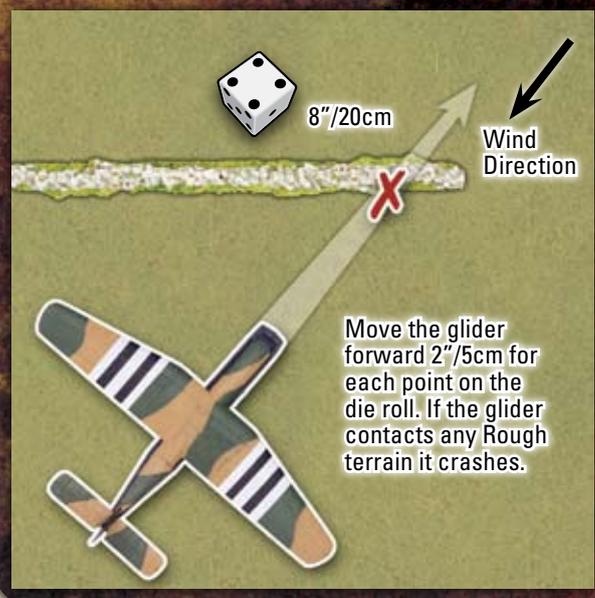
OBSTACLES

As the flimsy glider slides along the ground, obstacles strewn across the landing zone, trees, hedges, even enemy fortifications, lurch out of the darkness, threatening to bring the landing run to a premature end.

If the glider's fuselage runs into Rough terrain, an enemy gun (except Man-packed Gun teams), an enemy vehicle or the fuselage of another glider. The glider crash lands and stops immediately. However if the glider's wings hit an obstacle, they just snap off and the wingless fuselage carries on unharmed. The glider only crash lands if the fuselage itself hits an obstacle.

If the glider's fuselage passes through or ends its run on the position of an enemy Infantry or Man-packed Gun team, the defending player moves the team aside just far enough to avoid the body of the glider as they dive out of its path.

GLIDER LANDING RUN



GLIDER CRASH LANDINGS

Glider crash landings are extremely dangerous. The wood and fabric structure of the gliders offers practically no protection in a crash and in fact the splintering framework is a deadly hazard in itself.

If the glider crash lands, the passengers may be killed or injured. Roll a die for each team carried in a crashed glider except Command teams. On a roll of 5+ they survive, but on a lesser roll they are Destroyed.

CRASH LANDINGS

Each passenger, except Command teams, must roll 5+ to survive crash landing.



AFTER LANDING

DISMOUNTING GLIDERS

Once on the ground, whether their landing was smooth or rough, the Coup-de-main party aren't going to hang around. They realise that speed is key to the success of their mission and the sooner they can get out of this contraption, the sooner they can get at the enemy.

Once the glider has come to a stop, all teams immediately dismount anywhere adjacent to the fuselage of the glider. The platoon may either:

- *move as normal in this Movement Step, or*
- *launch an assault, if they are able, in the Assault Step.*

For this turn only, however, they may only perform one or the other action, not both. All movement is measured from the fuselage of the glider.

Additionally, because they are totally focused on getting amongst the enemy the platoon may not conduct any shooting in the Shooting Step, regardless of whether they move or not.

DISMOUNTING GLIDERS

Teams dismount adjacent to glider. Coup-de-main platoons may launch an assault or move, but may not shoot this turn.

SHOOTING THROUGH GLIDERS

The broken-up fuselage of the flimsy gliders can provide some concealment from, but no real protection against, enemy gunfire.

Gliders are only markers showing where troops land and cannot be shot. Gliders provide Concealment to any teams targeted through them.

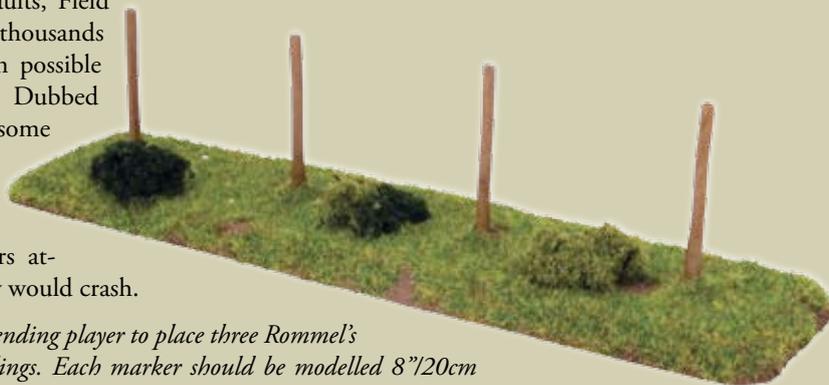
MOVING THROUGH GLIDERS

Although gliders are just wood and wires, they are still enough of an obstacle to throw the track of an unwary tank.

A glider counts as Very Difficult Going to teams attempting to move through it.

ROMMEL'S ASPARAGUS

In an attempt to counter airborne assaults, Field Marshal Rommel ordered the erection of thousands of 8 to 12 foot high wooden stakes in possible landing fields all across Normandy. Dubbed *Rommelspargel* or Rommel's Asparagus, some of these stakes were booby trapped with mines atop them and linked by wire. This ingenious arrangement permitted cattle to graze safely, yet if any gliders attempted to land amongst the stakes they would crash.



The Seize and Hold mission allows the defending player to place three Rommel's Asparagus markers to counter glider landings. Each marker should be modelled 8"120cm long by 2"15cm deep. They count as Rough terrain (Difficult Going), and therefore force any glider that contacts a marker to crash land.

AIRBORNE ASSAULT SUMMARY

1 ROLL FOR WIND DIRECTION

- Choose a table edge, roll a die, and consult Wind Direction Diagram.

2 DROP PATHFINDER

- Place Pathfinder marker on any table edge or corner. When rolling for Scattered Reserves a roll of 2 or 5 will result in a platoon arriving at this table edge or corner.

DURING THE GAME:

- Roll for reserves to bring any Parachute, Glider or Airlanding platoons that are in reserve onto the table.
- At the start of the first Movement Step conduct any Coup-de-main glider landings.
- In the first Movement Step move that portion of your force that is not in reserve, onto the table.
- All platoons arrive on table from Scattered Reserve.

GLIDER LANDINGS

FOR EACH GLIDER:

1. ROLL TO FIND LANDING ZONE

- Roll 2+ to find Landing Zone, otherwise lands off-table, platoon is in Reserve.

2. MAKE GLIDER LANDING RUN

- Place Glider and roll for landing run distance.
- Glider crash lands on a roll of 1 or if contacts Rough Terrain, Gun team, vehicle or glider.
- Roll 5+ save for teams (except Command teams) in crashed glider.

3. DISMOUNT GLIDER

- All teams immediately dismount adjacent to the glider.
- In the first turn Coup-de-main platoons may move in their Movement Step or launch an assault in their Assault Step, not both.
- Coup-de-main platoons may not shoot in their first Shooting Step.



MISSION SPECIAL RULES

NIGHT ATTACK

The Allied airborne forces launched their D-Day offensive at night to maximise the surprise and confusion amongst the defenders prior to the dawn beach landings.

When an Allied airborne company attacks in a Seize and Hold mission the game starts in darkness and uses the Night Fighting rules (on page 154 of the Flames Of War rulebook) until morning breaks.

- *At the start of the defender's turn three, the defender rolls a die. On a score of 5+, morning has broken.*
- *If the roll is unsuccessful, at the start of the attacker's next turn they roll two dice with morning breaking on any roll of 5+.*
- *If it is still dark at the start of the defender's next turn, they roll three dice, and so on until morning breaks on any roll of 5+.*

Once morning breaks the Night Fighting rules are no longer used, and it is daylight for the remainder of the game.

NIGHT TRAINING

In preparation for their mission, the Allied airborne troops trained extensively at night, and studied maps and aerial photographs of their target area.

The British Parachute Platoon, Airlanding Platoon, and the US Parachute Rifle Platoon may ignore the usual rules regarding movement at night and may instead move normally.

SURPRISE

Although they may be expecting an airborne assault, the speed with which the attack begins always catches the defenders by surprise. Many of the troops will be away from their positions, eating, sleeping, or otherwise unprepared.

To simulate the time taken to get the defending force fully ready to fight, all defending platoons on the table start the game Pinned Down and all defending armoured vehicles on the table start the game Bailed Out.

Defending teams may not start the game mounted in their transport vehicles or on tanks, and as normal, may not mount Bailed Out transport vehicles or tanks until the crew have remounted.

RESERVES

An airborne commander can't afford to wait around until all of their company have gathered at the rendezvous point. As soon as they have enough troops to begin their mission they head for their objective. The rest will have to follow as soon as they have formed up.

In the Seize and Hold mission both players hold half their platoons in reserve (the Attacker ignores any platoons conducting a Coup-de-main). Place these platoons to one side at the start of the game.

At the start of your first turn roll a die. On a roll of 5+ your first reserve platoon arrives. It may be any platoon of your choice, subject to the Unload the Gliders special rule.

At the start of each subsequent turn roll again adding one more die than the previous turn. Each roll of 5+ results in another platoon arriving from your reserves.

When a reserve platoon arrives place its Platoon Command team at your edge of the table to remind you of its arrival. During your Movement Step move the newly-arrived platoon on from the table edge indicated in the mission briefing.

UNLOAD THE GLIDERS

Gliderborne reinforcements carry heavier equipment like anti-tank guns and vehicles and are slower to unload and get to the battlefield.

During the game all Glider or Airlanding platoons, except those that land on the table in a Coup-de-main, may only arrive on table after all Parachute platoons. Glider or Airlanding Support platoons must arrive last of all.

SCATTERED RESERVES

In an airborne assault both sides' reserves are scattered over a wide area and could arrive at the front from just about any direction.

When each platoon arrives from reserve, the player rolls a die to determine from which table edge or corner it will arrive (the mission map shows the edge or corner for each roll). If the reserves arrive from a corner, they must enter the table within 16"/40cm of the corner.



SEIZE AND HOLD

The Seize and Hold mission reflects the daring airborne assaults conducted by the US and British Airborne forces on D-Day.

Seize and Hold missions use the Airborne Assault rules on pages 54-59 and the **Night Attack**, **Night Training**, **Surprise**, **Reserves**, **Unload the Gliders** and **Scattered Reserves** special rules.

YOUR ORDERS

ATTACKER

In just a few hours the bulk of your army will be thrown ashore on the beaches of Normandy. To ensure a speedy advance for the ground troops, and to disrupt enemy counterattacks, your force must capture vital positions deep in the enemy rear.

You must seize an objective point and hold it until a link-up can be established with your ground troops.

DEFENDER

The enemy has launched his long expected invasion! While your force is far from the beaches, attack from the air is always possible.

Your mission is to hold both objectives and drive the attacking force back to a safe distance.

PREPARING FOR BATTLE

1. The player with the Allied airborne force is always the attacker. If both players have Allied airborne forces, both players roll a die. The highest scoring player is the attacker.
2. The defender places one objective anywhere on the table at least 16"/40cm from the table edges.
3. The attacking player places two objectives anywhere on the table at least 16"/40cm from the table edges.
4. The defender must hold at least half of their platoons in reserve at the start of the game. The remaining platoons deploy anywhere on the table.
5. The attacker must hold at least half of their platoons in reserve, ignoring any that are to be used in a Coup-de-main. The remaining platoons are not deployed on table at the start of the game and will instead move onto the table in the attacker's first Movement Step.
6. The attacking player now removes one of the objective markers that they placed (not the objective that the defender placed).
7. The defender may now place up to three Rommel's Asparagus markers anywhere on the table.



8. The attacker selects their table edge and rolls for Wind Direction.
9. The attacker places the Pathfinder marker using the Airborne Assault rules.

BEGINNING THE BATTLE

1. Neither player may make any Reconnaissance Deployment moves.
2. The attacking player has the first turn. Remember to roll for Reserves in the Starting step.
3. At the start of their first Movement Step the attacker lands any Coup-de-main gliders.
4. In their first Movement Step the attacker moves that portion of their force that is not in reserve onto the table as if arriving as Scattered Reserves. All reserves arrive on the table as Scattered Reserves.

ENDING THE BATTLE

The battle ends when either:

- the attacker starts any turn from turn 6 holding any objective, or
- the defender starts any turn after turn 6 with no attacking teams within 16"/40cm of either objective.

DECIDING WHO WON

The airborne player wins if they hold any objective. The attack has gained a foothold and reinforcements are on the way.

Otherwise the defender wins. The airborne assault has failed.

Calculate your Victory Points using the Victory Points Table on page 195 of the *Flames Of War* rulebook.