

★ M6 HEAVY TANK

DEVELOPMENT

At the outbreak of World War II the US Army possessed few tanks, and no heavy tanks. In May 1940 the US Army Ordnance Department started to work on the T1, 50-ton heavy multi-turreted tank. This was similar in concept to the Soviet T-35 and other 1930s 'land battleship' designs. By October 1940, the Department reached the same conclusions of excessive size, difficulty in crew co-ordination and high production cost that had led to the abandonment of the land battleship concept in Europe.

A new T1 heavy tank design was laid down with a single turret retaining the mixed armament of the earlier design. The turret mounted a stabilized 3-inch gun with a coaxial 37mm gun with a loader and ammunition handler to keep up the rate of fire. Initially the design had six machine-guns, but this was cut to four in the production vehicles. These were twin .50 cal machine guns in a bow mount, a fixed .30 cal machine-gun of dubious value in the front plate fired by the driver, and a .50 cal machine-gun on the commander's hatch.

On 26 May 1942 a cast-hull T1E2 and a welded-hull T1E3 were standardised for production as the M6 and M6A1 respectively. The initial plan was to produce 5000 tanks at 250 tanks per month, but this was soon cut to a more realistic 115 tanks in the first production run starting in December 1942.

COMBAT SERVICE

By the time the M6 was ready for production, the Armored Corps had lost interest, preferring the more mobile M4 medium tank. However, the appearance of the German Tiger heavy tank made them reconsider.

M6 heavy tanks operated in Tunisia with most tank battalions having a platoon. They proved their worth as their 3-inch guns were one of the few weapons capable of knocking out a Tiger and their thick armour enabled them to withstand return fire.

DESIGN FEATURES

When the specifications were laid down for the M6 heavy tank it was normal for heavy tanks, such as the Soviet T-35, to follow the 'land battleship' model, having multiple turrets mounting a variety of guns and machine-guns. The T1 heavy tank specification featured a slightly more modern arrangement with both of its guns mounted in the same turret and its twin .50 cal machine-guns in a relatively conventional bow mounting.



Soviet T-35 multi-turreted heavy tank

The M6 heavy tank is a 'land battleship' with multiple guns. It has a 3-inch anti-tank gun for use against heavy tanks, a 37mm gun for use against lighter armoured vehicles, and twin .50 cal machine-guns to dig infantry out of trenches.

It can fire both of its main guns at the same time using the Multiple Weapons rule on page 111 of the rulebook.

Co-axial 76mm and 37mm guns, Twin .50 cal

HEAVY TANK PLATOON

The newly-formed heavy tank platoons are giving a good account of themselves.

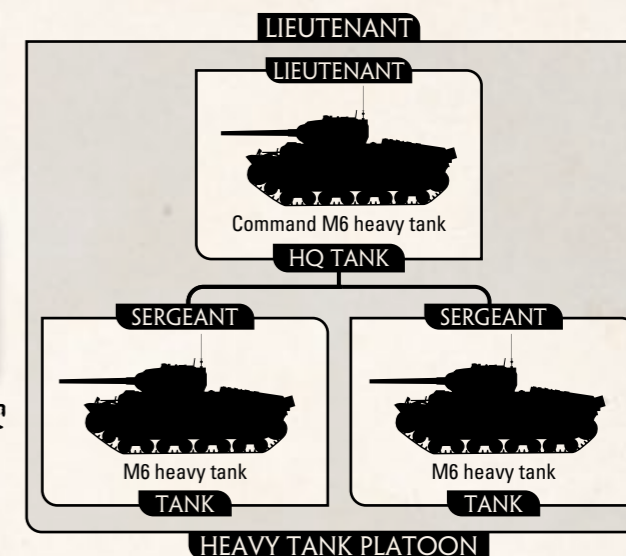
Heavy Tank Platoons are rated as:
Confident Trained

PLATOON

- 3 M6 heavy tanks 510 points
- 2 M6 heavy tanks 340 points
- 1 M6 heavy tank 170 points

REPLACING STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Any US company may replace a Tank Platoon taken as a Support platoon with a Heavy Tank Platoon. A Tank Company may take a Heavy Tank Platoon as an additional Support platoon.



Name	Mobility	Armour			Equipment and Notes
		Front	Side	Top	
M6 heavy tank	Slow Tank	8	6	2	.50 cal AA MG, Unreliable, Wide tracks.
Weapon	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	
M7 3in gun	32*/80cm	2	12	3+	Co-ax mount, Stabiliser.
M6 37mm gun	24*/80cm	3	7	4+	Co-ax mount, Stabiliser.
Twin .50 cal MG	16*/40cm	4	4	5+	Hull mounted, Twin MG. ROF 2 if other weapons fire.

The M6 heavy tank can fire the 3in and 37mm guns together, treating one as having ROF 1.

M6 SPECIFICATIONS



Designation: Tank, Heavy, M6
 Crew: 6 (cdr, gnr, ldr (2), dvr, co-dvr)
 Weight: 126,500lb/57,379kg
 Length: 27'8"/8.43m
 Height: 10'7"/3.22m Width: 10'2 1/2"/3.11m
 Armament: 1x M7 3in anti-tank gun,
 1x co-ax M6 37mm tank gun
 1x Browning .30 cal machine-gun
 3x Browning .50 cal machine-guns
 Armour Thickness: 25mm to 100mm
 Engine: Wright G-200 air-cooled radial petrol,
 1823cu in/30 litre, 800hp
 Suspension: Horizontal volute double bogie
 Maximum Speed: 22mph/35km/h
 Cross-country Speed: Classified
 Road Radius: 100 miles/160km
 Vertical Obstacle: 3'/0.91m
 Trench Crossing: 11'/3.35m



★ HEAVY TANK PLATOON