



WW1 AERIAL COMBAT

Campaign Rules

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Aircrew

Aircrew are the pilots and observers that fly the planes, fire the machineguns, drop the bombs and operate the cameras. If they manage to survive combat sorties and shoot down enemy airplanes, they will be able to improve their skills and progress in their careers.



All airmen must have a name and rank. Players should keep a flight logbook as a record for each of their airmen: noting down, the number of missions they fly and any victories they accumulate as well as medals and even promotions awarded.

Each player will start in the campaign with enough aircrew to fill all of the available positions in the airplanes that they are assigned. As this initial aircrew are killed, captured or wounded, replacement recruits will be drafted in to replace them.

In addition the players will have one officer commanding the squadron with the rank of Major. One player will take the role of squadron commander in addition to his normal aircrew. The officer commanding the squadron will not normally fly. He is responsible for selecting missions, allocating replacement aircraft and crew and the general running of the squadron and campaign.

Rank

Aircrew can be commissioned or non-commissioned officers. For the purposes of the campaign all aircrew will be commissioned officers starting at the rank of Second Lieutenant. The exception to this is that British aircrew can optionally be non-commissioned officers starting at the rank of Sergeant. An officer's rank and promotions should be recorded in his flight logbook.

American Officers - United States Air Service

- Second Lieutenant
- First Lieutenant
- Captain
- Major
- Lieutenant Colonel

Belgium Officers - L'Aviation Militaire

- Sous-Lieutenant
- Lieutenant
- Capitaine
- Capitaine-Commandant
- Lieutenant-Colonel

British Officers – Royal Flying Corps

- Second Lieutenant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Major
- Lieutenant Colonel



British Officers – Royal Naval Air Service

- Flight Sub Lieutenant (sometimes Sub-Flight Lieutenant)
- Flight Lieutenant
- Flight Commander
- Squadron Commander
- Wing Commander

British Non-Commissioned Officers - Royal Flying Corps

- Sergeant
- Sergeant Major

British Non-Commissioned Officers - Royal Naval Air Service

- Petty Officer Mechanic
- Chief Petty Officer Mechanic

French Officers - L'Aeronautique Militaire

- Sous-Lieutenant
- Lieutenant
- Capitaine
- Commandant
- Lieutenant-Colonel



German Officers - Fleigertruppe

- Leutnant
- Oberleutnant
- Hauptmann
- Major
- Oberstleutnant



Special Ranks

Major

Should an officer be promoted to the rank of Major, he will immediately take over command of the squadron. The current squadron commander will be automatically promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. From 1917 onwards, squadron commanders weren't supposed to cross the lines however this can be ignored by officers newly promoted to Major as some of the more famous squadron COs -- Collishaw, Bishop, Barker, Mannock -- crossed the lines in defiance of the standing order.

Lieutenant Colonel

An officer promoted to Lieutenant Colonel is given a cushy job at HQ and retired from flying. He will not take further part in the campaign.

Sergeant Major

Once the NCO has reached the rank of Sergeant Major he can no longer be promoted. He can however be commissioned. For the purpose of these rules this is a very special occurrence. Commissioned NCO pilots tended to be treated with disdain by fellow officers.

Luck

Surviving an aerial combat in WW1 required a certain amount of luck as well as skill, not only in avoiding the enemy's guns, but also flying the flimsy airplanes so that they did not spin out of control or simply break up in the air due to damage or excess stress in tight turns or dives. Luck was often short lived and could run out at any time.

To reflect this each airman that survives a scenario without being wounded, captured or killed is awarded a 'luck point'. An airman can accumulate a maximum of 9 luck points.

These luck points can be used to improve an airman's chance of survival. Airmen can only use their luck on themselves and each luck point can only be used once.

An officer's luck points should be recorded in his flight logbook.

Kills

Each time an airman shoots down an enemy airplane, or forces it to land outside its own territory (by being the last person to fire at it before it crashes or lands) he is awarded a 'kill'. Each time an airman shoots down an enemy balloon he is awarded a 'kill'.

Planes that exit the gaming surface do not count as kills unless they are on fire, and that fire would have resulted in the destruction of the airplane. If a plane is on fire when it exits the gaming area, draw the damage cards that should have been taken in the future turns; if the damage is enough to eliminate the plane, a kill is awarded to the last airman that shot at it.

If a plane is fired at and shot down by 2 or more aircraft in the same phase, then each of the pilots or observers firing get an equal share of the victory.

Quality

Crew members are considered to be Ace, Veteran or Novice. At the start of the game, half of the planes should have Veteran aircrew and half Novice. With the advent of victories or replacements, it will be possible for planes to have aircrew of different qualities.

A pilot or observer becomes an Ace after being awarded five 'victories'. A novice becomes a veteran after earning 10 Experience Points. The change in aircrew quality happens on return to base after the mission. It is possible to become a multiple-ace by scoring a multiple of five 'victories'. For example a double-ace requires ten 'victories'.

After Smith-Barry's Gosport System was introduced, RFC pilots arrived at the front with much better training. In 1918 an RFC pilot will become veteran after earning 6 Experience Points.

An officer's quality should be recorded in his flight logbook.

The crew quality affects the way they perform in the tactical game.

Ace

Ace crews have no particular advantages in the tactical game. However on becoming an ace (5 victories) a skill may be chosen.

Veteran

Veteran quality does not affect the performance of aircrew in the tactical game. All standard rules apply.

Novice

Novice crews have the following restrictions in the tactical game. Note that this is the same restrictions as for wounded aircrew. Thus there no extra restrictions for a wounded novice.

1. Novice aircrew may not use aimed fire.
2. Novice pilots may not fire just after executing a steep manoeuvre.
3. Novice aircrew take an additional "jammed" counter.
4. Novice pilots may not use the Immelmann turn card.

Skills

As a pilot or observer progress through the campaign they can gain extra skills. An officer's skills should be recorded in his flight logbook.



An officer can only use a skill once per turn. To remember this, take three "roundel" counters and put them on the manoeuvre area on the game board. One roundel counter is discarded after performing each of the next three manoeuvres and a skill may not be used during that time. Two-seater planes but record the use of skills by pilot and observer separately.

Pilot Skills

Acrobatic Pilot: may perform a non-straight (but not steep) manoeuvre after an Immelman turn or Split-S.

Daredevil: can do two steep manoeuvres in a row.

Evade: may evade so as not be tailed. I.e. can cause one enemy plane in a tailing position to lose this advantage. May not be used against another pilot with the same skill.

Exceptional Pilot: can use the same manoeuvre twice in the same turn. Take two blank manoeuvre cards and write a "1" on one and a "2" on the other. Add them to your Manoeuvre deck. When you plan your move, you can use the "1" as second or third manoeuvre, the "2" as third: when you show the "1" use again the first manoeuvre of the turn, when you show the "2" use again the second.

Example: a SPAD XIII plans an Immelmann, a straight and a "1". The plane executes an Immelmann in the first phase, a straight in the second and another Immelmann in the third one.

The restrictions of the "1" and "2" are the same of the card they replace. So if you use a "1" and the first manoeuvre of the turn was an Immelmann, you have to do a straight manoeuvre before it and another after it.

Incendiary Bullets: some aces, like the balloon-buster Willy Coppens, used special incendiary bullets especially effective against balloons. Incendiary bullets can only be used on balloon-busting missions. This skill cannot be taken before 1917. (No roundel markers are used for this skill)

Light Touch: when pilot's aeroplane has accumulated sufficient damage from gunfire (not fire or explosion) to shoot it down, the plane is not shot down. Instead the pilot may nurse the damaged machine home so long as he does not perform any steep manoeuvres (climb, Immelmann, etc); and he takes no further damage. If the aeroplane takes additional damage after the shooting that would have otherwise shot it down, it is shot down as normal.

Nine Lives: may discard one damage card *once per mission*. Ignore its damage and reshuffle it back in the deck.

Rockets: may use rockets when flying balloon-busting missions. The Le Prieur rockets were rarely of any use against aircraft and they never attained any success against dirigibles, but they were quite effective against balloons. Le Prieur rockets fired electrically and only launched after a short delay. This skill cannot be taken prior to the Verdun fighting of 1916. (No roundel markers are used for this skill)

Pilot or Observer Skills

Bullet Checker: during the First World War, bullets were often produced by improvised workers aiming more to quantity than to quality. This caused machineguns to jam frequently, but some pilots - as the Italian ace Silvio Scaroni - checked every single bullet before taking off and discarded up to half of them. Gun jam cards with a green cross can be ignored; jam cards with the red cross cannot be ignored and will still jam a bullet checker.

Chivalrous: some aces, like Francesco Baracca, thought that burn in your plane was a horrible end so they removed all the tracing bullets from their machinegun feed. A plane that is fired at by a plane whose pilot *or* observer has this skill ignores any fire special damage. (No roundel markers are used for this skill)

Crack shot: the firer uses the +1 Aim bonus even if he did not shoot at the same plane in the previous phase.

Luck of the Devil: This ability gives the airman a permanent luck point that he can use once per scenario. (No roundel markers are used for this skill)

Precision Bomber: A plane with a 'precision bomber' pilot or observer needs to be within a half ruler distance of the target when dropping the bomb instead of overflying.

Quick on the Trigger: firing with this skill is resolved prior to other firing. Firing is thus no longer simultaneous. Airplanes eliminated by a quick on the trigger shot cannot then fire back; only surviving airplanes can fire.

Technical Eye: In firing phase may look at damage cards of one friendly or enemy airplane within one ruler's distance. Distance is measured from the centre of the airplane's base to anywhere on the other airplane's base.

Tough as Old Boots: Airman has a permanent extra Health point allowing him to take up to a maximum of 5 wounds. (No roundel markers are used for this skill)

Observer Skills

Eagle Eye: When photographing an objective the airplane needs to be within a half ruler distance of target instead of overflying.

Radio Technician: One less manoeuvre to spot and call in artillery.

Allocating Skills

When a new skill is earned it is allocated at random from the following table. The exception to this is that on becoming an ace a skill may be chosen. The pilot type is determined by the plane type flown when the last victory was obtained.

Skill	Scout Pilot	Two-seater Pilot	Observer
Acrobatic Pilot	1		
Daredevil	2	1	
Evade	3	2	
Exceptional Pilot	4		
Incendiary Bullets	5		
Light Touch	6	3	
Nine Lives	7	4	
Rockets	8		
Bullet Checker	9	5	1
Chivalrous	10	6	2
Crack shot	11	7	3
Luck of the Devil	12	8	4
Precision Bomber		9	5
Quick on the Trigger	13	10	6
Technical Eye	14	11	7
Tough as Old Boots	15	12	8
Eagle Eye			9
Radio Technician			10
Re-roll	16-19	14-19	11-19
Pick one	20	20	20

Experience Points

Experience points (XPs) are awarded after each mission:

Kill	6 XP
Shared kill	4 XP
Successful Mission	2 XP
Unsuccessful Mission (only novices)	1 XP

For each 20 XPs awarded the aircrew rolls a D6 and consults the following table:

1-5	One new skill obtained
6	One new skill obtained and promotion

Medal Awards

German Awards

Pilot's Badge	Awarded after first contact with enemy
Black Wound Badge	Awarded when wounded
Silver Wound Badge	Awarded for three wounds
Golden wound Badge	Awarded for serious or disfiguring wound
Iron Cross 2nd Class	Awarded after first kill
Iron Cross 1st Class	Awarded after 5 kills
The Cross of the Royal House Order of Hohenzollern	Awarded after 10 kills
The Blue Max <i>Orden Pour le Mérite</i>	Awarded after 20 kills

Pilot's Badge



Black Wound Badge
Silver Wound Badge
Golden Wound Badge



Iron Cross 2nd Class
Iron Cross 1st Class



The Cross of the Royal House
Order of Hohenzollern



The Blue Max
Orden Pour le Mérite



British Awards - Officers

Military Cross	Awarded after 1 kill
Distinguished Service Order	Awarded after 5 kills
Distinguished Flying Cross	Awarded after 10 kills
Victoria Cross	Awarded after 15 kills

Military Cross



Distinguished Service Order



Distinguished Flying Cross



Victoria Cross



British Awards - Enlisted

Military Medal	Awarded after 1 kill
Bar to Military Medal	Awarded after 5 kills
Distinguished Flying Medal	Awarded after 10 kills
Distinguished Conduct Medal	Awarded after 15 kills

Military Medal



Distinguished Flying Medal



Distinguished Conduct Medal



French Awards

Croix de Guerre	Awarded after 5 kills
Médaille Militaire	Awarded after 10 kills
Légion d'Honneur	Awarded after 15 kills

Croix de Guerre



Médaille Militaire



Légion d'Honneur



Parachutes

Parachute had been provided for observers in balloon since 1915: they were however not very reliable and even with enemy aircraft in the vicinity the balloon observers preferred to have the balloon slowly winched down rather than trust to their parachutes.

Allied aircrew were never issued parachutes. Some German and Austrian aircrew were issued starting in the spring of 1918, however many pilots never used them, priding themselves on their ability to always bring their aircraft home.

The first description of a successful parachute jump by a German pilot during a military encounter dates from 27 June 1918, when Leutnant Stembrecher was shot down by a British aircraft and parachuted to safety.

However jumping by parachute was not always so successful. After scoring his 54th victory on 10th August 1918, German Ace Erich Löwenhardt was forced to jump from his plane and was killed when his parachute failed to open.

Starting in May 1918 all German and Austrian pilot replacements may roll a D6 and on scoring a 1 are equipped with a parachute. Alternatively roll for the parachute but allow the officer commanding to assign it to any aircrew he chooses.

Additionally every time a pilot becomes an ace he may roll to obtain a parachute. In two-seater planes, the observer will have a parachute if the pilot does.

Determine the Mission

Each mission should be determined as follows:

1. Determine the date.
2. Determine the scenario.
3. Determine optional anti-aircraft defences.
4. Setup the scenario playing area placing any ground objectives and troops.
5. Determine the cloud cover.
6. Choose which of the available pilots and planes will fly the mission.
7. Choose the formation flown.

Aftermath of the Battle

Once the scenario has been completed the following procedure is followed to determine the consequences and after effects of the battle.

1. All planes that are on fire at the end of the scenario immediately take remaining damage cards.
2. Determine which planes & aircrew return home.
3. Determine aircrew wounds and injuries.
4. Determine the scenario winner.
 - Note the victory and the number of VPs awarded in the campaign log.
5. Aircrew have completed one mission.
 - Note the mission in their flight logbook.
 - Awarded one luck point, note this in their flight logbook.
 - Note any change in quality in the flight logbook.
6. Aircrew are awarded their victories.
 - Note victories in the flight logbook.
 - Note any change in quality in the flight logbook.
 - Choose new skill on becoming an ace.
 - Check for award of medal
7. Aircrew calculate Experience Points
 - Note any change in quality in the flight logbook.
8. Check for promotion
 - Note any promotion in the flight logbook.

Planes & Aircrew Returning Home

Planes that explode

Planes that explode are destroyed and their aircrew killed.

Planes that were shot down

Aircrew with parachutes may elect to bail out. Each crew member rolls separately. Plane destroyed.

D20	D100	Result
-3	-15	Killed.
4-8	16-40	Receive one wound. Location determined by scenario.
9+	41+	Land safely. Location determined by scenario.

Modifiers:

+1	+5	Per luck point expended
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Planes that were “shot down” and did not elect to bail out must roll on the following table:

D20	D100	Result
-3	-15	Plane destroyed and aircrew killed.
4-6	16-30	Crash land – Plane destroyed, location determined by scenario. Aircrew each receive two wounds
7-9	31-45	Crash land behind friendly lines – plane destroyed. Aircrew each receive two wounds
10-12	46-60	Crash land – Plane destroyed, location determined by scenario. Aircrew each receive one wound
13-15	61-75	Crash land behind friendly lines – plane destroyed. Aircrew each receive one wound
16-17	76-85	Crash land – Plane destroyed, location determined by scenario.
18-19	86-95	Crash land behind friendly lines – plane destroyed.
20+	96-00	Plane nursed home successfully

Modifiers:

-1	-5	Novice
-3	-15	Engine Special Damage
+1	+5	The pilot has Chivalrous skill
+1	+5	Per luck point expended

Planes with damage

Planes with must roll on the following table depending on the amount of damage:

Amount of damage:	Half or more		Less than half	
	D20	D100	D20	D100
Crash land behind friendly lines. Take 4 damage	-1	-05	-1	-05
Take 2 damage upon landing	2-5	06-25	2-3	06-15
Crash land in no man's land Plane destroyed	6	26-30		
Take 2 damage upon landing Aircrew each receive one wound	7-8	31-40	4	16-20
Return successfully to base	9+	41+	5+	21+

Modifiers:

-1	-5	Novice
-3	-15	Engine Special Damage
+1	+5	Per luck point expended

Planes without damage

Planes without damage must roll on the following table:

D20	D100	Result
1-	-05	Take 2 damage upon landing
2+	06+	Return successfully to base

Modifiers:

-1	-5	Novice
+1	+5	Per luck point expended

Aircrew that land/parachute behind enemy lines or in no man's land

Landed:	Behind enemy lines		No man's land	
	D20	D100	D20	D100
Killed.	-3	-15	4-	-20
Captured.	4-9	16-45	5-7	21-35
Receive two wounds while escaping	10-11	46-55	8-9	36-45
Receive one wound while escaping	12-15	56-75	10-14	46-70
Escape	16+	76+	15+	71+

Modifiers:

-1	-5	Serious leg injury
-1	-5	Per wound
+1	+5	Per luck point expended

Aircrew that land/parachute behind friendly lines

Aircrew that land/parachute behind friendly lines are feasted in the nearest officers' mess before being returned to their airfield early the next morning rather hung over.

Aircrew Wounds and Injuries

Aircrew that receive three wounds are dead.

Aircrew that receive one wound must rest and miss the next mission; those with two wounds miss the next two missions.

Furthermore wounded airmen must roll on the serious injuries table.

D20	D100	Serious Injury
0	< 01	Crippled: The airman is confined to a wheelchair and honourably discharged from the service.
1-10	01-50	Recovery event
11+	51+	None: No serious injury

Serious Injury Modifiers:

-2	-10	Aircrew that have received two wounds
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Recovery Event

A recovery event can occur when an airman is in hospital recovering from his wounds. These events should be related to the campaign. When an event is rolled it is suggested that you replace it with a different event. An alternative method is to create one card per event and draw a card instead of rolling – the card is not returned to the event deck.

D20	D100	Recovery Event
1	01-05	Serious Chest injury: Misses three missions.
2	06-10	Serious Leg injury: Misses three missions. Deduct one when checking for landing behind enemy lines or in no man's land.
3	11-15	Serious Arm injury: Misses three missions.
4	16-20	Serious Head injury: Misses three missions.
5	21-25	Old War Wound: The airman recovers but his old wound sometimes affects his health. Roll a D6 before each mission. On a roll of one the airman's old wound is playing up and will fly with those restrictions that apply to an airman with one wound. Alternatively he can be replaced by another airman if a replacement is available.
6	26-39	Blinded in one eye: The airman can no longer get a bonus for aimed fire. This cancels the crack shot skill.
7	31-35	Nubile Nurse: The airman meets a beautiful nurse who falls in love with him. He is nursed back to full health and gains five luck points.
8	36-40	Beautiful Nurse: The airman meets a beautiful nurse with whom he falls in love. He is nursed back to full health but the nurse is not interested in his advances. All his luck points are lost. Treated as "Nubile Nurse" if the aircrew has chivalrous skill.
9	41-45	Horrible scars: The airman recovers and is left with horrible scars as a testament to his bravery. Deduct one when checking for medals.

10	46-50	Impressive scars: The airman recovers and is left with impressive scars as a testament to his bravery. Add one when checking for medals.
11	51-55	National hero: Meet a journalist, Ernest Hemmingcurd, in the hospital and gets a positive write-up. Becomes a national hero. May never voluntarily leave a battle until the mission is completed or until his plane is over half damage.
12	56-60	Hip-flask: Nursed back to health by a stunning red-headed nurse. She gives him a pewter hip-flask filled with brandy which he keeps in his breast pocket over his heart. He may ignore the next wound special damage as the hip-flask takes the bullet.
13	61-65	Miraculous recovery: The hospital is visited by an esteemed professor who has a new therapy. Recovery is miraculous. Miss no missions.
14	66-70	Food poisoning: While convalescing, the airman visits a Bistro in the local town where he meets an attractive waitress. Gets food poisoning, increase recovery time by one mission.
15	71-75	Cigarette case: While convalescing, the airman visits a Bistro in the local town where he meets an attractive waitress. She gives him a silver cigarette case which he keeps in his breast pocket over his heart. He may ignore the next wound special damage as the cigarette case takes the bullet.
16	76-80	Checks out of hospital: The airman wastes no time and immediately checks himself out of hospital. He must fly the next mission starting with one wound.
17	81-85	Countess: On the way to the hospital the ambulance breaks down. A passing countess in a Rolls Royce/Horsch stops and takes him back to her Chateaux. He is nursed back to health but so enjoys the experience that the convalescent period is doubled.
18	86-90	Countess: On the way to the hospital the ambulance breaks down. A passing countess in a Rolls Royce/Horsch stops and takes him back to her Chateaux. He is nursed back to health. The countess sends her mechanic back with him to help him service the plane. His plane will take 3 extra damage during the next mission.
19	91-95	General's visit: Visited in hospital by a General. Decorated with a medal.
20	96-00	Bombed: The hospital is bombed by a dastardly German/drunk French pilot. Recovery delayed. Misses one additional mission.
		Thread: A patient in the adjacent bed passes on information that helps a thread to move towards/away from a closure.
		Mad scientist: Meets a mad scientist who gives the airman some "super" bullets. These bullets are made of titanium. These are extra long range and when shooting draw two damage cards even at long range. However the price of these bullets is such that he only has enough for one mission.
		Mad scientist: Meets a mad scientist who gives the airman some "super" bullets. These bullets are made of gold. These function as normal bullets but if the gun jams then it takes one additional jam counter. Luckily the price of these bullets is such that he only has enough for one mission.