



V3.5

Move, stack, attack or pack to wipe out your enemies and capture their king or stronghold

Game Components: One pack of normal playing cards (2 packs for 3-4 players)

OBJECTIVES

Your suit of 13 playing cards are warriors of varying ability and mounted royal leaders. They move around a battleground, individually or in groups, to attack the enemy and invade their stronghold or kill their king.

Be the player with the most victory points when the game ends. You get victory points for taking enemy cards and bonus victory points for either taking the enemy king or moving your king onto their stronghold (back row of face-down cards).

(Full Rules – Section 1)

SETUP

(Full Rules – Section 2)

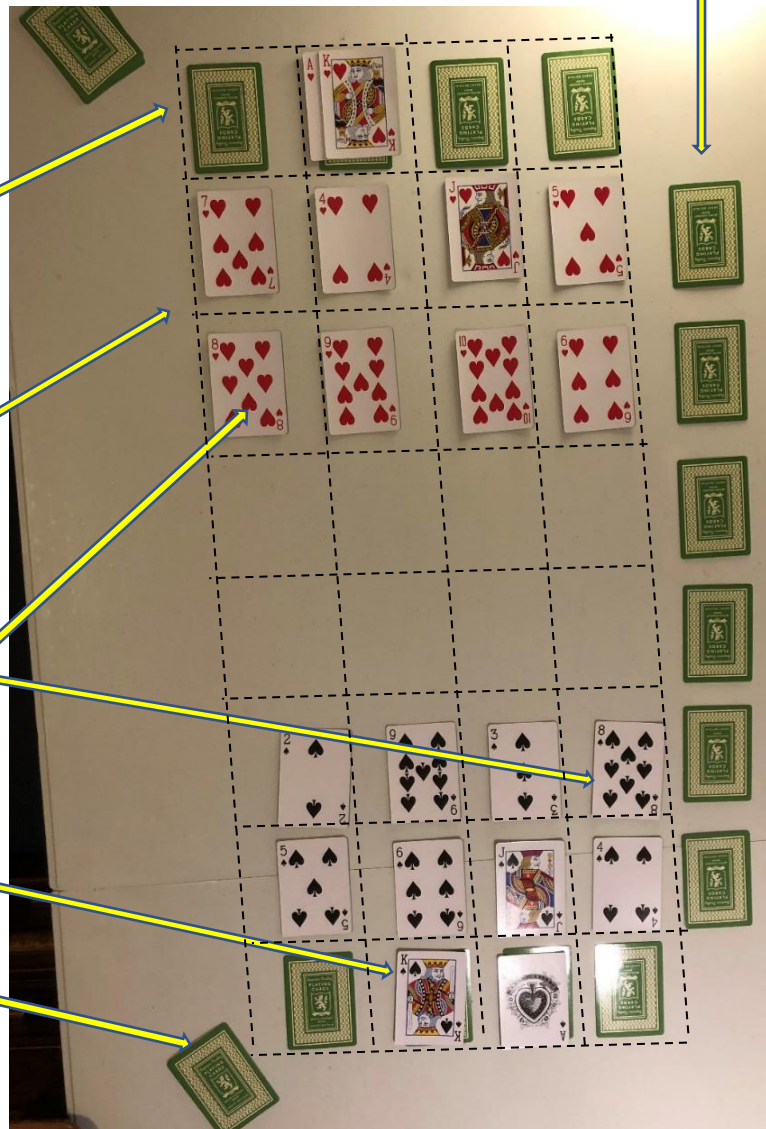
- Collect your warriors:** One player takes all the hearts, the other takes all the spades.
- Layout the battlefield:** Use the other suits face-down to mark out the play area and strongholds:
 - Lay a 4 card row of face-down cards in front of you. This is your **stronghold** (and are normal, playable spaces).
 - Lay 6 cards between the strongholds to mark the rows (these cards are non-playable spaces).
- Arrange your warriors:** Remove King and Ace, then shuffle your suit. Layout 8 cards face-up in front of your stronghold.
 - Lay out from left to right, back row first (i.e. you can't choose the card positions).
 - The remaining 3 cards are placed just to the side, face down. These are your **reserves**.
- Decide on First Player:** The player whose last-laid card has the highest **melee ability** (face value for number cards, ace=1 and picture cards = 10) will go first. If it is a tie, compare the 2nd to last cards placed etc.
- Place your king and ace on your stronghold:** First player places first. They can be separate or in the same space (Stacked/Royal Rider – see below). The second player then places their king and ace.

----- Play area

Row marker cards
(not playable spaces)

Reserves

That's it – you're ready to go!



ACTIONS

The players take alternate turns. They can choose to do one of the following actions on their turn:

Move

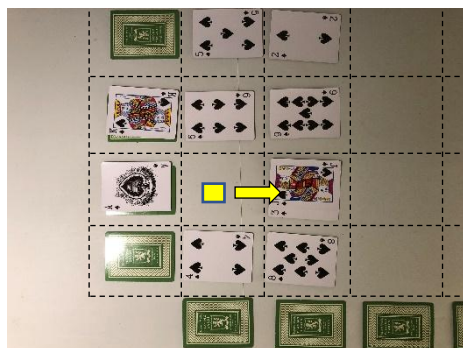
Move an individual card or stack into a clear space. (Full Rules – Section 3)

- A single W**
- arrior** (number card) can move 1 space in any direction apart from diagonally.
- Royal Move** (face card) can move up to 3 spaces in any direction apart from diagonally.
 - They can change direction mid-move.
 - They can ride over a space containing one of their own warriors (but no more and not another Royal)
- Stacks:** (Cards grouped together - see below).
 - All the cards in the stack can move together, limited by the slowest card in the stack.
 - Warrior Split Off (1):** One number card can move off a stack for its maximum 1 space.
 - Warrior Split Off (2):** Two cards can move off a stack of 3 cards for their maximum 1 space. They must go in the same direction.
 - Royal Split Off:** A Royal can split off from a stack for up to its maximum move of 3 spaces
 - The Royal's stack can move together for 1 space and then the Royal can continue on for its remaining movement.
- In all cases, the card(s) left behind after a split off cannot also move in that same turn.

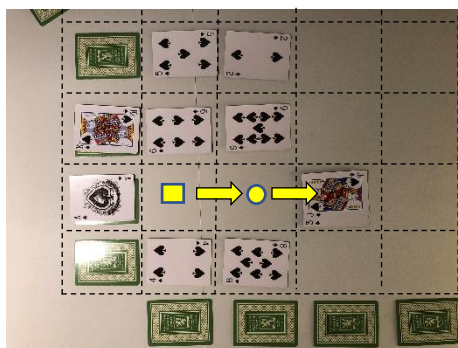
Stack

Move an individual card or stack onto another friendly card/stack. (Full Rules – Section 3)

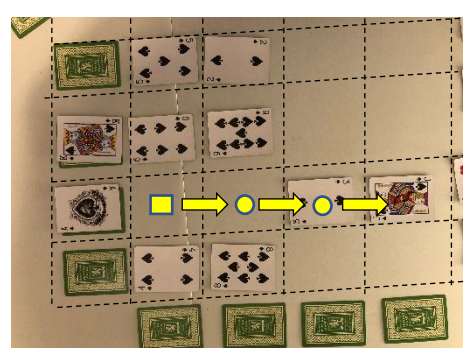
- Maximum of 3 warriors (number cards) or 1 Royal +1 warrior in a stack. Exception – Royal Rider (see below).
- Royal Rider:** This is a special case where a Royal stacks with the ace and the two of them are treated as one card *{the small squire rides on the back of the Royal's horse, taking up no extra room but able to fight}*.
 - The Royal Rider stack can move up 3 spaces and has a melee value of 11 (Royal's 10 + Ace's 1).
 - The Royal can pick up and/or drop the ace at any point in its move (at no movement cost).
 - The Royal Rider may stack with one other warrior (and move on/split off just like a Royal on its own). Normal stack rules apply.
 - The Royal Rider may execute the Follow Royal move (below) exactly as a lone Royal can.
- Follow Royal:** A Royal (or Royal Rider) may move 1 or 2 spaces onto a square with a friendly warrior and then immediately move on 1 space dragging that warrior with them in the same turn.
 - However, a warrior can't move 1 space to stack with a Royal and immediately move the stack on as the warrior has already used up its movement allowance for that turn (the warrior is also the *ordered card* and a player can only order one card per turn).
 - A Royal (or Royal Rider) can move 1 square, drag a friendly warrior 1 square and carry on alone for one square in the same turn (e.g. on Additional Info. sheet below).



1. The Jack (ordered card) moves 1 space onto the same space as the Three.



2. The Jack *drags* the Three along for its 1 space under the Follow Royal move.



3. The Jack drops the Three (as it has used up its 1 space being dragged/running) and continues for 1 space using up its last move.

Attack

An individual card or stack attempts to move onto an enemy card/stack. (Full Rules – Section 3)

- A single card's melee value:** Warriors = face value (ace=1). All Royals = 10.
- A stack's melee value** is simply the total of the melee value of all its cards.
- The card/stack with the lowest melee value is killed and removed from the play area.
- The victorious card/stack occupies the defended square.
- If the melee values are equal, all cards are killed and removed from the board.

Pack

Place the top card from your (face-down) reserve pile anywhere in your stronghold. (Full Rules – Section 3)

- The reserve can stack with a friendly card already on your stronghold or attack an enemy there.

WINNING

Game End and Bonus Points (Full Rules – Section 4)

The game finishes when:

- One king is defeated = **20 Bonus Points** (+ the King's 10 melee points) or
- One king (alone or Royal Rider or in a stack) reaches the opponent's stronghold = **20 Bonus Points**
- NOTE: All bonus points apply if a) and b) happen simultaneously.
- Occasionally, a stalemate position may be agreed on e.g. Neither king can be realistically caught by the other side but it can't reach the back line without being killed. In this case, the game stops and there are no bonus points awarded.

Winning and Victory Points (Full Rules – Section 4)

- Once one of the Game End conditions has been met, simply add up the melee points of all the enemy cards you have taken (inc. King) plus any bonus points. This gives you your total **Victory Points**.
- The winner is the player with the most Victory Points.

Optional Rules

(Not needed to play the main game game)

3-4 Players

(Full Rules – Section 6)

- Simply add in the other two suits, reds on one side, blacks on the other – players control a suit each or 1 player controls both red or both black suits (for a three-player game).
- Double the width of the play area – 8 card strongholds. You'll need a second deck as markers.
- Alternate play between colours e.g. hearts – spades – diamonds – clubs.
- Mixed-suit stacks of the same colour are allowed.
 - The stack is "controlled" by the highest card: King down to Ace (Tie: Spades > Clubs, Hearts > Diamonds). Thus, the stack can only move on the "controller's" turn. **Exception** – a non-"controller" card(s) in a stack may split off on its turn.
- Game-end conditions are similar but not the same as in the two-player game:
 - One king reaches the enemy stronghold: 20 bonus points **or**
 - Both red or black kings are killed. When the first king on a side is killed, the other side gains 20 bonus points but play continues. However, the suit that lost its king misses its next turn *{command confusion!}*.

Other Optional Rules - Summary

There are many other ways to extend and modify the Battle Ace game (still using standard decks of cards). I'll release my full optional rule ideas on the Battle Facebook page and website and would be delighted to hear any suggestions. Here are the current options. The first three are currently being play-tested (2026)

- Nimble warriors:** The Ace – 5 are lightly armoured warriors and can also move diagonally (1 square) alone or in a stack of other "Nimbles". (Full Rules – Section 3 Move)
- Order a Square:** A player can order each card in the same square to act independently or together. (Full Rules – Section 3)

- **Fortunes of War:** Take risks by adding a random 1-4 points to each card's melee points in an attack (all attacking and defending cards roll a d4 and add the score to their melee points. (Full Rules – Section 5)
- **Campaign Rules:** Players agree to play a set number of games in a campaign, totalling VPs from each game.
- **Bloodbath:** Take out one or two rows between the set-out armies – see how quickly the killing starts!
- **High Ground:** The row marker cards are valley sides giving +1 melee bonus to each card on the marker card.
- **Joker:** An assassin with all-direction movement of 2, sneak ability and bonuses for backstabbing! Dealt in with each army so the random reserve pack becomes 4 cards not 3.

Further Information



See the Battle FB group and website (top of page 1) to find out the latest news, optional rules and share comments/game reports about Battle Ace.

Also, find out about my custom card game (in development), **Battle** - a Fantasy Card/Board game with changeable boards and terrain and armies of cards with different movement abilities, ranged attacks, extra powers plus magical spells, creatures, abilities and items. I am playtesting a prototype of Battle on Tabletop Simulator. Join me there and on the above FB group for rules, feedback, scenarios and more!



Log in to Tabletopia to play Battle Ace online!