

Field of Mars (copyright - Red Sash Games) is a simple grand-tactical game, originally intended as a battlefield expansion kit for Red Sash Games operational-level land warfare games, the series known as Lace Wars. Field of Mars may still be used for this purpose, but it is also a standalone game that can be played without prior knowledge of the series.

The playing pieces, which represent military units at various scales, are laid on a gridded map sheet called the Battlefield. The Battlefield shows only clear terrain, so a set of Terrain Tiles is used to add variety. Playing pieces are grouped within the squares of the grid to form Wings, with a Wing being the games basic manoeuvre-unit. Wings can be Infantry or Cavalry, and include some or all of the following elements: Units (mandatory), Auxiliaries, Artillery Batteries, and Leaders.

One of the Leaders will be the overall commander, called the Generalissimo, or GO. Battle is resolved as a series of Rounds, with each Round divided into the following Phases: Issue Orders, Approach March, Action, End of Round. The Action Phase is further divided into a number of Steps, samples being Advancing, Coordinated Fire, and Rally.

Wings are Issued Orders by rolling dice and allotting a die to each Wing. The number of pips on the die indicates the range of options the Wing has, though only one particular Action can be Executed during the current Round.

By Moving into contact with the enemy and Executing the various Actions in sequence, Fire or Melee Combats will come about. In a Combat, Hits can be inflicted, and these cause an affected Wing first to Waver, then to become Shaken, and then to suffer successive Morale Checks. Eventually, a Morale Check will be failed, at which point the Wing loses a Unit.

If a Wing loses all its Units, it becomes Hors de Combat and is permanently removed from play. The players each have a Retreat Threshold, counted in Hors de Combat Wings; to win the Battle a player must be the first to push his opponent to or past this threshold.