

RECIVS' Boardgame Projects

House Rules, Variants & Hacks

Presents

RISK

“Balance of Power” Implementation Variant

Version 2.1

Redesign Notes

Risk, as we all know, is an all-time classic strategy game. Its simplicity and elegance have attracted casual players for generations. Over the years, however, some gameplay issues have been pointed out: long duration, limited strategies, elusive balance (winning player becomes nearly unstoppable), and a bland two-player game.

Risk: Balance of Power is one those rare installments of *Risk* that addresses all of the aforementioned issues. Not released in the United States, it introduces some interesting mechanics intended to improve the gameplay experience for two players, which (let's face it) is not the strongest part of the classic game. In my opinion, some of the new concepts (such as the *Combat Service Support* and its *Powers*) work very well even in games of three or more players without sacrificing simplicity (see *Blood and Honor* for IOS). The end result is a more strategic and engaging version of *Risk*.

This variant implements *Risk: Balance of Power* and some concepts from *Risk: Halo Wars* and *Blood and Honor* (IOS) to classic *Risk*. The goal is that players may have a very similar gameplay experience to *Risk: Balance of Power* without the need for its original components.

Rules of Play

All the official rules from [*Risk: Balance of Power*](#) apply unless otherwise indicated below.

Components

Only a copy of *Risk* is required, preferably one with stars on the cards. If an older edition is used, then each card with a cavalryman equals two stars. Any other card equals one star for the purposes of these rules.

However, we recommend using WW2 miniatures (from *Attack, Axis & Allies*, or whatever you can find) on a classic *Risk* game board. For that purpose, we also suggest the board, cards, and plastic markers from *Risk: Revised Edition*, but they are not required.

The individual soldier represents 1 troop, the tank represents 5 troops, and the artillery piece represents 10 troops. If the components of *Risk* are used, consider the cavalrymen (or whatever if an older set is used) as tanks.

Basic Training

Basic Training section is ignored.

Game Set-Up

By default, there are four *Sites* in the game: Argentina, Eastern Australia, Madagascar, and Northern Europe. Place one *Site* marker (use your own) on each one of those territories, and separate the corresponding territory cards from the deck. Each *Site* starts with twenty neutral troops (four tanks). Eighty in total.

Cities are placed randomly by drawing fifteen territory cards (leaving *Sites* out of the deck). *Rough* terrain is assigned by reshuffling the deck and drawing another fifteen cards, placing one *rough terrain marker* on each one of the corresponding territories.

Place Capitals and Troops

Player 1 gets 40 troops (and one capital). Player 2 gets 45 troops (and one capital). Troops are placed randomly by dealing territory cards and placing one troop in the corresponding territory for each star on the card. Players may then reinforce their territories in the usual way (by placing one troop each) and place their capitals in different continents as normal.

Neutral Resistance

<i>Defeated Neutrals</i>	
<i>Casualties</i>	<i>Result Required</i>
1	12
2	11+
3	10+
4	9+
5	8+
6	7+
7	6+
8	5+
9	4+
10	3+

Combat Service Support		
Cost	Power	Effect
2	<i>Recon Mission</i>	When attacking a Site, one die cannot be 1 and is rerolled until it is not (although the other dice can be). It may be purchased multiple times in order to guarantee that more dice are not 1s.
3	<i>Maneuver</i>	Make an immediate maneuver with troops on the board.
5	<i>Bombardment</i>	Attack an enemy territory (adjacent or not) with 3 dice. The attacked territory may only defend with one die and must always keep one troop.
6	<i>Insurrection</i>	Choose an enemy territory adjacent to a territory containing at least two neutral troops. These neutrals may attack the enemy territory until they take over the territory or lose at least one troop in combat. If the neutrals succeed at taking over the enemy territory, only the neutrals involved in that attack (one, two, or three) move into the new territory.
6	<i>Kill General</i>	Select one adjacent enemy territory. The enemy won't be able to attack from the selected territory during their next turn.
7	<i>Draft 3 Troops</i>	The player may place three troops onto the board, into territories they already control.
8	<i>Special Forces</i>	For the turn, the player may attack into rough terrain territories with a maximum of three troops instead of the usual maximum of two.
9	<i>Draw Card</i>	The player draws one card, and they add it to their hand.
10	<i>Build Airfield</i>	The player takes the <i>Airfield</i> token and immediately places it onto any territory they control. As long as the player has the <i>Airfield</i> , they add one to their highest die roll for any battle conducted in that territory or in any adjacent territory. This works on attack and defense but not when the player is rolling dice for neutral troops. If the player loses control of the territory containing the <i>Airfield</i> , then the <i>Airfield</i> is destroyed (but can be rebuilt later). A player may only have one <i>Airfield</i> at a time.
10	<i>Espionage</i>	Steal one card from the other player.

Objectives	
Objective	Description
<i>Control Africa</i>	Control all six territories in Africa
<i>Control Asia</i>	Control all twelve territories in Asia
<i>Control Europe</i>	Control all seven territories in Europe
<i>Control North America</i>	Control all nine territories in North America
<i>Control 10 Cities</i>	Control ten cities anywhere on the board
<i>Control 2 Continents</i>	Control two different continents
<i>Control 10 Territories by the Sea</i>	Control ten territories adjacent to a sea-line
<i>Control 10 Territories with Rough Terrain</i>	Control any ten territories that contain rough terrain
<i>Control 25 Territories</i>	Control at least 25 territories anywhere on the board
<i>Control 2 Sites</i>	Control at least two Sites
<i>Eliminate the Neutral Player</i>	Eliminate the last of the Neutral Player's troops
<i>Take Over 4 Cities in One Turn</i>	Take control of at least 4 enemy cities in one turn

Optional Rules

Players may use as many or as few of the following optional rules as decided:

Card Limit

A player may have a maximum of five cards at any given moment; additional cards are given to the *Losing Player* (see below).

Sites

There may be six *Sites*, and they may be fixed (Argentina, China, Eastern Australia, Eastern United States, Madagascar, and Northern Europe) or selected randomly by drawing another six territory cards. If *Sites* are selected randomly, there cannot be two *Sites* in the same Continent, and neither can be *Sites* in Asia, Europe, and North America at the same time (at least two of those continents must be clear).

Player 2 may freely set up the (80) neutral troops in the *Sites*, but there must be at least five neutral troops in each one.

As an additional option, Player 2 may be allowed to set up the neutral troops after the Players have claimed (and reinforced) their initial territories.

Tanks

Tanks are considered as single units, but they never participate in combat. Tanks grant +1 to the highest die during any attack or defense conducted on (or from) an adjacent territory. A single tank attacking a territory with two or more tanks grants no bonus. Tanks may be produced in the *drafting* phase just as a new regular troop (1 tank= 5 troops), and they can be converted back to 3 troops in the *maneuver* phase of the owning player's turn.

Winning/Losing Player

At the start of every turn, the active player must determine who is the *Winning/Losing Player* for the purposes of this variant. Only the *Losing Player* may use the Neutral Army and Combat Service Support in that turn.

The player with more claimed territories and cities is the *Winning Player*; consequently, the player with less claimed territories and cities is the *Losing Player*. If both players control the same number of territories and cities, then the player with more cards is considered to be winning. If both players have the same number of territories, cities, and cards, then the player with more troops is considered to be winning. If both players have the same number of territories, cities, cards, and troops, it is decided randomly.