VIETNAM
1965–1975

PLAY BOOK

Living Rules v1.0 / *02.11.22* / *Changes in blue*

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17.0 Example of Play

The following is an example of an entire scenario: Operation Starlite. After you have read through the rules and the specifics of that scenario, read through the example, referring to the rules when you have questions.

At the start of the scenario, the NLF player decides to deploy both of his units in hex 5219. Neither player chooses to put any of his units on Hold or Patrol during the Special Operations Designation Phase. The Allied player sees no need for Strategic Movement or Security operations during the Strategic Movement Phase. The NLF player begins the Operations Phase by splitting his units, moving the regiment to 5120 and the Political Section to 5020, expending 2 and 4 Movement Points respectively (the latter is the full Movement Point Allowance of 4 per the scenario guidelines).

The moves are conducted as part of a Search and Destroy Operation. The NLF player marks 5220 as a Target Hex so the Marines can't React. He ends the operation immediately after the move, since the NLF player elects not to conduct combat. The VC units become ineligible for operations, i.e. Ops Complete, (the NLF player chooses to remember this fact, instead of cluttering up the map with Operations Complete markers).

Having no units left to assign to operations himself, the NLF player has no choice but to ask the Allied player to conduct an operation. The Allied player assigns 3/3/3M to a Search and Destroy Operation, with 5020 as the Target Hex. 3/3/3M moves directly into the Target Hex, along the indicated path, expending 5 Movement Points.

As soon as 3/3/3M ends its movement, the VC counter in 5120 gets to React. It moves into 5019 for 3 Movement Points. The VC unit in the Target Hex does not get to React, since it is a Target Unit. It does get to Alert, however. A 3 is rolled, giving it an Alert Movement Point Allowance of 2 (3, +1 for cultivated terrain, -2 for the scenario). The VC player does not have enough MP to exit the hex (1 for the terrain in the cheapest adjacent hex +2 for leaving an enemy-occupied hex).

The Allied player then declares that he is attacking the Target VC. It is revealed to be a Political Section and is removed. The operation ends immediately, and 3/3/3M's ineligibility for future operations is noted and/or marked.

The Allied player then announces a second Search and Destroy Operation, with 5019 as its target. All four remaining US ground units, the cruiser, and 4 Air Points are assigned. The four ground units move into position along the indicated paths.

The Allied player then commits the cruiser to interdicting the Target Hex, adding one Movement Point to the cost for all units to leave the hex. All 6 points of the cruiser's firepower are consumed, since the region has not been declared Free-Fire.

The NLF player checks for Alert, and rolls a 4. Normally he would be able to use 5 Movement Points (the roll, plus 1 for cultivated terrain). The scenario special rules reduce this to 3, however, leaving the VC unable to exit the hex (1 for the terrain in the cheapest adjacent hex, +2 to leave an enemy occupied hex, +1 for the interdiction marker, for a total of 4).

The Allied player then declares an attack. The VC unit is revealed to be a regiment, and the Allied player declares all of his remaining strength will be used to attack . The Allied player has 6 ground combat strength and 9.5 support (15 artillery and 4 Air Points, halved for no Free-Fire). The VC unit defends with a total of 8 points (6 ground combat strength and 2 organic artillery). The odds are 3 to 2 (15.5 to 8). The cumulative modifier to the combat roll is +1 (+1 for the odds, 0 for terrain). A 2 is rolled, becoming a 3 after modification. The NLF unit, determining casualties on the 14-21 column (6 ground combat strength + 9.5 Allied support), sustains 2 losses which are taken by expending 2 Replacement Points. The Allied player, looking on the 8-13 column (6 ground combat strength and 2 VC support), expends 1 Replacement Point to cover his own loss. An Air Point is also lost, although this will not affect the current operation.

Normally, the VC regiment would have retreated to the more favorable mountain terrain in 4919, but that requires 6 Movement Points, and, per special rule, it's Movement Allowance is reduced by 2. It might also have elected to retreat to 5120 (5 Movement Points) and use the road to help facilitate a future escape even though it would have triggered a Reaction from 3/3/3M (since it's not involved in the operation). Instead it retreats to 5018 using all of its 4 Movement Points.

The operating US Marine battalions each have a Pursuit Allowance of 3 (0 for the combat result, +3 for their innate Pursuit modifier). 3/7/1M is now airmobilized and moves to 4919 along the indicated path, expending 2MPs to land in an enemy ZOC (it would, otherwise, have required 4 Movement Points to enter the Mountain hex across the Minor River). 2/4/3M remains where it is. The HQ and artillery cannot move, since they have no Pursuit Allowance.

The Allied player then declares that 2/4/3M, the HQ, the artillery unit, the cruiser, and the 4 Air Points will all attack the regiment. 3/7/1M is deliberately left out, since to include it would reduce the Allied force's Pursuit bonus. (Essentially, this represents 2/4/3M pressing forward its attack, maintaining its tactical advantage instead of waiting for 3/7/1M's flanking maneuver to be completed.) The 7/1M HQ can still provide support as a subordinate unit is assigned to the operation even if it's not involved in the actual attack. The Allied force's attack strength is 3 ground combat strength and 25 support which is halved to 12.5 since this is not a Free-Fire Zone. Support for odds calculations is limited to triple the ground combat strength *[7.51]*, though, making the final attack strength 12 (3 for 2/4/3M plus 9 support). The additional 3.5 support has no effect on the combat odds, since it is in excess of 3 times the ground strength used. The VC unit again defends with a strength of 8. The die roll of 3 is modified up to 7 (+1 for the 3 to 2 odds, 0 for terrain, +3 for remaining Pursuit Allowance). The VC unit's casualties are read on the 14-21 column. Three casualties are inflicted which is one more than the number remaining in the VC pool. The regiment is removed, and the VC Replacement Pool is set to 3. The Allied player also sustains a loss and spends 1 Replacement Point; no Airmobile Point is lost as this is not a Hot Landing Zone.

The two US Marine battalions may each expend up to 6 Movement Points in Pursuit (3 for the combat result, +3 for their Pursuit Modifiers). Note that 3/7/1M can Pursue, even though it was not included in the final attack. The operation and scenario ends with an Allied victory.

18.0 Scenarios

The situations presented in the scenarios have been selected to present examples of operations in a variety of sections of Vietnam at various stages of the war. "Operation Starlite" and "Silver Bayonet" are introductory scenarios; it is recommended that the players play one or both several times before attempting any of the larger scenarios.

In most of the scenarios, the players will find that the Allied forces romp across the map, clearing it of NLF forces, or forcing them to flee. Clearing the map is not necessarily a victory, however, if Allied forces sustain heavy losses in the process.

There are two basic types of scenarios: Operational and Campaign scenarios. Operational scenarios are shorter; most are playable in an evening. Only rules sections 2 through 11 apply although references to later rules are made. Game-turns are played without breaking for seasonal interphases. Campaign scenarios use the entire body of rules. Seasonal interphases are interposed at the start of each season. Campaign games take a long time to play.

18.1 Operational Scenarios

The following rules apply to all the Operational scenarios in this section (although each of the scenarios has additional rules and modifications of its own).

1. The scenario instructions will sometimes designate a limited area of the map as the **Play Area**. No units can be deployed outside this area. Units may move, retreat, or pursue out of this area, but they cannot re-enter it later in the scenario; they are not considered eliminated for victory purposes. A unit must leave the play area to leave a scenario, not just enter a boundary hex. Although a boundary may place a hex in play, any features physically outside the actual boundary line are not in play.

2. The instructions to each scenario will list the starting forces available to each side and (in some scenarios) reinforcements. These are in color coded blocks:

US Army	Korea
USMC	Australia
ARVN	ANZAC
NVA	Phillippines
VC	Thailand

In some cases, historical (at least as far as we can tell, in cases where we did not have information there is a question mark) divisions are marked with ♣ and listed in the color of this text, however players may choose any division in these cases. Unless otherwise specified, ARVN and NVA units are un-augmented, and Allied forces are in 2nd deployment

[8.0]. Allied forces are always deployed before NLF forces. VC battalions are drawn randomly and placed before the NLF player sees their values. NLF units cannot be set up in enemy-occupied hexes in any of the scenarios.

3. Certain scenario instructions will indicate that a player receives reinforcements. These instructions will indicate what units or points are received, when they are to be taken, and where they are placed. Some reinforcements are simply placed in a named/numbered hex before the turn begins; if the hex that such reinforcements were to be placed in is enemy-occupied when the reinforcements are to be taken, the reinforcements are lost for the scenario; they are not considered eliminated for victory purposes.

Sometimes a scenario will indicate that reinforcements will move into the play area. Such reinforcements are placed in any hex or combination of hexes adjacent to the play area before the start of the turn. They cannot attack or be attacked while outside the play area. The player controlling the reinforcements may assign some or all of them to any friendly operations in the normal course of the turn following all rules for operations. They can then move into the play area, and function normally thereafter. They cannot move through hexes outside the play area before entering. They may move into or through an enemy-occupied hex *[4.2; 4.5.2; 4.11]*. Any reinforcements that have not moved onto the play area by the end of the turn they were scheduled to arrive are lost for the scenario; they are not considered eliminated for victory purposes.

4. Free-Fire zones declared during any turn of a scenario last for the entire scenario.

5. The Ho Chi Minh Trail cannot be entered or moved along in these scenarios.

6. Certain scenarios will require the Allied player to check the effectiveness of his ARVN units during the Support Phase. If not otherwise stated, ARVN units are effective.

18.1.1 Victory Point Schedule

At the end of the last turn of a scenario, victory is determined by adding up the number of VICTORY POINTS each player has acquired and subtracting the Allied total from the NLF total. The scenario instructions will then indicate who has won, and by how much. Victory Points are acquired in the following ways:

NLF:

- **5** for each friendly unit (to a maximum of 5 units per hex) in a Capital City or Major Capital City at the end of the scenario.
- **2** for each friendly unit (to a maximum of 5 units per hex) in a Capital Town at the end of the scenario.
- **2** for each other Town occupied at the end of the scenario.
- **1** for each other cultivated hex in SVN that is occupied at the end of the scenario.*
- **½** for each other hex in SVN occupied by the NLF at the end of the scenario.*

* *National Border hexes are not considered to be in SVN.*

Victory Points for the preceding are mutually exclusive; only one type of award can be given for any one hex.

> **Example:** 2 VC occupy a Capital Town in a cultivated hex for a total Victory Point award of 4 (2 each). There is no additional award because of the cultivated terrain.

- **10** for each Major Capital City captured at any point during the scenario (NLF units must be the sole occupants of the hex at any time during an operation).
- **10** each if Laos and/or Cambodia is invaded during the scenario.
- **10** for each US counter eliminated.
- **3** for each Capital City or Capital Town captured at any point during the scenario (NLF units must be the sole occupants of the hex at any time during an operation).
- **2** for each Free-Fire Zone declared by the Allied player.
- **1** for each US Replacement Point expended.
- **1** for each US Air or Airmobile Point lost.
- **1** for each combat and artillery strength point of any ARVN or FWA units eliminated.
- **¼** for each ARVN Replacement Point expended.

Allied:

- **4** for each NVA counter removed (any type).
- **3** for each VC brigade, HQ, or Supply Conduit *[16.5.9]* that is eliminated, Dispersed, or broken down.
- **1** for each VC battalion or Political Section that is eliminated or Dispersed.
- **¼** for each NVA Replacement Point expended

Certain scenarios will supersede or add to these Victory Point awards.

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18.1.2 Operation Starlite

This is an introductory scenario, suitable for solitaire play. It simulates the first major US operation of the war.

Game Length: 1 turn starting 1965 Summer-1.

Play Area: North map. Quảng Ngãi (in I Corps Zone).

Allied:
Allocations: No ARVN Rangers are available. 4 US Replacement Points; 4 Air Points; 1 Airmobile Point; 1 cruiser.

Setup:

Location	Units
5118 (Chu Lai)	3/3/3M Battalion, 2/4/3M Battalion, 1 155mm artillery battalion
5220	3/7/1M Battalion, 7/1M Regiment HQ

NLF:
Allocations: 4 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
5219 and/or 5320*	70th Regiment, 1 Political Section

The NLF player chooses which hex each unit is deployed in. (Assign the units randomly if playing the scenario solitaire.)

Special Rules:

1. The NLF player cannot conduct Strategic Movement.

2. The Movement Point Allowances of the VC units for all purposes (movement, Alert, Reaction, retreat, pursuit) are reduced by 2.

   Note: The VC, used to the slow action of the ARVN, were unprepared for the speed and flexibility demonstrated by the Marines in this operation.

3. The Allied player cannot declare Free-Fire Zones.

Victory:
Ignore the standard victory conditions. The Allied player wins if the VC regiment is Dispersed, broken down, eliminated, or leaves the play area, but no US units are eliminated. The NLF player wins if the Allies do not win.

> **Play Note:** *Advice to the NLF: Don't let the US take the first operation. It happened historically — try it and see.*

18.1.3 Silver Bayonet (Operation Long Reach)

This is an introductory scenario offering excellent opportunities for exploring different tactical opportunities while conducting operations. It simulates the operation and battle in the Ia Drang *valley in the Fall of 1965.*

Design Note: *You knew this was going to be here.*

Game Length: 2 turns starting in 1965 Fall-1.

Play Area: Center Map. Kon Tum (in II Corps Zone) south of XX31 (inclusive).

Allied:

Allocations: 2 ARVN Rangers; 6 US Replacement Points; 2 ARVN Replacement Points; 10 Air Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
4334 (Pleiku)	Entire 1/1C Brigade, entire 3/1C Brigade
	1 armored battalion, 1 infantry battalion

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	4334 (Pleiku)	1C Division HQ, entire 2/1C Brigade
		1/A Brigade
2	Anywhere on the map	Withdraw either entire 1/1C Brigade or entire 3/1C Brigade (just pick them up off the map)

NLF:

Allocations: 8 NVA Replacement Points; 2 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
3837	31st Regiment
3937	33rd Regiment
Anywhere in the play area not adjacent to an Allied unit	3 battalions

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	3738, 3837, or 3937	66th Regiment

Special Rules:

1. The Movement Point Allowances of the NLF units for all purposes (movement, Alert, Reaction, retreat, pursuit) are reduced by 2.

    Note: the NLF still hadn't learned how to react to the speed and ferocity that airmobility brought to the battlefield.

2. Kon Tum is a Free-Fire Zone.

3. In the first turn's Special Operations Phase, FWA units and VC battalions may be placed on Hold or Patrol; the NVA cannot.

4. Skip the Strategic Movement Phase in Turn 1.

5. The Allied player must conduct the first operation but may assign units only from one US brigade and any ARVN units desired. The Allied player may commit Offensive Reserves.

6. Any unit which leaves the play area is considered eliminated. Ignore Disputed Borders *[5.2]*.

Victory:

Ignore the standard victory conditions. The Allied player wins if two NVA regiments are eliminated or leave the play area, but no US units are eliminated. The NLF player wins if the Allies do not win and they capture Pleiku or eliminate a US unit. Any other result is a draw.

18.1.4 The First Volley

The first important US military actions of the war occurred in I Corps, soon after the Marines landed in Đà Nẵng and were given permission to engage the enemy.

Game Length: 2 turns starting in 1965 Summer-1.

Play Area: North map. All of I Corps Zone, North Vietnam, and Laos

Allied:

Allocations: No ARVN Rangers are available. 30 US Replacement Points; 18 ARVN Replacement Points; 10 Air Points; 3 Airmobile Points; 1 cruiser.

Setup:

Location	Units
4411 (Đà Nẵng)	Entire 3/3M Regiment, entire 4/3M Regiment, 1/9/3M Battalion, 3/9/3M Battalion
	1 105mm artillery battalion
Anywhere in I Corps Zone	Entire 1st Division, entire 2nd Division, 5 infantry battalions

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	4411 (Đà Nẵng)	2/9/3M Battalion, 9/3M Regiment HQ, 3M Division HQ, 3M armored battalion, 3M armored cavalry battalion

NLF:

Allocations: 25 VC Replacement Points; 10 NVA Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in the play area	63rd Regiment, 12 battalions, 2 Political Sections
Anywhere in North Vietnam	Entire 324B Division

Special Rules:

1. The Allied player cannot invade Laos.

2. The 2nd ARVN division is ineffective for both turns. All other ARVN units are effective.

Victory:

Use 18.1.1 to calculate victory.

14 or less: Decisive Allied Victory

15 to 18: Allied Victory

19 to 22: Draw

23 to 30: NLF Victory

31 or more: Decisive NLF Victory

18.1.5 Masher/White Wing

The 1st Cavalry Division, working with ROK forces, joined with Marines from Operation Double Eagle in I Corps to sweep populous Bình Định province in one of the largest operations of the war.

Game Length: 2 turns starting 1965 Winter-2.

Play Area: North and Center maps. Bình Định, Kon Tum, Phú Bổn, Phú Yên, Laos, Cambodia.

Allied:

Allocations: 2 ARVN Rangers; 35 US Replacement Points; 20 ARVN Replacement Points; 15 Air Points; 3 Airmobile Points; 1 cruiser.

Setup:

Location	Units
Within 2 hexes of 4334 (Pleiku)	Entire 3/25 Brigade, 1 175mm artillery battalion
Within 2 hexes of 4932	Entire 1st Cavalry Division
4932	1 105mm artillery
5232	1/CAP Regiment
5633 (Qui Nhơn)	CAP Division HQ, Cav/CAP Regiment, 26/CAP Regiment
5741 (Tuy Hòa)	28/9 Regiment
Any hexes in the play area	Entire 22nd Division, 4 infantry battalions

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	Enter anywhere on the north edge of the play area	4/3M HQ, and 1/4/3M, 2/4/3M, 1/7/1M, 2/7/1M battalions
		1 155mm artillery, 1 105mm artillery

NLF:

Allocations: 10 NVA Replacement Points; 18 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Any unoccupied hexes in play area*	12 battalions, 2 regiments, 4 Political Sections
Any hexes in Kon Tum	2 independent regiments

*At least 4 VC counters must be placed in hexes containing cultivated terrain. 4 additional VC counters must be placed within 4 hexes of an all-sea hex.

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	Any unoccupied hexes of the play area	4 battalions, 2 Political Sections

Special Rules:

1. The Allied player receives 2 Victory Points for each region containing no NLF units at the end of the scenario. NLF units on a regional border are considered to occupy all regions touching the border for purposes of this award.

Victory:

Use 18.1.1 and Special Rule #1 to calculate victory.

4 or less: Decisive Allied Victory

5 to 7: Allied Victory

8 to 12: Draw

13 to 17: NLF Victory

18 or more: Decisive NLF Victory

18.1.6 War Zone C: Operations Attleboro and Cedar Falls

To the northwest of Sài Gòn lay the "Iron Triangle," a bastion of insurgency for more than 20 years. A series of operations beginning in late 1966 were initiated to clear the area of NLF bases. They were somewhat successful in disrupting VC operations, but as soon as the US forces left, the NLF would return.

Game Length: 3 turns starting 1966 Winter-1.

Play Area: Center and South maps. Hậu Nghĩa, Tây Ninh, Phouc Long, Bình Dương, Cambodia.

Allied:

Allocations: 4 ARVN Rangers; 20 US Replacement Points; 8 ARVN Replacement Points; 30 Air Points; 8 Airmobile Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Within 1 hex of 2462 (Khiêm Cường)	Entire 2/25 Brigade
Within 1 hex of 2858	Entire 1/1 Brigade, 1st armored cavalry battalion, 1st Division HQ
Within 1 hex of 2963	Entire 2/1 Brigade
Within 1 hex of 2659	Entire 3/1 Brigade
Within 1 hex of 3061 (Biên Hòa)	Entire 173rd Airborne Brigade
Within 1 hex of 3153 (Phước Bình)	Entire 199th Infantry Brigade
Within 1 hex of 2259 (Tây Ninh)	Entire 196th Infantry Brigade
Any friendly-occupied hex(es) in the play area	1 175mm artillery battalion, 1 155mm artillery battalion, 2 105mm artillery battalions
2860 (Phú Cường)	7/5 Infantry Regiment

NLF:

Allocations: 10 NVA Replacement Points; 25 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in the play area	Entire 9th Division, 6 battalions, 3 Political Sections
Anywhere in Cambodia	101st Regiment

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	Anywhere in South Vietnam	165th Regiment, 272nd Regiment, 5 battalions, 2 Political Sections, 1 Supply Conduit*

*The Supply Conduit must be placed; the NLF player need not deploy the other forces.

Special Rules:

1. At the end of each turn the Allied player receives 3 Victory Points for each region in the play area which contains no NLF units. NLF units on national or regional borders do not count.

Victory:

Use 18.1.1 and Special Rule #1 to calculate victory.

Less than 0: Allied Victory

0 to 4: Draw

5 or more: NLF Victory

18.1.7 The Battle for I Corps

Some of the fiercest fighting of the Tet Offensive took place in I Corps. Huế was captured by NVA and VC forces and was only recaptured by bitter street-to-street combat. The NLF were eventually repulsed, but only after the US had been bloodied and more than half a million civilians were homeless.

Game Length: 3 turns starting in 1968 Spring-1.

Play Area: North map. I Corps Zone, Laos, North Vietnam.

Allied:

Allocations: 4 ARVN Rangers; 90 US Replacement Points; 30 ARVN Replacement Points; 60 Air Points; 9 Airmobile Points; 2 cruisers.

Setup:

Location	Units
4411 (Đà Nẵng)	1M armored battalion, 1M armored cavalry battalion, 1M Division HQ
	1 175mm artillery battalion
3807 (Phu Bai)	1/1M Regiment HQ
3910	1/1/1M Battalion
3405	2/1/1M Battalion, 3/1/1M Battalion
4119	1/5/1M Battalion (3rd deployment)
4515	2/5/1M Battalion (3rd deployment)
4412	7/1M Regiment HQ, 2/7/1M Battalion
4514	1/7/1M Battalion
	2/3/4 Battalion
4413	3/7/1M Battalion
3203	3M armored battalion, 3M armored cavalry battalion, 3M Division HQ, 3/3/3M Battalion
2906 (Khe Sanh)	1/9/3M Battalion (3rd deployment), 26M Regiment (1st deployment)
3004	2/9/3M Battalion (3rd deployment), 3/9/3M Battalion (3rd deployment)
3104	3/3M Regiment HQ, 2/3/3M Battalion
3204 (Đông Hà)	1/3/3M Battalion, 4/3M Regiment HQ, 3/4/3M Battalion,
	1 155mm artillery battalion
3205	1/4/3M Battalion
3304	2/4/3M Battalion
3808	1/1/101 Battalion (3rd deployment)
4614	3/4 Brigade HQ, 1/3/4 Battalion, 3/3/4 Battalion, 1/196/23 Battalion
5118 (Chu Lai)	23rd Division HQ, 23rd armored cavalry battalion, 1 105mm artillery battalion

Location	Units
4715	196/23 Brigade HQ, 2/196/23 Battalion
4516	3/196/23 Battalion
5019	1/198/23 Battalion (3rd deployment)
5120	3/11/23 Battalion (3rd deployment)
3406	3/1/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 3/2/1C Battalion (3rd deployment)
3507	1/1/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 1/3/1C Battalion (3rd deployment)
3909	3/3/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 1/2/1C Battalion (3rd deployment)
4613 (Hội An)	2M Brigade
3204 (Đông Hà)	1/1 Regiment
3707	3/1 Regiment
4314	5/2 Regiment
4917 (Tam Kỳ)	2nd Division HQ, 4/2 Armored Cavalry Battalion, 6/2 Regiment
5221 (Quảng Ngãi)	4/2 Regiment
3103, 3305, 3506, 3708, 3710, 3807, 4209, 5118, 5323	1 infantry battalion in each hex

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	Enter through any hex on the south edge of the play area	2/3/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 2/1/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 2/2/1C Battalion (3rd deployment), 1C Division HQ

NLF:

Allocations: 60 NVA Replacement Points; 60 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in the play area	2 regiments, 25 battalions, 6 Political Sections
Anywhere in North Vietnam or Laos	Entire 304th Division, entire 325th Division, entire 320th Division, 1 independent regiment, 2 independent artillery regiments

Special Rules:

1. During setup, the entire 325th NVA division is augmented.

2. The ARVN 2nd division is ineffective for the entire scenario.

3. There is no Strategic Movement Phase during the first turn of this scenario.

4. Reduce the ground combat strength of all ARVN units by 1 (to a minimum of 1) for all purposes except Victory Points for the first game-turn. Regional forces are unaffected.

5. The NLF player need not occupy a Town, Capital Town, Capital City, or Major Capital City at the end of the scenario to gain Victory Points for units occupying it. Thus, if 3 NVA units were the sole occupants of Huế during turn 1 of the scenario, the NLF player would receive 15 Victory Points, even if his units were subsequently expelled. The NLF player gets credit for the maximum number of units ever in a place at the end of any operation. Thus, if 1 unit was in Huế on turn 1, and 4 at some point during turn 2, but none at the end of the scenario, the NLF player would receive 20 Victory Points. NLF units must end an operation in a place to get the Victory Points for it; they cannot just pass through.

6. The NLF player receives 1 Victory Point for each attack made by his forces, including a Bombardment Operation and Incidental Attacks (i.e., each time he rolls the die for combat, it's a Victory Point).

Victory:

Use 18.1.1 and Special Rules #5 and #6 to calculate victory.

65 or less: Allied Victory

66 to 85: Draw

86 or more: NLF Victory

18.1.8 Quyetchien: ARVN Operations in the Delta

The Mekong Delta was relatively quiet for most of the war. The ARVN was constantly sweeping the area, but no large concentrations of NLF forces were detected, and few important battles took place.

Game Length: 5 turns starting in 1968 Summer-2.

Play Area: South map. All of IV Corps Zone, Cambodia.

Allied:

Allocations: 5 ARVN Rangers; 10 US Replacement Points; 25 ARVN Replacement Points; 15 Air Points; 1 Airmobile Point; 2 Riverine Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in South Vietnam	Entire 7th Division, entire 9th Division, entire 21st Division, 8 infantry battalions
Within 2 hexes of 2467 (Mỹ Tho)	2/9 Brigade
In any friendly-occupied hexes	2 175mm artillery battalions, 3 105mm artillery battalions

NLF:

Allocations: 10 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Any unoccupied hexes in the play area	6 battalions, 2 Political Sections

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
2	Anywhere in South Vietnam	2 battalions, 1 Political Section; 2 VC Replacement Points
3	Anywhere in South Vietnam	1 battalion; 2 VC Replacement Points
4	Anywhere in South Vietnam	1 battalion, 1 Political Section; 2 VC Replacement Points
5	Anywhere in South Vietnam	1 battalion; 2 VC Replacement Points

Special Rules:

1. At the start of each turn, roll one die each for the ARVN 7th, 9th, and 21st divisions. If a 1 is rolled for a division, it is ineffective for that turn.

2. The Allied player cannot declare any regions Free-Fire zones.

3. One time during the scenario, the NLF player may substitute (at his option) a VC regiment for any battalion on the map or in his reinforcements. He merely switches the two units at the start of any turn. He cannot see a reinforcement's strength before replacing it with the regiment.

Victory:

Ignore 18.1.1 and use the following victory schedule instead.

NLF Victory Points:

- **1** per ARVN Replacement Point expended.
- **1** per Capital (of any type) entered or occupied each turn (NLF units must be the **sole** occupants of the hex at any time during an operation).
- **1** per cultivated hex in South Vietnam (not a National Border hex) occupied at the end of each turn.
- **2** per ARVN ground and artillery strength point eliminated.
- **2** per US Replacement Point expended.
- **2** per non-Capital Town occupied at the end of each turn.
- **3** per unit (up to 5 units per hex) in a Capital (of any type) at the end of each turn.
- **10** per US unit eliminated.

Allied Victory Points:

- **3** per VC battalion or Political Section eliminated or Dispersed.
- **23** if the VC regiment is eliminated, Dispersed, or broken down.

35 or less: Allied Victory

36 to 45: Draw

46 or more: NLF Victory

18.1.9 Tet

The Tet Offensive of 1968 was the psychological turning point of the war. The American public had been told that the war was being won (and by some standards, this was true). Then the NLF launched a country-wide offensive. Scenes of battles and violence even in the streets of Sài Gòn itself destroyed all confidence that the US was winning the war. In military terms, the offensive was a disaster; NLF military might was shattered and took years to rebuild. But its effect on US morale was decisive.

<u>Game Length:</u> 2 turns starting in 1968 Spring-1.

<u>Play Area:</u> The entire map.

Allied:

<u>Allocations:</u> 5 ARVN Rangers; 95 US Replacement Points; 75 ARVN Replacement Points; 90 Air Points; 24 Airmobile Points; 4 Riverine Points; 2 cruisers.

<u>Setup:</u>

Location	Units
3204* (Đông Hà)	3M Division HQ, 3/3M Regiment HQ, 4/3M Regiment HQ
2904*	9/3M Regiment HQ
3506* (Phong Điền)	1/1C Brigade HQ, 2/1C Brigade HQ
3909*	1C Division HQ, 3/1C Brigade HQ
4411* (Đà Nẵng)	1M Division HQ, 5/1M Regiment HQ, 7/1M Regiment HQ
3807* (Phú Bài)	1/1M Regiment HQ
3061* (Biên Hòa)	101st Division HQ, 1/101 Brigade HQ
3059*	2/101 Brigade HQ, 3/101 Brigade HQ
4334* (Pleiku)	4th Division HQ, 2/4 Brigade HQ
4025* (Đăk Tô)	1/4 Brigade HQ
4614*	3/4 Brigade HQ
5118* (Chu Lai)	23rd Division HQ, 11/23 Brigade HQ
4715*	196/23 Brigade HQ
5323* (Đức Phổ)	198/23 Brigade HQ
3264*	9th Division HQ, 1/9 Brigade HQ
2467* (Mỹ Tho)	2/9 Brigade HQ
2566* (Tân An)	3/9 Brigade HQ
2906* (Khe Sanh)	26M Regiment HQ
4025* (Đăk Tô)	173rd Airborne Regiment HQ
2863* (Sài Gòn)	199th Brigade HQ
5428	1/50 Mechanized Infantry Battalion

Location	Units
3061* (Biên Hòa)	11th Armored Cavalry Regiment HQ
2561*	25th Division HQ, 1/25 Brigade HQ, 2/25 Brigade HQ
2259* (Tây Ninh)	3/25 Brigade HQ
2860* (Phú Cường)	1st Division HQ, 1/1 Brigade HQ, 2/1 Brigade HQ, 3/1 Brigade HQ
Anywhere in South Vietnam	8 105mm artillery battalions, 2 155mm artillery battalions, 6 175mm artillery battalions
4613 (Hội An)	2M Brigade
5633* (Qui Nhơn)	Entire CAP division
5741 (Tuy Hòa)	9th Division HQ, 28/9 Regiment
5547 (Ninh Hòa)	29/9 Regiment
5651	30/9 Regiment
3466 (Phước Le)	ANZAC Battalion
	Entire ATF Regiment
	CAG Battalion
Anywhere in South Vietnam	18 infantry battalions, entire Marine Division, entire Airborne Division
Anywhere in I Corps Zone	Any 2 entire infantry divisions (♣1st, 2nd)
Anywhere in II Corps Zone	Any 2 entire infantry divisions (♣22nd, 23rd)
Anywhere in III Corps Zone	Any 2 entire infantry divisions (♣18th, 5th)
Anywhere in IV Corps Zone	Any 4 entire infantry divisions (♣7th, 9th, 21st, 25th)

All units subordinate to each HQ may be deployed anywhere within 2 hexes of it.

NLF:

Allocations: 90 NVA Replacement Points; 90 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in North Vietnam	3 entire divisions (♣ 324B, ?, ?), 1 independent regiment, 2 independent artillery regiments
Anywhere in Laos	3 entire divisions (♣304, 325, 320), 2 independent regiments (♣270, 271)
Anywhere in Cambodia	3 entire divisions (♣1,2, 5), 4 independent regiments (♣24, 273, ?, ?)
Anywhere in South Vietnam	4 independent regiments* (♣4, 5, 6, ?), 1 independent artillery regiment
Anywhere on the map	2 entire divisions, 4 regiments, 70 battalions, 15 Political Sections

*no more than 1 per region

Special Rules:

1. During NLF setup, any 2 entire NVA divisions and 3 NVA independent regiments are augmented.

2. After setup is complete, the NLF player must tell the Allied player how many VC regiments (divisional or independent) are in each Corps Zone. Units on Corps Zone boundaries may be assigned to either Corps Zone for purposes of this count.

3. The NLF player receives 1 Victory Point for each attack up to the 60th made by his forces (i.e., each time he rolls for combat, including a Bombardment Operation and Incidental Attacks, it is worth a Victory Point). Each attack after the 60th is worth 2 Victory Points (thus, a total of 100 attacks would be worth 140 Victory Points).

4. Roll a die for each ARVN division at the start of each turn. On the first turn, a roll of 1 through 4 indicates that the division is ineffective for that turn. On the second turn, a roll of 1 through 3 indicates a division is ineffective for that turn.

5. Reduce the ground combat strength of all ARVN units by 1 (to a minimum of 1), for all purposes except Victory Points for the first game-turn. Regional Forces are unaffected.

Victory:

Use 18.1.1 and Special Rule #3 to calculate victory.

105 or less: Allied Victory

106 to 130: Draw

131 or more: NLF Victory

18.1.10 The Easter Offensive

The next major NLF offensive after Tet took place in early 1972. The US had withdrawn virtually all its ground formations by this time, but her airpower remained, and was to prove decisive.

Game Length: 4 turns starting in 1972 Spring-1.

Play Area: The entire map.

Allied:

Allocations: 5 ARVN Rangers; 40 US Replacement Points; 140 ARVN Replacement Points; 80 Air Points; 8 Airmobile Points; 4 Riverine Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
4411 (Đà Nẵng)	196/23 Brigade (1st deployment), 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (1st deployment)
3061 (Biên Hòa)	3/1C Brigade (1st deployment), 2/1 Armored Cavalry Squadron
5633,(Qui Nhơn)	CAP Division HQ, Cav/CAP Regiment
5637 (Sông Cầu)	26/CAP Regiment
5431	1/CAP Regiment
5547 (Ninh Hòa)	28/9 Regiment
5741	9th Division HQ, 29/9 Regiment
5651	30/9 Regiment
3305* (Quảng Trị)	P Division HQ, M Division HQ
3708* (Huê̓)	1st Division HQ
4411 (Đà Nẵng)	1/1A Armored Battalion, 2/1A Armored Battalion, 3/1A Armored Battalion
5118* (Chu Lai)	2nd Division HQ
5430*	22nd Division HQ
4334 (Pleiku)	1/2A Armored Battalion, 2/2A Armored Battalion, 3/2A Armored Battalion
2906* (Khe Sanh)	3rd Division HQ
4345* (Buôn Ma Thuột)	23rd Division HQ
3562* (Xuân Lộc)	18th Division HQ
2860* (Phú Cường)	5th Division HQ
3061 (Biên Hòa)	1/3A Armored Battalion, 2/3A Armored Battalion, 3/3A Armored Battalion
2661*	25th Division HQ
2467* (Mỹ Tho)	7th Division HQ
2867* (Gò Công)	21st Division HQ
2863* (Sài Gòn)	9th Division HQ

Anywhere in South Vietnam	18 infantry battalions 4 105mm artillery battalions, 2 155mm artillery battalions, 3 175mm artillery battalions

*All units subordinate to each HQ may be deployed anywhere in SVN.

Reinforcements:

Turn	Location	Units
3		+60 Air Points (total 140 Air Points)

Note: The additional Air Points have been diverted from strategic operations against the North.

NLF:

Allocations: 110 NVA Replacement Points; 80 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in North Vietnam	2 entire divisions (♣304, 308)
Anywhere in Laos	2 entire divisions (♣312, 324B)
Anywhere in Cambodia	3 entire divisions (♣320, 2, 3)
Anywhere outside of South Vietnam	2 entire divisions (♣1, 5), 4 independent regiments, 3 independent artillery regiments
Anywhere on map	3 entire divisions, 3 regiments, 45 battalions, 15 Political Sections

Special Rules:

1. During Allied setup, any 4 ARVN divisions and all ARVN infantry battalions are augmented.

2. During NLF setup, any 6 NVA divisions and 3 NVA independent regiments are augmented.

3. Roll a die for each ARVN division at the start of each turn. On a roll of 1 through 3, the division is ineffective for that turn.

4. No US or FWA units may be assigned to Allied Search and Destroy, Security, or Clear and Secure Operations for the duration of the scenario. Remember that units used as Offensive Reserves are assigned to operations.

5. The NLF player receives a full Victory Point for each ARVN Replacement Point expended (rather than the usual ¼).

Victory:
Use 18.1.1 and Special Rule #5 to calculate victory.

185 or less: Allied Victory

186 to 220: Draw

221 or more: NLF Victory

18.1.11 The Fall of South Vietnam

By 1975, all US formations were long gone. US aid had continued, but in dwindling quantities. Many US aircraft had been given to the South Vietnamese, but the training and morale did not exist to use them effectively. All it took was a push from the NLF to send the Sài Gòn government toppling.

Game Length: 3 turns starting in 1974 Winter-2.

Play Area: The entire map.

Allied:

Allocations: 5 ARVN Rangers; 25 ARVN Replacement Points; 30 Air Points; 12 Airmobile Points; 6 Riverine Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in South Vietnam	All ARVN counters (♣Historical ARVN HQ bases: 1st Division: 3708 (Huế)(I) 2nd Division: 5221 (Quảng Ngãi) (I) 3rd Division: 3305 (Quảng Trị) (I) 5th Division: 3061 (Biên Hòa) (III) 7th Division: 2467 (Mỹ Tho) (IV 9th Division: 1871 (Cần Thơ) (IV) 18th Division: 3562 (Xuân Lộc) (III) 21st Division: 1779 (Bạc Liêu) (IV) 22nd Division: 4429 (Kon Tum) (II) 23rd Division: 4334 (Pleiku) (II) 25th Division: 2762 (Cu Chi -1 hex NW of Gia Định) (III) P Division: 2863 (Tan Son Nhut Airbase, near Sài Gòn) M Division: 2863 (Sài Gòn)

NLF:

Allocations: 140 NVA Replacement Points; 35 VC Replacement Points.

Setup:

Location	Units
Anywhere in Long An	1 entire division (♣7)
Anywhere in Tây Ninh	1 entire division (♣312)
Anywhere in Vĩnh Long	1 entire division (♣9)
Anywhere in Kon Tum	2 entire divisions (♣3, 320)
Anywhere in Phú Bổn	1 entire division (♣10)
Anywhere in Bình Định	1 entire division (♣?)
Anywhere in Quảng Tín	1 entire division (♣711)
Anywhere in Quảng Nam	1 entire division (♣304)
Anywhere in Thừa Thiên	1 entire division (♣324B)
Anywhere in Quảng Trị	1 entire division (♣325)
Anywhere in IV Corps Zone*	15 independent regiments
With any NVA unit	8 independent artillery
Anywhere on map	3 entire divisions, 4 regiments, 14 battalions, 15 Political Sections

*No more than one independent regiment may be deployed in any one hex.

Special Rules:

1. During Allied setup, all ARVN units (except for 3 divisions of the Allied player's choice) are augmented.

2. During NLF setup, any 7 NVA divisions and 8 NVA independent regiments are augmented.

3. All regions are Free-Fire Zones for the duration of the scenario.

4. NVA artillery and augmented HQs and units may be assigned Security Operations. They may conduct these operations only in the Operations Phase.

5. Roll a die for each ARVN division at the start of each turn. On turns one and two, a roll of 1 through 4 indicates that the division is ineffective for that turn. On turn three, a roll of 1 through 5 means the division is ineffective for that turn. All non-divisional units are effective on turn one, but ineffective on turns two and three.

Victory:

Ignore the standard victory conditions. The NLF wins if 42 Capital Towns, Capital Cities, or Major Capital Cities are solely occupied by NLF units at the end of the scenario. Sài Gòn (2863) counts as 10 toward this total, Đà Nẵng (4411) as 3, Huế (3708) as 5, Qui Nhơn (5633) as 2, and Cam Rahn (5652) as 3. The Allied player wins if the NLF player fails to win.

18.2 Campaign Scenarios

All rules apply to the following two scenarios. Be forewarned: these scenarios take a long, long time to play to conclusion.

18.2.1 1965-1975: The Battle for South Vietnam

The campaign scenario is set up in the following sequence.

1. Setup US units.

Location	Units
4411 (Đà Nẵng)	Entire 3/3M Regiment, entire 4/3M Regiment

2. The SVN draft level is set at 0, SVN Population Available to 217, SVN Supply Available to 100, SVN morale to 65, and SVN Replacement Points to 0. The Allied player produces SVN units and points using the normal procedure *[16.4]*. No US commitment can be used to purchase additional supply at this time. Any SVN units produced are deployed anywhere within SVN.

3. The Allied player draws a three-star leader and 7 two-star leaders. He then draws 1 one-star leader for each division from which units were built. The one-star leaders are distributed randomly among the divisions and two-star leaders among the spheres of command. Starting loyalties are determined for each leader by rolling two dice and adding two to the result. Totals more than 10 are treated as 10.

4. US morale is set to 520 and US commitment to 25. Support available includes 21 Air Points, 2 Airmobile Points, 3 Replacement Points, and one cruiser. Naval Points are 1.

5. Control of regional population is as follows (all are neutral; none are " + " or " - "):

Quảng Trị (I-1)	4	Long An (III-7)	7
Thừa Thiên (I-2)	13	Châu Đốc (IV-1)	5
Quảng Nam (I-3)	5	Kiến Phong (IV-2)	6
Quảng Tín (I-4)	3	Kiến Tường (IV-3)	6
Quảng Ngãi (I-5)	6	Định Tường (IV-4)	6
Kon Tum (II-1)	3	Gò Công (IV-5)	0
Bình Định (II-2)	8	Vĩnh Long (IV-6)	7
Phú Bổn (II-3)	5	Kiến Hòa (IV-7)	4
Phú Yên (II-4)	3	Vĩnh Bình (IV-8)	1
Khánh Hòa (II-5)	6	Sa Đéc (IV-9)	3
Tuyên Đức (II-6)	3	An Giang (IV-10)	8
Bình Thuận (II-7)	3	Kiên Giang (IV-11)	3
Phước Long (III-1)	1	Phong Dinh (IV-12)	1
Long Khánh (III-2)	6	Ba Xuyên (IV-13)	4
Biên Hòa (III-3)	9	Chương Thiện (IV-14)	2
Bình Dương (III-4)	0	Bạc Liêu (IV-15)	3
Tây Ninh (III-5)	1	An Xuyên (IV-16)	0
Hậu Nghĩa (III-6)	2		

6. NVN morale is set to 10 and NVN commitment to 0. Air Defense Level is 0. Four NVN and 0 VC Replacement Points are available. The NLF player sets up one entire NVA division (unaugmented) anywhere in Laos or NVN (not on the Ho Chi Minh Trail). No other units may be placed. Optimal status for the Ho Chi Minh Trail is box 4.

7. VC population controlled is 143. VC draft level is 0. VC Supply Pool is 90. The NLF player uses this supply to build VC units and Replacement Points immediately and place them in any unoccupied hexes on the map (including on the Ho Chi Minh Trail). Regional Maximums *[16.5.8]* are ignored. VC units may deploy in Capital Towns, Capital Cities, or Major Capital Cities left unattended. The NLF player may also deploy up to 4 Political Sections. The NLF player should make his allocations to Trail Supply and Sea Supply *[16.5]* for the coming season (Summer 1965) as if they had been allocated in Spring 1965; remember, NVN commitment allocated will be spent in Summer 1965.

8. Begin play with the Seasonal Interphase of Summer 1965 but skip the Pacification Phase during the first season. No units or support may be Withdrawn.

9. The NLF player wins if Saigon is ever captured by the NLF or if the VC-controlled population ever exceeds 200. The Allied player wins if the NLF player has not won by the end of Spring-2 1975.

18.2.2 After Tet

After the Tet Offensive, US forces were gradually withdrawn. Attention shifted to the ARVN and preparing them for the conflict that they were soon to face alone. Deploy as for the Tet scenario [18.1.9]. The following modifications should be made:

1. Add 30 Air Points and 8 Airmobile Points to Allied support.

2. The optimal status of the Ho Chi Minh Trail is box 7. Three Naval Points are available. NVN Air Defense Level is 2. The NLF player should choose his allocations for Trail Supply and Sea Supply [16.5] for the next season (Summer 1968); remember NVN commitment allocated will be spent in Summer 1968.

3. An offensive has been declared and paid for the first season of the game. No new units are placed, however.

4. Draw leaders for each ARVN division and sphere of command. Add 3 to the roll of two dice to determine their loyalties, with a maximum of 13.

5. US morale is 410. US commitment is 340. SVN morale is 115. SVN Population Controlled is 239. SVN draft level is 107. NVN morale is 270. NVN commitment is 270. VC Population Controlled is 121. VC draft Level is 445. VC Supply Pool is 15.

6. Reduce the ground combat strength of all ARVN units by 1 (to a minimum of 1) for all purposes for the first game-turn (not the first season). Regional Forces are not affected.

7. Control of regional population is as follows (all are neutral; none are "+" or "-"):

Quảng Trị (I-1)	2	Long An (III-7)	8
Thừa Thiên (I-2)	13	Châu Đốc (IV-1)	5
Quảng Nam (I-3)	6	Kiến Phong (IV-2)	8
Quảng Tín (I-4)	4	Kiến Tường (IV-3)	8
Quảng Ngãi (I-5)	6	Định Tường (IV-4)	6
Kon Tum (II-1)	1	Gò Công (IV-5)	0
Bình Định (II-2)	11	Vĩnh Long (IV-6)	6
Phú Bổn (II-3)	4	Kiến Hòa (IV-7)	6
Phú Yên (II-4)	6	Vĩnh Bình (IV-8)	4
Khánh Hòa (II-5)	6	Sa Đéc (IV-9)	5
Tuyên Đức (II-6)	2	An Giang (IV-10)	9
Bình Thuận (II-7)	5	Kiên Giang (IV-11)	2
Phước Long (III-1)	1	Phong Dinh (IV-12)	3
Long Khánh (III-2)	7	Ba Xuyên (IV-13)	4
Biên Hòa (III-3)	9	Chương Thiện (IV-14)	4
Bình Dương (III-4)	0	Bạc Liêu (IV-15)	4
Tây Ninh (III-5)	1	An Xuyên (IV-16)	0
Hậu Nghĩa (III-6)	4		

8. Begin play with the Special Operations Designation Phase of Spring 1968. The Strategic Movement Phase is skipped on turn 1. Remember to apply the weather rules [7.3].

9. Play until the end of spring 1975, using the same victory conditions as the Battle for South Vietnam scenario

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"Around midnight [on the opening night of the Tet Offensive] we moved as close as possible to the American perimeter. We just wore shorts and covered our bodies with dirt for camouflage. Uniforms can snag on barbed wire so we wore as little as possible. When everyone was in position we all dug foxholes and waited... [S]mall munitions teams crawled forward to place explosives under the barbed wire...

Weeks before...we had crawled and cut our way through the mines and barbed wire to get a close look at the base. We drew maps of the layout, including the positions of all the bunkers and buildings so our mortar men could preplan their targets... In preparing our troops, we made sure they understood the importance of fighting as close to the enemy as possible... [W]e wanted to take the battle right to the enemy bunkers and grab the Americans by the belt buckle...

We launched the attack at five A.M. First we fired a flare. That was the signal to detonate the dynamite that blasted holes in the perimeter. At the same time our mortar men and machine gunners began firing.... Within seconds we blew a bugle and whistles to signal our troops to advance. All four hundred of us moved forward screaming, "Attack! Attack! Attack!"

— *Tuan Van Ban*

19.0 Using the Record Sheets

The rules that follow discuss how to use the US, SVN, and NLF Record Sheets to record information for the Campaign Games.

The Allied Player fills out the US and SVN record sheets. The NLF player fills out his own. Information on the Allied player's record sheets are public information; the NLF player's record sheet is kept secret from the Allied player.

19.1 Example
19.1.1 Setup
For our example, let's use the start of the 1965 Campaign Scenario *[18.2.1]*. We will fill out the starting record sheets in the order specified by the scenario setup rules.

Starting with the SVN Record Sheet, fill in the Year with "1965". Using the values in SSR #2, fill in Line 10 under "Spring" with 100 Supply Available. Then, again under Spring, spend that Supply and any Personnel desired to build the Initial ARVN Order of Battle. For example, let's assume the Allies deploy the following (recording the appropriate amounts):

Line	Build	Personnel	Supply
11a	Mar and Abn Div Regiments (6)	6	12
11b	Mar and Abn Div HQs	2	6
11c	20 Replacement Points	20	40
11d	Three Ranger Groups	15	27
11e	21 Infantry Battalions	7	14
11f	1 Armored Cav battalion	0	1

The SVN has spent a total of 50 Personnel (Line 12) and 100 Supply (Line 13). The Allied player also writes "50" on Line 14 as that's all the Personnel who have been drafted so far and 0 for ending Supply.

Now, the Allied player records, under "Summer" the starting SVN Morale of 65 on Line 1. In Line 8a and 8c, both the Starting and Ending SVN Population, respectively, are set to 217 (as Pacification is skipped for the first Seasonal Interphase). In Line 9a, the Initial Personnel Draft is set to 50 (per the above builds) and Line 9b, Starting Supply, is set to 0 (as it was all spent above).

Now, let's move to the US Record Sheet. First, fill in the Year with "1965", and, under "Spring" set Naval Points (Line 8) to 1.

Then, under "Summer", the Allied player records 520 as US Starting Morale (Line 1), 25 as the Current Commitment (Line 9), 21 as Air Available (Line 12), and 2 as Airmobile Available (Line 19).

Next, let's get the NLF Record Sheet set. The NLF player should set the Year to "1965" and, under "Summer", record 10 for Starting Morale (Line 1), 0 for Air Defense Level (Line 4), and 0 for Current Commitment (Line 5). The Starting and Ending VC Population is set to 143 (Lines 11a and 11c). The Initial VC Draft Level (Line 12) and the Starting VC Supply Pool (Line 14) are set to 0.

Finally, the NLF player sets the Supply committed for "Summer" by recording, in the "Spring" column, the amount committed to Next Season's Trail and Sea Supply. So, in Lines 9 & 10, under "Spring", let's assume the NLF committed 4 to Trail Supply and 4 to Sea Supply respectively and record those numbers. Go ahead and record 4 in Line 10 for "Summer" as well as the Naval Blockade doesn't directly affect the commitment spent.

We are now ready to begin the Seasonal Interphase.

19.2.2 Seasonal Interphase
We've essentially completed step 1 (Recordkeeping Phase) with all the notations above, and, since Pacification is skipped, we'll move on to step 3 (Strategic War Phase).

The Allied player decides to use 20 Air Points in Strategic Bombing, and records "20" on Line 13. The Allied player then resolves that bombing. Let's assume that 10 points are spent each on the Unrestrained bombing of the North and the Trail. First, record a "+4" on the SVN sheet on Line 3 and a -3 (1 + die roll of 4, halved) on the US sheet on Line 4. The results are 1 hit on the North and 1 Air Point loss. The NLF player should record, in Line 6g on the This Season Trail Supply Line "4 (3)". This indicates that, although 4 commitment was spent, only 3 make it through. The Allied player then records an Air Point loss on the "Lost Turn 1" on Line 16b (we recommend tick marks as this will be a running total throughout the turn). Next, the Allied player resolves Trail bombing. Let's assume no further Air Point loss. The NLF player then calculates the amount of Trail Supply and writes that amount, 27, in Line 15. NVN Trail Infiltration (Line 13) is ignored for now since the VC draft Level is currently less than VC Population.

The players then resolve the results of the blockade against Sea Supply. The NLF player records a 4 in the "This Season Sea Supply" (Line 6h) if he hasn't already. After resolving, the NLF player has 20 points available from Sea Supply and records this in Line 16.

Now that's complete, we can continue with Step 4, the Politics Phase.

19.2.2.1 Politics Phase
a) **SVN Morale Adjustment Segment:** During this segment, the SVN attempts to replace leaders and checks for a coup. For our purposes, let's assume the result is a Coup. The new three-star leader is Bao Dai. On the SVN sheet, record a "-3" under "Spring" on Line 4c to reflect his morale impact. For the Coup itself, Line 4a on the SVN sheet gets a "-8". Record a "-1" on Line 2 of the SVN sheet for controlled population (Line 8c).

b) US Morale Adjustment Segment: No adjustment is made for Current US Commitment (Line 4a) as it's below the zthreshold of 100. Apply "+1" under "Spring" on Line 4c for the SVN three-star leader and Line 6a on the US sheets gets a "-3" for the coup.

c) NVN Morale Adjustment Segment: There is no adjustment for current US Commitment (Line 2b) as it's below the threshold of 51 nor was there any US New Commitment from last season for Line 2a. Line 2c gets a "+5" for the current NVN Morale of 10.

19.2.2.2 Recruitment Phase

In this Phase, both sides use their respective recruitment mechanisms to build new units, supply, etc.

a) US, ARVN, and FWA Placement and Withdrawal Segment: The Allied player decides to make the following commitments:

Line	Build	Commitment
10f	30 Air Points	10
10g	4 Airmobile Points	2
10h	2 Riverine Points	2
10i	1 Naval Point	4
10j	15 Replacement Points	5
10k	7 SVN Military Supplies	1
10l	2 SVN Economic Aid Programs	2

The Allied player records "26" on Line 11a. and "51" on Line 11b. He also records the following under "Summer":

Line	Amount	Note
8	2	New total Naval Points
14	30	New Air Points
16a	31	New Air Points less Strategic Bombing
20	4	New Airmobile Points
21a	6	Total Airmobile available
25	2	New Riverine Points
26	2	Total Riverine Points

On the SVN sheet, the Allied player records a "7" on Lines 9c and 10 (for the supplies the US sent). In addition, the Allied player rolls a single die twice (once for each SVN Economic Aid Program) and halves the result (rounded down). Let's say the rolls are 1 and 5. The one is halved to .5 and rounds down to 0; the 5 is halved to 2.5 and rounds down to 2. So, the player records a "+2" on Line 7a. He can now record the final SVN morale ("-6" on Line 7a and "59" on Line 7b).

Now that US commitment is 50+, the Allied player can roll to see if any Korean units arrive *[16.2.1]*, and, if they do, place them *[16.1.1]*.

The Allied player records a "+1" on Line 7a and "521" on Line 7b.

The Allied player can now build and place ARVN units using the Supplies provided by the Allied player. Since there are only 7, the Allied player chooses to build one 105mm Artillery battalion and 3 armored battalions:

Line	Amount	Note
11g	3	3 Armored Battalions
11h	4	One 105mm Artillery battalion
13	7	Total Supply Spent
14	50	Ending draft Level
14	0	Ending Supply

b) NVA and VC Placement Segment: The NLF player now spends commitment to build NVA units, air defenses, or the Trail, and spends Personnel and Supply to create VC units.

NVN commitment (currently 0) can never exceed NVN morale (15). He decides to make the following commitments:

Line	Amount	Note
6f	4	Increase Air Defense Level
6g	4	This season's Trail Supply
6h	4	This season's Sea Supply
6i	3	Increase Ho Chi Minh Trail one level
14	0	Ending Supply

He then records "15" on both Line 8a and 8b.

The NLF player then builds VC and records the expenditures as follows:

Line	Personnel	Supplies	Note
17a	8	16	8 VC battalions
17d	9	27	9 Replacement Points
17e	N/A	4	2 Supply Conduits
18	N/A	47	Total Supply spent
19	17	N/A	Total New VC Draft Level
20	17	0	VC Ending Draft Level & Supply

"We are going to win because this great Convention has demonstrated to the nation that the Republican Party has the leadership, the platform and the purpose that America needs… We are going to win because at a time that America cries out for the unity that this Administration has destroyed, the Republican Party—after a spirited contest for its nomination for President and for Vice President—stands united before the nation tonight…

As we look at America, we see cities enveloped in smoke and flame. We hear sirens in the night. We see Americans dying on distant battlefields abroad. We see Americans hating each other; fighting each other; killing each other at home…Did American boys die in Normandy, and Korea, and in Valley Forge for this? Listen to the answer…It is another voice. It is the quiet voice in the tumult and the shouting. It is the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans—the non-shouters; the non-demonstrators…

I…promise action—a new policy for peace abroad; a new policy for peace and progress and justice at home…We shall begin with Vietnam. We all hope in this room that there is a chance that current negotiations may bring an honorable end to that war. And we will say nothing during this campaign that might destroy that chance. But if the war is not ended when the people choose in November, the choice will be clear…And I pledge to you tonight that the first priority foreign policy objective of our next Administration will be to bring an honorable end to the war in Vietnam"

— *Richard M. Nixon*

"To say that we are closer to victory today is to believe, in the face of the evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past. To suggest we are on the edge of defeat is to yield to unreasonable pessimism. To say that we are mired in stalemate seems the only realistic, yet unsatisfactory, conclusion."

— *Walter Cronkite*

"Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak… And we must rejoice as well, for surely this is the first time in our nation's history that a significant number of its religious leaders have chosen to move beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm dissent based upon the mandates of conscience and the reading of history…

For nine years following 1945 we denied the people of Vietnam the right of independence. For nine years we vigorously supported the French in their abortive effort to recolonize Vietnam…After the French were defeated, it looked as if independence and land reform would come again through the Geneva Agreement. But instead there came the United States, determined that Ho should not unify the temporarily divided nation, and the peasants watched again as we supported one of the most vicious modern dictators, our chosen man, Premier Diem… When Diem was overthrown they may have been happy, but the long line of military dictators seemed to offer no real change, especially in terms of their need for land and peace. The only change came from America as we increased our troop commitments in support of governments which were singularly corrupt, inept, and without popular support…

If we continue, there will be no doubt in my mind and in the mind of the world that we have no honorable intentions in Vietnam… [W]e must be ready to turn sharply from our present ways. In order to atone for our sins and errors in Vietnam, we should take the initiative in bringing a halt to this tragic war.

— *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

20.0 Designer Notes

Vietnam: 1965–1975 exists because my college advisor refused to accept a simulation game as a Senior Thesis. I was welcome to design a game on the demise of the Roman Republic if I really wanted to -- but I'd also have to turn in the traditional bulky paper.

Unable to get academic credit, I approached Victory Games, the phoenix just emerging from SPI's cinders. Mark Herman, VG's general manager, glanced over my list of proposed topics and cannily determined that Vietnam had greater promise than obscure battles from the waning days of the Roman Republic.

Vietnam made my list primarily because of a yearning to understand, or at least to process, the news on Southeast Asia that had been prominent in the Times and the TV networks for my whole life. Another appeal was that there was nothing yet available on the entire conflict in Vietnam— it was too recent (and too raw). The only games I knew on the subject were dark, tactical, and impressionistic, leaving a void when it came to serious strategic simulations.

My 1982 contract with Victory Games specified only a game on "Vietnam," leaving scale and emphasis entirely open. So I began to read, intending to continue researching until I understood the conflict's moving parts and how they meshed, and could find a perspective that would give players insight into what mattered.

I began with surveys (e.g. Maclean's *Ten Thousand Day War*), then continued to the Pentagon Papers, *Fire in the Lake,* Giap's *People's War*, US Army monographs, Tim Page's photographs, etc. By luck and fate this research began in that narrow window when there was enough secondary material to form a rounded picture, but it was still possible for one person to read everything at hand in book stores, a well-stocked university library, and the New York Public Library system.

Moreover, an image of the war was just coagulating in popular culture. Films like *The Deer Hunter, Coming Home, The Boys in Company C, Rambo: First Blood, Hearts and Minds,* and, of course, *Apocalype Now* portrayed fear and fire schizophrenically sandwiched between a veneer of lush beauty and a heart of pre-industrial innocence. I wanted the game to echo the emerging themes of this mythology: vast firepower and air mobility; romantic nobility intertwined with cynicism and futility; frightened cockiness and moral ambiguity; professional but fruitless manuever.

For a year and more I read and took notes, but made no direct move towards producing a game. A composition book slowly filled with pages headed by topics that seemed relevant to understanding the conflict (e.g. "Firepower"; "ARVN leadership"; "NLF supply"; "Air Mobility"; "Search & Destroy").

Eventually, the key theme that emerged was the contrast and interplay between events in the jungle and the mood on the streets and campuses at home. That dichotomy became the morale/commitment level concept, determining the game's overall scope, structure, and scale.

Homefront perceptions of the war evolved slowly, so showing the interaction between events in-country and US morale required the game to cover an extended timeframe. I briefly considered beginning with the French colonial period, but a simulation starting in 1945 (end of WWII) or even 1954 (Dien Bien Phu) would have had too many opportunities for dramatic divergence from history, requiring elaborate, compounding hypotheticals, and more guesswork than I was comfortable with. Starting in 1965 felt right, with the US committed to a build-up, but unconstrained as to pace, emphasis, and execution, the results of which the game could plausibly evaluate.

The corresponding endpoint was less clear since I saw the goal of US involvement as primarily defensive and unbounded: prevent the territory of South Vietnam from falling into hostile hands. Ultimately I settled for better-than-historical as the condition for game victory, which meant continuing through 1975, the iconic fall of Saigon.

Given ten years to simulate (1965–1975) it might have been wise to abstract military operations so as to keep playtime manageable. However I didn't know how to do that without losing the themes that made Vietnam different: air mobility, massive firepower, the whack-a-mole difficulty of finding and fixing the enemy, the inability to trust the security of "friendly" territory. Consequently, I opted for a two-tier structure, with ground operations to give a feel for the conflict, connected to homefront politics by periodic interphases.

Company- or even platoon-level units would have been most appropriate for the sorts of maneuver depicted, but battalion-level seemed a reasonable compromise that would give mortal players a chance of finishing a game. Even so, it was clear that Vietnam was destined to be a long game, really long.

Once I had settled on the game's essential shape the first draft of the rules came surprisingly and gratifyingly quickly. At the start of a weekend I gathered my notes and plunked a ream of white paper on one side of an IBM Selectric. By Sunday evening most of the notes were checked off and there was a pile of double-spaced manuscript on the other side. It took a lot of cleanup and polishing to get from there to the final version, but the kernel of the game popped out in one extended session.

In designing the games systems I deliberately challenged any limitations and conventions that had struck me as arbitrary in other games. Vietnam was such a novel situation, what better testbed to see what would happen if, for example, units were allowed to enter an enemy hex? Why not let the enemy respond during friendly movement? Some of these experiments didn't work, but others gave rise to alert and reaction movement, incidental attacks, and a fluidity that reflects the uncertainty of jungle combat against a wary and wily opponent.

Such rules also emphasized the asymmetries that were hallmarks of the conflict, allowing the US and the NLF to play two different games on the same board for most of the war, allowing each side to downplay defeats and feel like they were secretly manipulating the course of the war to their own advantage.

Another goal was to convey the ease of slipping into tactical thinking and the effect of such a mindset on US commanders in particular, seduced by what they could accomplish with just a few more troops, planes, guns...all too often losing sight of why they were fighting in the first place. I didn't want the game to impose historical errors on the players through reinforcement schedules or special rules; ideally the system itself would lure them into replicating such mistakes on their own.

The game provides lots of operational detail and choices, naturally encouraging this tunnelvision. Most of the time the players are immersed in maneuver, with superficially satisfying opportunities for skill, artistry, and mastery of mechanics. Seasonal phases distract only briefly with uneasy glimpses of the larger situation beyond the jungle canopy.

Despite the play length that all this operational detail entailed, the game was initially conceived purely as a campaign game. Fortunately, when I delivered the first draft, Mark Herman glanced at the time scale, unit count, and system complexity, cocked his head, and casually asked if it took a while to play. A little embarassed, I admitted that the game would probably only ever be completed by felons serving long sentences. Mark nodded, and whispered the magic word, "scenarios" and made me promise there'd be a lot of them. I was skeptical, but the scenarios seemed to keep the playtesters' interest, even without the context of a seasonal superstructure.

I have a confession to make: the full campaign game in the original release was never played to completion with the final rules. Perhaps that shouldn't surprise anyone who considers how long the campaign takes and the impracticality of investing hundreds of hours to get even one ambiguous result. But I vividly remember the testers' shock and horror when I changed quite an important ratio in the final stages. The change appears to have done no harm— or at least no one has played so many times they can confidently assert the contrary!

After the game was released I played it seldom, but delighted in the elaborate "After Action Reports" that dedicated cadres of players would periodically write and post to gaming forums.

Over the years I was approached by several parties interested in producing a new edition of the game, but I was particularly pleased when GMT offered to do so, given their extensive portfolio of top quality work.

Moreover GMT intended to reissue the game without remaking it; all too frequently in the past I've found reissues to break games that I have loved by "fixing" quirks long after players had become accustomed to them, inadvertently creating schisms that made it harder to find compatible opponents.

As a result, I am happy to write that this edition should not change anything material about the game. We edited and gently reorganized the rules for clarity, incorporating answers to questions accumulated over the years. Components have been polished and upgraded. But that's it: experienced players won't have to relearn the game, or unlearn strategies sometimes honed since Reagan's first term. Mitch Land, my primary point of contact with GMT, has guided this process with thoughtful consideration. I am deeply grateful to him for doing all the heavy lifting.

My wife and I visited Saigon in 2018 ("Ho Chi Minh City" on the map, but still Saigon to us and to most of the locals). Two generations after the war I felt no animus as an American, though perhaps a wincing irony occasionally tinged conversations with the small proportion of the population of an age to remember fighting Americans. The war museum offered a different spin on the "War of American Aggression" than we're accustomed to in the US; but even there any hostility felt residual and perfunctory. With all the world's troubles, it is comforting that mortal emnity can dissipate so quickly.

— *Nick Karp*

Postscript: In the time it took to organize these notes the Taliban swept through Afghanistan and occupied Kabul. My heart goes out to those who served and bled there, to their families, and to the people of Afghanistan who are enduring yet another violent convulsion. Let us hope that those wounds will heal, the scars will fade, and the Afghans emerge with the vibrant optimism so pervasive on my recent visit to Vietnam.

Game Credits

Original Victory Games Design Team

Designer: Nick Karp

Graphic Deign: Ted Koller

Development Assistance: David Amidon, Tony Curtis

Testing & Commentary: Dr. Michael Bogdasarian, Guy Andrew, Orlando Bradley, Frederic C. Catlin, Thomas F. Fine, Greg Flaccavento, Tom Glascow, Leon Loo, Craig Maye, Michael Phelps, Joe Studholme, Rick Trembley, Paul Westkaemper, Gilbert Winters

Research Assistance: Larry Fontana

Rules Editing: Bob Ryer

Production: Ted Koller, Bob Ryer, Colonial Composition, Monarch Services, Inc., Elaine M. Adkins (Camera Department Coordinator)

Front Cover Art: Jim Talbot

Project Oversight: W. Bill

GMT Design Team

Designer: Nick Karp

Developers: Mitchell Land, Ralph Shelton

Map & Counter Art: Justin Martinez

Manuals & Player Aid Cards: Justin Martinez

Cover Art: Mark Simonitch

Proofreaders: Johan Halvarsson, Mark Evans, Mark McGilchrist, Shannon Cooke, Justin Martinez

Producers: Tony Curtis, Andy Lewis, Gene Billingsley, Mark Simonitch