

Improved Morale Rules for LotR Derived Games

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Introduction

The existing rules for morale in LotR tend to produce games which are hard to end by a morale victory; figures flee, then return, then flee again. This is unsatisfactory both from the games having a long tail, but also from the behaviour being unnatural.

The LotOW and LotHS derivations simply end the game on a posse/crew failing a morale check after 50% losses and that seems rather brutal and random (with the player having no real ability to influence that).

The following system therefore blends these approaches together. Failing a morale check should be serious, but not immediately game-ending and therefore there are recovery chances. Also, partial morale failures are possible (if one's forces are split).

In addition this will work for games involving multiple forces (more than one posse/crew/warband/retinue on each side).

General Rules

A figure must take a morale check if;

1. It is not a hero and it is *alone*.
2. The warband/posse/crew/retinue it is part of has taken 50% or more losses since the start of the game.
3. The figure wants to charge something *terrifying*.
4. The figure is charged by something *terrifying*.

5. The hero currently providing the figure with a courage/pluck rating bonus was killed last turn.

The test is that 2D6 plus the figure's courage/pluck rating plus any modifiers is 10 or greater.

Figures need only test once per turn. If they have already passed a test, they do not need to retest if circumstances change, however they may *choose* to act as if they failed if they wish when a circumstance would require a test.

Figures who fail cases 1, 2 and 4 and who are able to move immediately make a flee move.

Figures who fail case 3 may not charge anyone this turn and halt and halt 1" from the figure they were charging. If charged by any terrifying opponent they will immediately flee from it.

Figures may only make 1 flee move per turn. If a flee move from a terrifying opponent puts them where they can be charged by another, they do not also flee the second opponent.

Once a figure starts fleeing, it will continue to do so until given a reason not to – at the start of the next turn it acts as if it has already failed a morale test.

Failing Morale In Combat

If a figure is currently in combat and fails a morale check, they are marked as fleeing, but instead of moving, fall prone. If they survive combat, they will get up and flee.

Modifiers

Modifiers to pluck/courage are provided by figures around them.

- Army Banners/religious objects/iconic personage. The figure gains a +2 pluck/courage boost if within 12".

- Unit Banners/guidons/standards. The figure gains a +1 pluck/courage boost if within 12". (Not cumulative with Army Banner).
- Heroes. The figure may use a friendly heroes pluck/courage value to test if within 6". The highest ranking hero's pluck/courage must be used, even if not the highest value.

Fleeing

A fleeing move is a maximum distance move;

1. Away from the nearest opponent figure if there are any within 12".
2. Towards a friendly banner if one is visible.
3. Towards a friendly table edge.

Figures may not approach within .5" of an enemy figure; they will take the extra distance to move around them.

Rallying

Once a fleeing figure moves into a position where the modifiers or requirements for testing morale change, it may re-test to see if it stops fleeing – this is a rally test.

As examples: A figure which is fleeing towards a banner, will retest when in range of the banner's modifier. A figure which is *alone* will try to rally if it encounters friendly forces.

Figures Who Are Alone

Figures are alone if they are:

- Not heroes. Heroes are never afraid when they're alone – that's why they're heroes!

- Are not within 6" of a friendly figure.
- Do not have LOS to a friendly hero or banner.

Figures who are alone must make a morale test at the beginning of the move phase.

Situations Which Are *Terrifying*

The following situations are terrifying:

- Being infantry charged by cavalry.
- A non-hero charging infantry who have both a higher STR and DEF value.
- A non-hero who survived a fight with >4 combatants.