

Liberty FAQ v1.4
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This FAQ (pertaining to Liberty rules version 1.02) has been compiled by copying, editing, clarifying, and elaborating various questions and answers posted to the rules threads at Consimworld, the Columbia Games Discussion Board, and BoardGameGeek. All answers have been reviewed by Mark Kwasny, one of the game's designers.

Please send all corrections to *wkover* via BGG mail.

GENERAL

Q: The forest hex southwest of Baltimore and northwest of Alexandria: Are the hexsides that lead to Baltimore and Alexandria clear hexsides?

A: Yes, that is correct. The hex is a forest hex, since 2 hexsides are forest. But the hexsides to Alexandria and Baltimore are clear.

Q: Can a ship end a turn (but not a year) in the Atlantic?

A: Yes, ships can end a turn in the Atlantic. They must always end a turn/move in the Atlantic or at a port. At the end of the year, however, ships in the Atlantic will have to disband.

Q: Can the British player put multiple replacement blocks (using a 2 or 3 action card) in the Atlantic on the same turn, or is there a limit of 1 replacement block per turn for the Atlantic like there is for a supply town?

A: You can put any number of drawn replacements into the Atlantic in the same turn. The one per turn restriction is only for towns.

Q: What about the French troops starting in the West Indies: Can the American player move them right away or does he have to wait until the French entry?

A: He has to wait until French entry. The British are allowed to move their forces in the West Indies elsewhere, but they can't be used to attack the French in the West Indies.

Q: Hex control seems to be one of the most important rules of the game, since it affects all movement decisions at the strategic level. The general rule seems to be that hex control is based on where units are located at the beginning of that turn. If an English (red) unit starts the turn in an American (blue) town, for example, then that hex is considered to be red controlled for the rest of that turn. That is, if a red unit starts the turn in the blue town and then moves away, the vacant blue town hex will still be considered red-friendly for retreat and regroup purposes on that turn. This also means that, even if the Americans move into the blue town that same turn, the Americans won't be able to use it as a retreat/regroup hex because the hex is still British-controlled until the end of the turn. Is all of that correct?

A: This is all correct. That is how town control works.

Q: Throughout the rulebook, there are rules relating to whether hexes are “friendly to” a player and “controlled by” a player. Do these phrases mean the same thing, or are they different concepts?

A: They mean exactly the same thing. If a hex is controlled by a player, it is also friendly to that player - and vice versa.

Q: There are multiple references in the rules (in the retreat and regroup rules, e.g.) to hexes that are “friendly but free of enemy blocks.” Why is “free of enemy blocks” specified? Isn’t a friendly hex by definition free of enemy blocks?

A: Due to the non-instantaneous hex control rules, with control changing at the end of turn, it is quite possible – and even common – for friendly hexes to contain enemy blocks. Consider, for example, the situation where a blue unit starts a turn in a red town hex. At the beginning of the turn – and for the entire turn, in fact - the hex is blue-controlled (i.e., blue-friendly). If the blue unit moves away, and red units move in later that same turn, then the hex becomes a blue-friendly hex that is occupied by enemy blocks (red units). (As an aside, note that neither player could retreat/regroup units to such a hex. Blue units can’t retreat/regroup to the hex because it contains enemy blocks, and red units can’t retreat/regroup to the hex because it is blue-controlled.)

Q: A red unit starts the turn in a blue town hex, and then moves away during the turn. If the hex remains empty at the end of the turn, who controls it?

A: Since no red units remain to garrison the blue town hex, it will revert back at the end of the turn to its original blue control. (The same would be true for blue units moving out of a red town hex.) This means, to achieve their Supply Point victory conditions, the British have to garrison blue supply towns with British units to keep control of those towns.

Q: Do the end-of-turn hex control rules also pertain to non-town (“neutral”) hexes?

A: Yes. The hex control rules are valid for all hexes, not just town hexes. So if red units start the turn in a non-town hex, and then move away, that non-town hex is still red-controlled until the end of turn. It does not instantaneously become neutral. A non-town hex is only really “neutral” if no units occupy the hex at the beginning of the turn.

Q: The "British Initiative Option" - is this an optional rule, or something that the British player can always choose to do?

A: It is an optional rule. (Designer’s Note: And I strongly urge players to disregard this rule and not use it!!)

Q: Sections 3.3 and 10.0 state that Indians can receive steps from Supply cards in their own town areas. Does this mean that Indians can *only* receive steps in their home areas, or that they can receive steps both in their home areas and in friendly supply towns?

A: The latter. Indians can receive Supply steps both in their home areas and in friendly supply towns.

MOVEMENT

Q: How does river movement work for units with a movement value of two? Can these units move four river hexes total, with the first two hexes counting as one movement point and the second two hexes counting as another movement point? Can these units combine land and river movement, such as moving 1 hex of regular movement and then two hexes of river movement? Or does river movement take up a unit's full movement, regardless of whether it is a 1-move or a 2-move unit?

A: River movement allows a unit to move 2 hexes (total) along the river/lake. A unit with 2 movement points would not gain any extra movement. To get the benefit of river movement, the unit must move along the river, starting, moving, and ending its 2-hex move along the same or connected rivers.

Q: What does it mean that river movement can be used in lakes "except past Niagara falls"? The falls are off in one corner of the hex, so I'm not entirely clear on what constitutes "passing". Presumably, I can't start in Erie (the town) and end up in the main Lake Ontario hex. But can I start in the hex SW of Erie and end up in the Fort Niagara hex (2 hexes away) - or does that also count as "passing the falls"?

A: Entering the hex with Niagara Falls would not be considered passing it. So you could start along the lake 2 hexes from the Falls and then move into the Falls hex.

Q: Can land units move through all-water hexsides, such as the hexside between Newport and the northeast part of Long Island?

A: Land units can't cross all-water hexsides. They can only move along the shores.

Q: Can a British naval unit move from Newport to attack American-occupied New York following the Atlantic 2-hex route, around Long Island, instead of the interior Hartford route?

A: Yes, a naval unit could move along the coastal hex of eastern Long Island and then move into NYC.

Q: Are ships needed for land blocks to make a sea move from the Atlantic box to a port? The way I read the rules, ships only need to be with land blocks for a Sea Attack.

A: You are correct - ships are only needed for a Sea Attack. Sea Movement of ground blocks can be done without ships. Think of it as transports moving troops through relatively safe sea lanes.

Q: The sea movement rules (5.7) only discuss non-combat movement between friendly ports and the Atlantic box. What happens if the Atlantic box contains multiple naval and land units and you want to (a) move some units to friendly ports, (b) use naval blocks for naval-only attacks, and/or (c) use naval and land blocks together for Sea Attacks? Can these different attacks/movements all be done with a single action, or would each type of attack/movement require a separate action?

A: One action allows you to do any and all of the following with the group of Atlantic blocks: move units to one or more friendly ports, initiate naval-only battles, and/or initiate combined Sea Attacks with land and naval units. (Section 8.4 clarifies that a Sea Attack is a type of Sea Movement.) For example, let's say that there are six blocks in the Atlantic: two naval units and four land units. For one action, you could move one land block to Philadelphia, move one land block to NYC, move one naval unit to Boston to engage enemy land units with a shore bombardment, and use the remaining units (1 naval unit, 2 land blocks) to conduct a Sea Attack against enemy units in Charleston.

Q: Section 5.6 says I can use river movement to move along lake shores. Is the hexside limitation along a lake shore also increased to 3, like with a river?

A: Yes. The complete rule should say: "If a river runs through a Forest/Marsh hexside, or a Lake Shore contains a Forest hexside, the limit increases to 3 and blocks do not have to stop." Similarly, an attacker who uses river movement along a lake shore to enter combat may retreat using river movement along that same lake shore.

Q: Can Pro-British American Loyalists travel out to sea as other British blocks can?

A: Yes. But note that Loyalists (per section 11.0) can only disband in towns. A Loyalist block in the Atlantic box is captured rather than disbanded at the end of the year.

Q: In Section 5.2 (Hexside limits), the rules state that blocks do not have to stop after traveling through a Forest/Marsh hexside if a river runs through that hexside. Section 5.6 (River Movement) contains a similar statement. Is this a general rule, or does it only come into play during River Movement?

A: The rule that units do not have to stop after traveling through a Forest/Marsh hexside that contains a river is a general rule, and not only a characteristic of River Movement. For example, a unit moving from Albany to Fort Stanwix does not have to stop and can therefore move another hex (by force marching if it is a 1-movement block, or by normal movement if it is a 2-movement block). Likewise, a unit moving from Wilkes-Barre could travel to the Mohawk town and then on to Fort Stanwix in the same manner.

Q: Can land units pin naval units, and vice versa?

A: Yes.

COMBAT – GENERAL

Q: The rules state that “enemy blocks cannot be targeted individually...each hit is applied to the strongest enemy block...when two or more blocks share the highest Strength, the owner chooses which to reduce.” My opponent scores 2 hits and my 2 strongest blocks each have strength 2. Is one block eliminated or do both take 1 hit?

A: The latter is correct. Each hit is allocated separately to one of the currently strongest blocks. In your example, after you assign the first hit to one of the blocks, the other block is stronger at that instant and must take the second hit.

Q: If I’m firing with units in a particular initiative category (A/B/C), are hits assigned to the strongest enemy blocks in that category only – or to the strongest enemy blocks overall?

A: Hits are assigned to the strongest enemy block(s) out of the entire pool of enemy blocks, regardless of the initiative category of the firing blocks.

Example.

In a particular battle, American B blocks are firing, and they score a total of five hits. At that point in the battle, the British player has a 3-strength A unit (a ship), a 2-strength B unit, a 3-strength C unit, and a 4-strength C unit. The first hit is taken from the 4-strength C unit, the next three hits are taken one apiece from the three 3-strength units (the A unit and the two C units, one of which was just reduced in strength from 4 to 3), and – finally – the last hit can be taken from any one of the four British units, since they are now all at 2 strength.

Q: The rules state that only blocks that enter a battle by river can regroup/retreat by river. Does this mean that a defending unit that was already in the town can't use river movement to retreat/regroup - because it didn't enter the battle by river?

A: Correct, a defending unit that was already in the town can't retreat by river.

Q: In the retreat rules, it says that “blocks retreat their full move”. Does this mean that using the full move is required, or is it just an option? For example, what happens if a 2-movement unit can only retreat one hex? Is it captured, or is it allowed to stop retreating after moving only one hex?

A: From Mark Kwasny: I haven't played the game recently, so I don't fully recall whether it is a requirement to retreat a unit its full movement or if it is an option. I am fairly sure that retreat length is optional, so that a unit can retreat anywhere from 1 hex up to its full movement.

Q: May naval units conduct a regroup move through enemy-controlled hexes free of enemy units? For example, a sea attack by British forces captures Charleston. May the British naval units regroup to the friendly port of Wilmington if the intervening port of

Georgetown is friendly to the Colonials, but free of Colonial units?

A: This would not be allowed. Units of any kind can only regroup to an adjacent friendly hex. If the units have two movement points, they can then regroup to a second friendly hex from the first friendly hex.

Q: If American ground units attack British ground units in a port hex and there are British naval units in port, do the ships take part in the defensive battle?

A: Yes, all the units in the port take part in the defense, including the ships. This may seem a little odd, but remember that the ports were pretty small in 1776, and the key forts were right by the water's edge, in range of the naval guns. And a single ship-of-the-line carried more ordinance than a whole army, at least in the Americas! Fleets also carried marines, which would have landed and participated in the battle. Also note that the fleets don't have to be in the port before the attack. Fleets can reinforce a battle from a port within range (on the coast) or from the Atlantic holding box.

Q: Is it possible to move and attack with land troops and navy together without making a Sea Attack? For instance, let's say that British have one naval unit and two land units in Boston. Can the naval and land units move and attack together one hex south to Portsmouth? Or does that kind attack also count as Sea Attack?

A: Ground units and ship units can move together to a hex along the coast and attack. It only takes one action to do this if all of the blocks start in the same hex. In your example, one action would move all three blocks from Boston to Portsmouth, where they would attack together. (Note that a Sea Attack is strictly defined as a combined land/naval attack from the Atlantic box. No other type of combat counts as a Sea Attack.)

Q: If a purely naval force enters a battle, does this prevent a retreating land force from using the hexside by which the naval force entered the battle hex?

A: As for Naval units blocking retreat hexsides, rule 8.1 says that hexside limits do not apply to warships for attack or retreat. Therefore, ships don't affect the use of hexsides for attack or retreat by ground units.

Q: I have two ships (and no land units) attacking an enemy ship and enemy land units in New York. On round 1, the defending ship fires and hits me. I fire back with my ships and hit. On round 2, the defending ship fires and hits again, but does not eliminate either of my units. I fire back and sink the defender. So far, per section 8.2, combat has only been a sea battle between A2 ship units. At this point in round 2, do the land units get to fire their volleys at the ships, or is round 2 over and my ships may withdraw?

A: If the attacking ships eliminate the defending ship in round 2, the land units can fire at your ships immediately in round 2. (First, however, any excess hits against the now-sunk enemy ship carry over to the enemy land units.) In round 3, you'd then have the option to either retreat or participate in a shore bombardment against the land units.

Q: Can attacking and defending ships always retreat to the Atlantic box?

A: Yes. Victorious ships may not *regroup* to the Atlantic box, but ship units – regarding of whether they are attacking or defending - may always *retreat* there. Note also that, as long as they aren't transporting land units, attacking and defending ship units may also retreat up to their full 2-hex movement to a friendly port along the coast.

Q: If a ship uses its 2-hex movement ability to move into a hex containing an enemy ground unit, can it attack/ bombard that unit? When it has to retreat - as it will, being unable to eliminate a ground unit - may it retreat via the hex(es) it used to enter the hex, or does it have to retreat in to the Atlantic box?

A: A ship can attack an enemy ground unit just to bombard and try to weaken it. Of course, the ship will take hits as well. A ship can retreat normally, as per 7.4, through the hexside it entered, as long as it retreats through neutral and friendly hexes (free of enemy units) and ends in a friendly port within two hexes. Or, it can retreat to the Atlantic box.

Q: Can units use a Sea Retreat to escape from a battle started via coastal movement, or can a Sea Retreat only be used to escape from a Sea Attack? And what units are allowed to Sea Retreat – both attacking and defending units, or just attacking units?

A: Conducting a Sea Attack from the Atlantic box isn't a prerequisite for using a Sea Retreat. If land and naval units move up the coast together and attack enemy land units (which doesn't count as a Sea Attack), the attacking units will be able to Sea Retreat from combat. Also, you can Sea Retreat even as a defender. So if American land units attack British land/naval units, the defending British units can Sea Retreat.

Q: In rule 8.5, what does it mean that warships in an area with friendly landed ground units must be "unopposed" to participate in a Sea Retreat?

A: "Unopposed" means that there are no enemy ships in the same battle. If there are attacking and defending ships in a battle, neither side can Sea Retreat with friendly landed ground units. Exception: By themselves, enemy ships in reserve can't prevent a Sea Retreat during the first round of combat. Only enemy ships in the main combat groups can prevent Sea Retreats. (Note: The "unopposed" rule only applied to ships that are Sea Retreating with landed or already-present ground units. Ships carrying unlanded ground units can Sea Retreat even if enemy ships are present.)

Q: Can land and naval units move separately into the same hex to combine their attack? If so, would this be a Sea Attack? Example: My opponent wants to bring two ground units from Boston to attack Portsmouth. He also wants to sail ships from both Boston and Newport to Portsmouth to engage in the attack. Legal?

A: Yes. That is a legal attack, and the land and ship units would all fire in the first round because they entered combat through the same hexside. (Your example is not a Sea Attack, which is

defined as a combined naval + land attack from the Atlantic box. In this case, the ground units are "marching on land" while the naval units just scoot up the coast.) *Note:* The combat procedure in this case would depend on whether there are also defending ships in the battle. If the defender does not have ships, then all units are engaged with each other and fire normally – with the important caveat that the attacking ships can inflict damage on the defending land units, but may not eliminate them (see 8.3, Shore Bombardment). If the defender also has ships in the battle, however, then – per section 8.2 (Naval Battles) - the ships and land units engage in separate battles (ships with ships, land units with land units). If at some point in the battle the ships from one side are eliminated, then all units become engaged with one another. If instead the land units from one side become eliminated, then the ships would continue to fight their own separate battle without the remaining land units participating. (What makes this combat procedure different from the Sea Attack procedure is that no attacking or defending ground units in a Sea Attack can fight until the defending ships have been eliminated and the attacking ground units come ashore. In a combined attack up the coast with both ship and ground units, in contrast, the attacking ground units are already on the shore and may fight immediately as indicated above.)

Q: As the British player, I want to bring two different ships into the French West Indies for an attack. Can I bring one ship from the Atlantic box and one ship from the British West Indies port and have them attack together?

A: Since you attacked the West Indies, one ship could arrive from the Atlantic and the other could arrive from the other West Indies port. Ship movement is not the same as Sea Movement or Sea Attack, and thus suffers from none of those restrictions. They would both be available to attack during the first round.

Q: Am I correct that reserves which are forced to retreat because their side lost the battle in Round 1 retreat automatically without any additional fire of any kind? Also, in this special retreat of reserve units, are hexside limits important?

A: You are correct. There is no fire against reserve units that are forced to retreat because their allied combat units are completely eliminated (or completely retreat) in round 1. Also, if you retreat in round 1, all allied reserve blocks end up joining the retreat, so there have to be enough hexsides to allow all of the blocks (main + reserves) to retreat that round.

COMBAT – SEA ATTACKS

Q: Is a Sea Attack any combat involving a ship, or does it mean something more specific?

A: A Sea Attack is a combined attack by ships and ground units which initiates from the Atlantic (or a West Indies port). Any other combat involving ships is NOT a Sea Attack. For example, a player might move a group of ships two hexes along a shore to attack a nearby port – either by themselves or in combination with land units. This would not be a Sea Attack.

Q: Do Sea Attacks have to occur on a port hex? The rules only state that the hex must be “enemy controlled”.

A: A Sea Attack must be directed against a port hex.

Q: In section 8.4, in the paragraph about Sea Attacks not being combined with other attacks, there is a sentence that says “Moves by warships only are not restricted in this way”. What does this sentence mean?

A: It means that a player initiating a Sea Attack is allowed to reinforce his attack with warships from a nearby port, but is not allowed to reinforce his attack with any nearby land units. Essentially, the rule boils down to the fact that no land units beyond the original Sea Attacking units can be added to a Sea Attack. (Note, however, that the player defending against the Sea Attack is free to bring in both naval and land units as reserves. The limitation in 8.4 applies only to the attacker, not the defender.)

Q: From section 8.4: "If the Defender defeats all enemy warships, each Attacking ground block is reduced by one step and is then returned to the Atlantic." Does this only apply to a Sea Attack where the defender has warships present? For example, if the British conduct a Sea Attack against New York and the British ships are destroyed by French ships, then the British reduce the ground troops by one step and sweep them back into the Atlantic box with no combat sequence involved?

A: You are correct – it only applies in that particular situation. If the attacking ships are defeated (eliminated or retreated) by enemy warships in a Sea Attack – before the ground troops have had the chance to land - then all attacking ground units simply lose a step and return to the Atlantic.

Q: I'm the American player and have one ground block in New York. My opponent Sea Attacks with one ship and two ground blocks and specifies that he is using the hex side between Hartford and New York as his attack route (although we understand the blocks are coming from the Atlantic box). Does this specification of hex side preclude my retreat to the currently unoccupied American Hartford by a land retreat?

A: Hexsides don't matter for a Sea Attack. The Sea Attacking units simply go from the Atlantic to the port under attack. So the Americans in this case could retreat to an American-controlled Hartford.

Q: Here's an in-game scenario: The British player Sea-Attacks New York with 3 land units and one or more ships. The American player reinforces New York with one or more French ships. Which possibility is correct? Possibility #1: The French ships are in reserve. Possibility #2: The French ship is not in reserve and battle occurs as if the French ship was already there. Possibility #3: The French ship is not allowed to reinforce a Sea-Attack hex.

A: Possibility #1 is correct. Any reinforcements to any battle are in reserve the first round. So the French ships are reinforcements, and don't enter the battle until round 2. (Since the British launched the attack, the American can reinforce the battle with both land and naval units. The restriction against “combining attacks” applies to the player launching the Sea Attack, not to the defender.)

Q: What happens in the situation where a port containing only American land units is Sea Attacked by the British, but then French naval units are moved into the port as reserve units? The British ground units land in round 1 (since the French naval units are not yet present), but then what happens in round 2? Does the combat revert to a naval-only combat at that point – or are there separate naval and land combats somehow?

A: In this special case, in round 2, separate land and naval battles are fought simultaneously. However, if one side loses either all their fleets or all their land units, then all remaining units fight the remaining rounds as a single battle.

Q: The rules state that Sea Retreats and Sea Attacks are limited to 3 ground blocks. Is that 3 ground blocks per friendly warship, or 3 ground blocks total?

A: A Sea Attack or Sea Retreat is limited to three ground units total, but can include more than one ship.

Q: How can land blocks at a port perform a Sea Attack on another port?

A: It would take an action to move the land blocks to the Atlantic. Then it would take another action (on a later turn) for ships and the land blocks to Sea Attack a different port from the Atlantic box.

Q: How many actions does it take to attack Newport with the ship/infantry from the West Indies?

A: In one turn, one action would enable you to move the ship and land blocks from the West Indies to the Atlantic. Then, on another turn, a separate action would be used to attack Newport from the Atlantic box. A ship's "2" movement rating is only used when moving by hexes along the coast. A ship uses its entire movement to move either between a port and the Atlantic or the West Indies and the Atlantic.

Q: In a Sea Attack, if there are both defending land units and defending ship units, then the opposing ships have combat with each other (exclusively) for up to three rounds. If the attacking ship wins, then that ship and its land units engage in combat with the defending land units for another three rounds. Is this correct?

A: If the attacking ships defeat the defending ships, then any remaining attacking ships that have not fired can fire at the defending ground units - and that same round the attacking land units can "land" and initiate ground combat. But there are always a maximum of 3 rounds, no matter how they break down.

Example:

Two attacking ships (plus land forces) Sea Attack a single ship (plus land forces). In round 1, the ships exchange hits without eliminating any blocks. In round 2, the first of the two attacking ships eliminates the one defending ship, so the second attacking ship now fires at the defending ground units. The attacking

ground units "land" that same round (round 2) and both sides' ground units fire in round 2 in normal order (except attacking Dragoons are rated a C in the first round that they land). Round 3 would consist of one last exchange of fire (or hasty retreats) involving all remaining ships and land units.

Q: Naval units can move 2 coastal hexes. Can naval units on a coast (with land units) therefore conduct a Sea Attack against enemy units 2 hexes away (for 1 action) without having to use the Atlantic box?

A: All Sea Attacks (with one exception -- the West Indies) must begin in the Atlantic. The two-space hop is not allowed as a Sea Attack. In your example, the land and naval units can still attack the target hex together (as a single action), but the ships would need to move up the coastline and the ground troops would have to travel separately by land (force marching, if necessary). Both the land and naval units would attack in round 1 if they used the same hexside to enter the target hex - but this attack would not be a Sea Attack.