

OPERATOR TACTICS

VERTICAL PRESSURE

TERRA CONFLICTUS 2066
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06A/

VERTICAL PRESSURE

Hold the high ground. Fight for the hard ground. Stay off the skyline.

06A · VERTICAL PRESSURE

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Three optional rules for tables that want terrain to bite. Add any one, or all three. None of them touch the dice core — they change where the fight happens and what a piece of ground is worth. Agree on which are live before you place terrain.

All three reward the same instinct: stop treating the board as a flat plane with scenery on it. The roof is worth climbing. The reinforced wall is worth hiding behind until the last second. The objective is the building, not the chalk circle next to it.

HARDPOINTS

An open-ground objective is a token sitting in the dirt. A **Hardpoint** is an objective placed on a terrain piece — a Heavy Cover barricade, a Full Cover structure, an Elevation platform. Use Hardpoints in place of open-ground objective tokens in any scenario that calls for objectives.

- **Place it on the piece.** When a scenario sets an objective, set it on a terrain feature instead of bare ground. That feature is the Hardpoint.
- **Control.** An operator controls a Hardpoint while its base touches the piece (or sits inside it) and no enemy operator is in contact with the same piece. The cover you want and the ground you score are now the same ground.
- **Contested.** Operators from both sides touching the piece: nobody controls it.
- **Taking Ground.** Win a Fight in contact with a Hardpoint and you hold it. The operator you beat no longer contests the piece — a defeated operator may still be Locked against you, but a man losing the hand-to-hand is not holding the position.
- **Shaken don't hold.** An operator that failed its Contact Ceiling check this round does not count toward controlling a Hardpoint. A splice past its breaking point can still shoot off the position. It cannot plant a flag on it.

WHY HARDPOINTS

Open-ground objectives drag operators onto the killing floor and punish them for scoring. Hardpoints fold the safest ground and the scoring ground into one piece, so the whole match compresses onto two or three terrain features. Expect closer, uglier fights over less of the board.

CONCEALMENT

An operator in **Heavy Cover** that did not Shoot on its last activation is **Concealed**. Beyond 12", enemies cannot draw a target on it — they see the cover, not the body inside it. A Concealed operator can only be targeted by Shoot from within 12".

- **Inside 12".** Concealment does nothing. The operator is targeted as normal, at the usual Heavy Cover penalty (Shoot -2).
- **Breaks when** the operator Shoots, Sprints, or leaves its cover. Once broken, it can be targeted normally until the start of its next activation. Going loud gives the position away.
- **High ground beats it.** An operator is not Concealed against an enemy shooting down from higher ground with line of sight to it. You cannot hide in a doorway from a rifle on the roof.

Concealment is not Stealth. Stealth — the Hide action, or the Infiltrator's Ghost — makes an operator untargetable at any range and earns its protection with a roll. Concealment is free, comes from the terrain, and only hides you past 12". An operator can have both: one that loses Stealth while sitting in Heavy Cover is still Concealed at range.

THE DECISION CONCEALMENT BUYS

Hold fire and stay invisible past 12", or take the shot and light up. That trade is the entire point of the rule. It slows the alpha strike, rewards patience, and turns a Marksman in a far ruin into a problem you have to walk toward. If first blood comes too slow for your table, widen the band to 18". If it comes too fast, that is the rule working.

HIGH GROUND

Elevation already lets an operator see over low obstacles. With this rule it does more. An operator shooting from an Elevation piece — or any level higher than its target — **downgrades the target's cover by one step**: Heavy Cover counts as Light, Light Cover counts as none. Height beats the wall they are crouched behind.

- **One step only.** Heavy → Light (Shoot -1 instead of -2). Light → Open (no penalty). Full Cover still blocks line of sight — you cannot shoot what you cannot see, however high you stand.
- **Pay for the height.** Climbing costs 2" of movement per 1" of vertical (ladders and stairs 1:1). The roof is worth taking. It is not free to take.
- **The skyline cuts both ways.** An operator on Elevation is rarely in cover itself and is visible to everything with a line to the rooftop. High ground wins the firefight and loses the ambush.

RUNNING ALL THREE

The three rules are built to interlock. The Hardpoint everyone wants is usually the elevated one. The operator holding it from inside Heavy Cover is Concealed until the moment he fires. The enemy's answer is to put a shooter higher still, where High Ground strips the cover and the concealment together. Terrain stops being decoration and becomes the whole argument.

If you only add one, add **Concealment** — it changes the most decisions per game for the least new text. Add **Hardpoints** when your group keeps castling in a corner and ignoring the board. Add **High Ground** when you have terrain with real verticality and want it to earn its place on the table.

VERTICAL PRESSURE — QUICK REFERENCE

- **Hardpoint.** Objective sits on a terrain piece. Control it by touching the piece with no enemy in contact. Win a Fight on it to hold it. Shaken operators (failed Contact Ceiling) don't count.
- **Concealed.** In Heavy Cover and didn't Shoot last activation → cannot be targeted beyond 12". Breaks on Shoot, Sprint, or leaving cover. Higher ground ignores it.
- **High Ground.** Shooting down from Elevation downgrades the target's cover one step. Heavy → Light, Light → none. Full Cover still blocks LoS.

16A/

VERTICAL PRESSURE

Take the ridge. Hold the ruin. Range what breaks cover.

16A · VERTICAL PRESSURE

Take the ridge. Hold the ruin. Range what breaks cover.

The Iron Line cut of the same three ideas, scaled to the machines. Strongpoints, Defilade, Elevated Fire. Optional and modular — add any one. Built to pair with the Skirmish module (06A) so a crossover game runs one terrain logic at both scales.

Iron Line already fights over rubble harder than most mass-battle games. These rules sharpen that: they make the objective the cover, let small machines vanish into the ruins, and finally give a ridge line a reason to exist.

STRONGPOINTS

Most scenarios drop objective markers on open ground. A **Strongpoint** puts them on a terrain feature instead — a Fortified bunker, an Obscuring block, a Grim wreck-field. Use Strongpoints in place of open-ground markers in any scenario that scores objectives.

- **Put the marker on the terrain.** Whatever feature the marker sits on is the Strongpoint.
- **Hold it.** A unit holds a Strongpoint while any part of its footprint lies inside the feature, or touches it, and no enemy unit does. The hard cover and the scored ground are the same ground.
- **Contested.** Footprints from both lines touching the feature: nobody holds it.
- **Broken don't hold.** A Broken unit never holds a Strongpoint. It is leaving the field, not taking it.

WHY STRONGPOINTS

Open-ground markers reward a unit for sitting in a clear lane and eating fire. Strongpoints fold the cover and the score into one feature, so the line forms where the terrain already is. The board stops being a flat killing field with markers on it and becomes a map of positions worth taking.

DEFILADE

A non-Large unit positioned wholly inside an **Obscuring** feature that did not Shoot during the previous round is in **Defilade**. It cannot be targeted by shooting from beyond 12" — at range, it is one more shape in the rubble.

- **Inside 12".** Defilade does nothing. The unit is targeted as normal, at the Obscuring Cover penalty (+1 to the attacker's Target Number).
- **Breaks when** the unit Shoots, or moves out of the Obscuring feature. A unit that fires has shown itself, and can be targeted normally until it holds fire for a full round again.
- **Too big to hide.** Large and Immobile units never gain Defilade. A siege walker does not disappear into a ruin.
- **Higher ground beats it.** A unit firing down from terrain above the Defilade unit ignores it. You cannot hide in the rubble from a gun on the ridge.

Defilade is the in-play cousin of Sneaky. Sneaky hides a unit at deployment. Defilade hides it during the battle, for as long as it holds fire from inside cover. A unit may use both. The decision is the one Skirmish operators face at a smaller scale: stay dark, or open up and be seen.

ELEVATED FIRE

A unit shooting from terrain higher than its target — a ridge, a rooftop, a raised deck — **downgrades the target's terrain penalty by one step**. Height looks over the wall the target is using.

- **One step.** Fortified (+2 Target Number) counts as Cover (+1). Cover (+1) counts as none. Blocking terrain still stops line of sight — elevation sees further, not through solid mass.
- **It strips Defilade too.** A Defilade unit gets no concealment against fire from above.
- **No verticality, no rule.** If your table is flat, Elevated Fire never comes up. On terrain with real height, the ridge becomes the position the whole line bends around.

RUNNING ALL THREE

The same interlock as the Skirmish module, scaled up. The Strongpoint worth taking is often the high one. The scouts holding it from inside the ruins sit in Defilade until they fire. The counter is to range a unit onto higher ground, where Elevated Fire strips the cover and the Defilade together. Whoever reads the terrain first writes the shape of the line.

If you only add one, add **Strongpoints** — it changes how every game is scored for one paragraph of rules. Add **Defilade** when you field scouts and skirmishers and want them to play like scouts. Add **Elevated Fire** when your boards have levels.

IRON LINE VERTICAL PRESSURE — QUICK REFERENCE

- **Strongpoint.** Objective sits on a terrain feature. Hold it with a footprint inside or touching, no enemy in contact. Broken units never hold.
- **Defilade.** Non-Large unit wholly in Obscuring and didn't Shoot last round → cannot be targeted beyond 12". Breaks on Shoot or leaving cover. Large and Immobile never qualify. Higher ground ignores it.
- **Elevated Fire.** Shooting down from higher terrain downgrades the target's terrain penalty one step. Fortified → Cover, Cover → none. Blocking still stops LoS.

Operator Tactics: Vertical Pressure. An optional terrain module for Skirmish and Iron Line. Designed by Jesse Alexander, 2026.

Six rules across two scales, one terrain logic. The Skirmish cut and the Iron Line cut are built to pair, so a crossover game runs the same fight over the same ground. Folds into the combined Skirmish & Iron Line field manual as chapters 06A and 16A.

The hum is real. The dust is real. Take the high ground.