

ARTIFICIAL OPPONENTS v 1.0

“The real and most dangerous opponents we face are fear... and despair.”
Chris Bradford, *The Way of the Warrior*

Artificial Opponents (A.O) replace one or more players in WARSURGE, making them useful for single player or cooperative games. This guide will help players create and use A.O.

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A.O Rosters

Players will need to make a Roster for the A.O and equip the ‘Artificial Opponent’ Roster Perk; this will adjust the point cost of the Roster to factor their relatively limited tactical choices.

Playing with A.O

There are two main ways to resolve A.O. The simplest method is to use a ‘narrative’ or ‘story-driven’ approach, where A.O Units are resolved how players believe they would act.

The more ideal method is with Tactics, which we will discuss below. Tactics are what determines the behaviour of A.O Units during a game. Either before or after building the Roster, you will need to choose a Tactic for each A.O Unit.

Deployment and Movement Tactics

There are four Tactics. Each A.O Unit is assigned a Tactic and follows the guidelines, but when targeting enemy Units refers to ‘Target Priority’ (see on right). If an A.O is Turn Master on the first Game Turn, select their Deployment Zone randomly.

Objective: These Units prioritise capturing Objective Markers including Sabotage Markers, capturing enemy Deployment Zones and so forth. If there are no Objectives or Markers present, these Units count as ‘Offensive’ instead.

Deploy: Deploy as close as possible to Objective Markers.

Movement: These Units dedicate Movement to Objectives that the A.O Roster does not control. These Units will target the closest uncaptured Objective unless they are already on an Objective. Once the Objective is under the A.O’s control and if multiple Units are at the Objective, the lowest current Point Cost Unit will remain behind while other Units will make Movement toward the next nearest uncontrolled Objective.

Offensive: These Units primarily attack enemy Units.

Deploy: These Units Deploy as close as possible to get all their Weapons in range of an enemy as soon as possible.

Movement: They dedicate Movement to have all Weapons in range of their ideal enemy Unit (see Target Priority at the end of this page, on the right). If all Weapons are in Range, they will remain stationary.

Defensive: If there is any benefit for holding their own Deployment Zone or Objectives within it, Defensive Units are the first priority to hold these Objectives.

Deploy: These Units Deploy near Objective Markers in the A.O Deployment Zone, or behind other Units if each Objective Marker already has a Defensive Unit next to it.

Movement: They will dedicate Movement toward uncontrolled Objectives in their Deployment Zone, or if there are none, they will attempt to get at least one Weapon in Range of an enemy.

Recovery: The Unit favours healing friendly Units. It will only heal itself in the event that it has less % HP remaining than other nearby Units.

Some Recovery Units have Weapons optimised to restore lost HP on specific Units. If this is the case, they will follow/remain near these Units to heal them.

Deploy: They Deploy behind Offensive or Objective Units.

Movement: Recovery Units position themselves behind other A.O Units that have lost HP. If multiple Units have lost HP, favour Objective and Offensive Units first.

Activation / Deployment Order

When Activating/Deploying A.O Units, do so in the following order: Objective, Offensive, Defensive, then Recovery. If there are multiple Units with the same Tactic, Activate/Deploy the Units with the highest maximum Point Cost first.

Target Priority

A.O Units are to prioritise opponents that they have a good chance of causing HP Loss with a Weapon. A.O Units will focus Weapons on Targets with an Attack Dice chance of 3+ or 4+ before 2+ or A, then 5+ or worse.

If there are multiple Targets with a good chance of being damaged, A.O Units will favour the one with the highest current Point Cost (including attached Units). After that, the closest Target will take priority.

Penetrate Perks are recommended instead of AP, but if using AP, prioritise AP that matches Armour Saves only if their Attack Dice is 5+ or better.

Recap: Prioritise Attack Dice and AP (if 5+ or better on Attack Dice). After that prioritise Point Cost, then closest Target.

Movement Paths and Navigating Terrain

When making Movement to their Target or an Objective, A.O Units take the quickest or most direct path while factoring Perks. They go around Impassable Ground (and other Units) but they avoid Dangerous Ground if they do not have Perks to avoid the damage, unless there is a Target or Objective in the Dangerous Ground. They only utilise Cover if it does not interfere with seeking Objectives or attacking ideal targets.

Using Perks

When A.O Units use Perks, they normally resolve them to best seek their ideal targets or secure Objectives. In the case of passive Perks this should be straight forward.

Units that have Perks that improve HP Loss or the chance of causing damage to specific Targets will favour those before checking Attack Dice with Target Priority. For example, Units with Assassin or Commander Killer will favour Leader Units (in Range) before optimal Attack Dice. If several Targets are available, resolve using Target Priority.

Deployment Perks: When using Perks such as Ambush or Invade, A.O Units must try to Deploy as close as possible to their ideal target or an uncontrolled Objective.

If a Defensive Unit has a Deployment Perk that allows it to Deploy outside of its own Deployment Zone, then it will ignore holding Objectives and will try to Deploy near the centre of the Battlefield, and in Cover or on elevated terrain.

Recovery Perks will focus on the User primarily, unless they have the Recovery Tactic.

Perks such as Berserk (and Psychotic) always makes the Unit count as having the Offensive Tactic. In addition, the closest Target counts as an ideal target for all other purposes.

Perks that grant other abilities are to be discerned by players, but if unsure, randomise from the most beneficial choices for the A.O with a dice.

Attached Units and Mixed Tactics

If Units are joined together by Perks such as Leader or Bodyguard and have varying Tactics, the Unit with the highest current Point Cost decides the A.O Tactic that is used.

A.O in Intermediate / Advanced Playstyles

A.O Units are played as normal in games using the Standard Playstyle, but in Intermediate and Advanced there are some changes to how Actions are resolved.

Intermediate Games: Prioritise the following Actions:

Move: A.O Units use Move if they need to get Weapons in Range or get to an Objective.

Attack: Attack as per their Target Priority.

Guard: Use Guard if no Weapons are in Range, or if they did not need to Move (which is done after an Attack Action).

Overwatch: A.O only use Overwatch when they are being targeted by their ideal target (as per Target Priority) and have all Weapons in Range. As normal, this will give them one less Action to use (leaving them with Move or Guard later).

Advanced Games: A.O Rosters do not use CP. Instead, each Unit can use a Move, a Dash and an Attack (or Guard) Action when they are activated. They will not Dash if it would prevent the use of Battle Weapon(s). If they cannot Attack, they will use Guard instead.

Double Attack: If the Unit does not need to Move or Dash (they are remaining stationary) then they may Attack twice.

A.O Decisions

If there are multiple viable paths or enemy Units for A.O Units to choose from and it is not clear which they should prioritise, then decide randomly (most likely with a D2 or D3), or consider their most likely choice from a story perspective.

Tips and Community

There are several ideas that can enhance your experience with A.O in games. Among them, you could build a number of A.O Rosters to a Point Limit and select one at random after building your own Roster, and you could then select your own Roster at random too.

You can also join our WARSURGE social media where you can discuss A.O Rosters with other players. On our Discord server this is in the Artificial Opponent channel; here you can share and receive A.O Rosters created by other players.

