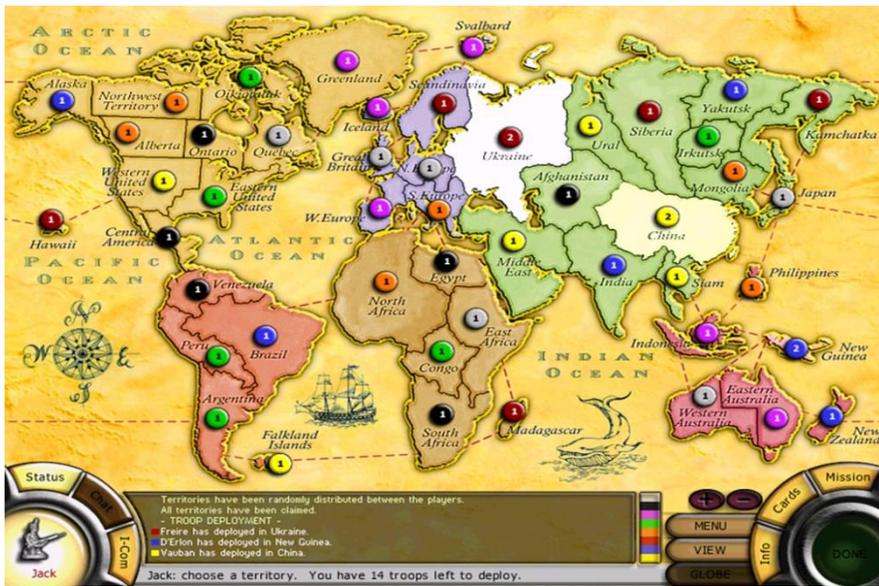


# Advanced Risk II



If you play this video game, a digital version of the board game, you know the cards you earn for victories are distributed randomly. Until you earn five cards, by defeating at least one enemy in each of five turns, there is no guarantee that you will get a 3-card match, which gets you 4, 6, 8 or 10 extra battalions to throw at your computer enemies. If your cards do not match, and then you battle an enemy whose cards *do* match, you may soon face ignominious defeat.

If you trade 3 Infantry cards, you will receive 4 reinforcement battalions.

If you trade 3 Cavalry cards, you will receive 6 reinforcement battalions.

If you trade 3 Artillery cards, you will receive 8 reinforcement battalions.

If you trade 1 of each card, you will receive 10 reinforcement battalions.

In addition, rolls of the double dice which determine the outcome of each battle can also cause you frustration, even if you understand that the chances of rolling double sixes are only 1 in 35.

It is entirely possible to lose as many as 20 battalions in a row, in only one turn.

If both the cards and the dice conspire against you, that combination can derail your chances of winning a game. However, in the video version of the game, you have a secret weapon that the AI does not have – your human deviousness. Especially in the advanced version of the game, random *errors* by the AI, open up new possibilities for you to take the game in unexpected directions.

## Advanced Risk

The advanced version of Risk allows you to add six new territories to the board. These are Hawaii, the Falkland Islands, Svalbard (an island chain north of Norway), New Zealand, the Philippine Islands and Qikiqtaaluk (the area between Hudson Bay and Greenland – pronounced qikiqta:'luk). In addition, you determine how many battalions each continent gets on each new turn – up to 10 battalions. Attacks come from many more directions. In the advanced game, to reward players, human or computer, for their success in conquering an entire continent, I set that reward as: North America 6 battalions, South America 3 Battalions, Africa 4 Battalions, Europe 6 Battalions, Asia 8 Battalions and Australia 3 Battalions – to distribute as they see fit on every new turn.

## The Japan Challenge

The Risk AI plays the game much differently in Advanced Risk. For instance, after a computer general conquers Australia, his next step will invariably be to stockpile a massive army in Japan. Generally, this army is not used for any offensive purpose until later in the game. However, if you are trying to control Asia or North America, that Japanese force can be a mighty impediment. Attacks upon that Japanese force are furiously repelled. Even if you defeat that force and then occupy Japan, the Australian general will continue to attack you whenever he can. This back and forth battle can seriously deplete your reserves, making you vulnerable elsewhere.

In addition, if you need to occupy Hawaii to complete your North American continent, the Japanese army will constantly attack you in Hawaii, to deny you your continent. The Japanese general will leave a token force in Hawaii. You can take it, but you may not be able to hold it.

A frontal assault on Japan from Hawaii is therefore often too difficult. Instead, after you have learned this lesson, leave one lonely battalion in the Western United States and then build up your forces in Alaska. The general controlling Japan will not see the Western U.S. as a threat and leave it in peace. He has more important things to do. Then send your Alaskan troops across to Kamchatka. From there, send your forces south to Japan. After you control Japan, defeat the small enemy force in Hawaii. Now you control Kamchatka, Japan *and* Hawaii, hardening your position against any counter-attack. If you can hold the North American continent for even one turn, you can reinforce any weak spots in your North American defense.

## The Iceland-Svalbard Challenge

In the advanced game, one of the things you must do to control the European continent is to conquer both Iceland and Svalbard. Armies in Greenland can threaten these two territories, so you must put enough troops in both of them to deter aggression from North America. Put the same amount of troops in both Iceland and Svalbard. Otherwise, you encourage an attack on the territory with the lesser amount of troops, seen as a weak spot in your defense.

Sometimes, after you take control of North America, troops of different armies occupy Svalbard and Iceland. The army in Svalbard may begin massing troops. You may think that general is preparing to occupy Europe, but often those troops will lash out at Greenland. In this case, if you wish to remain in control of North America, you must reinforce your troops in Greenland.

However, if both Svalbard and Iceland are occupied by the same general, then your forces in Greenland have only to be *one* battalion larger than the largest force in Iceland or Svalbard. The European general will almost never risk an attack on Greenland, even though he may have enough troops in Iceland and Svalbard combined to probably defeat you. This is because if he loses that battle, he loses Europe and his 6 extra battalions every turn. If you take any one of his territories, however, he may attack you there on his next turn even if his odds are unfavorable.

## The South America Challenge

South America is perhaps the easiest continent to conquer. It has only five territories. However, in the Advanced Game, you must defend four borders: North America, West Africa, the Falkland Islands and Australia. In the early game, because you control the entire continent, this seems doable, because you are getting more armies than your competitors, who are often still fighting among themselves. You can build up forces on all four borders and then attack in any direction you like. Until the other generals get their own continents, you have the upper hand. However, in the late game, the other generals can overwhelm South America with superior numbers.

The key to winning the game in this case is not to stretch your forces too thinly by charging into North America, Africa and Australia all at once. You run the risk of depleting your forces before you can get control of another continent. Instead, choose a single continent you desire and then concentrate on acquiring it. Build up battalions on your borders to deter attacks, but do not use those forces to attack, unless you have an opportunity to take that entire continent.

The problem with this scenario is that Australia is fanatical about attacking Peru. To stop these attacks, you must take Eastern Australia and then hold it. The temptation here is to continue to try and conquer the rest of the Australian continent. This may seem simple because the interior is often lightly defended. However, the other two borders of the Australian continent, Siam and Japan, often become stuffed with armies. That means that Eastern Australia is a much better defensive position than an offensive departure point. This is because you can be attacked from only one direction. If the Australian general sees that you have enough troops there to deter his attack, he will likely lash out at Asia, in order to get a card or two that he needs to better attack you later in the game. This gives you time and resources to invade Africa or North America.

But time is not on your side. A South American general must work quickly to expand his territory. Otherwise he can be eventually overwhelmed.

## The Territory-grab Strategy

Although the object of the game is to conquer continents, holding all the territories on a continent always encourages attacks from other generals. In fact, if you hold a continent, expect to be attacked in turn by all of your opponents. This can take you from a powerhouse to the poor house in only a few turns. One tactic you can use to avoid these attacks is to avoid taking *every* territory inside a continent. Instead, take all but one of them and then take more territories elsewhere. The lives of the troops you saved because you were not attacked can be used to build up your forces on the territories you control now – and would like to control later.

Then attack lightly-defended territories. After you conquer 12 territories, the game gives you four battalions every turn. After you conquer 15 territories, the game gives you five battalions every turn and after you control any 18 territories, the game rewards you with six battalions every turn.

Conquering any territory in a given turn gives you a card as a reward, but only one on each turn. Save up these cards until you have five of them, at which point the game forces you to trade them for troops. Use them to conquer another territory, giving you another card, which again gives you three cards. If they match, you might have two turns in a row where you get troops. That may give you enough armies to take control of that continent you have been admiring.

Note that after you defeat a general, you get his unused cards. The total number of cards in your inventory may then exceed five. The trade-in interface hides the extra cards. However, a *barely-visible* slider bar at the bottom of the card trade-in window allows you to see those cards if you click on the left or right arrow. This allows you to choose the best cards to trade.

## The Wait and See Gambit

One of my favorite places to start the game is Asia. Many times, the other generals are busy fighting over the smaller continents and tend to leave Asia alone in the early game. Enemy territories in Asia are often weakly defended. This allows me to conquer them without losing valuable troops and at the same time collect cards for future reinforcements. Then I see which way the winds are blowing in the remaining continents. When I perceive a weakness, I send a block of my carefully-maintained armies into that weakness. At the same time, I leave my Asian territories with enough battalions that they can defend themselves.

You may notice that your computer opponents often reinforce a lonely army far from the continent over which they are battling, just in case they need a place to run if their main attack goes badly. You may want to do this as well. Sometimes you find yourself in a no-win situation and may want to abandon your current position. Take your largest army on a long march toward that lonely territory on another continent and then start anew. This can often be a game-saving tactic.

## System Requirements

Note that this game was designed for Windows 98, but will run on Windows 7. However, expect the occasional crash to a black screen and then to the desktop. Many times this will happen just as you have turned the tide in the game and now have a chance to win it. Speculation on my part is that the AI knows it is going to lose and is just being a bad sport about it.

Chris Barton 05.10.2018