

The Comprehensive Tanking Guide

A Guide to Armoured Vehicles in Battlefield 3 by DTHbyGIANThaggis

Tanking in Battlefield 3 (and soon 4) is a great experience and can be rewarding for both the driver and gunner, with tanks excelling with teamwork between the crew. Tanks can dominate the battlefield on any map, and adapt to any situation.

As a Battlefield player, I have seen my playstyle develop and evolve around armoured vehicles. I have tanking experience in nearly every Battlefield game from 1942 up to Battlefield 3. From the release of Battlefield 3 however I have begun to focus my game on tanking specifically, and have played an armour role across both Xbox 360 and PC versions of the game.

Playing on console, I was part of a very competitive team, for whom I was the main tank driver. Playing against other competitive tankers I have learned a lot about tank engagements as well as surviving against aerial threats. Through competitive play I developed a good relationship with my gunner, DTHbyCILLITbang which I feel increases the potential of a tank hugely. Getting to know your gunners style has made us a serious threat on the battlefield.

The aim of this guide is to provide some basic techniques for players who are unfamiliar with tanks. Hopefully even experienced tankers can learn something new. I will update this guide some more when I have time. And I hope you like it.

DTHbyGIANThaggis.

Perks

Passive

Autoloader

Autoloader is the first passive unlock for the MBT class at 4400 score. The autoloader shortens the reload time of the main cannon by 20%. This perk can be useful if you have yet to unlock reactive armour due to the increased damage you can deal in the same time period.

Maintenance

Maintenance increases the rate of vehicle regeneration by 20%. This perk is only useful for the aftermath of engagements, giving the user a disadvantage when engaging other MBTs.

Proximity Scanner (Recommended for Gunner)

Proximity scanner is used to 2D spot enemies around the tank within a radius of roughly 15 meters. This is vital when detecting enemy C4 threats as well as locating engineers. This perk will stack so is the recommended passive perk for the gunner.

Thermal Camo

Thermal Camo increases the locking time of fire and forget weapons targeting the tank by 35%. However, due to the effectiveness of IR smoke, this perk has been rendered obsolete.

Reactive Armour (Recommended)

Reactive armour gives the tank disposable armour panels on the sides and rear of the tank. When hit on one of these panels, the tank will take no damage and the reactive panel will be spent. These panels can be repaired manually by the gunner but will not regenerate.

This is the most effective perk for the passive slot, allowing a tank to take up to three hits without taking any damage. Good hull positioning will take full advantage of this perk.

Active

IR smoke (Recommended)

IR smoke is the countermeasure for ground vehicles against fire and forget systems such as the Javelin and Guided Missiles. The countermeasure breaks the lock of any fired munition, currently tracking the vehicle, and the tank will not be targetable by these systems while still inside the smoke cloud. This is a vital perk now that lock on weaponry is extremely common.

Zoom Optics

Zoom optics allows the driver of the MBT an additional zoomed view, similar to the system the gunner receives. This perk will become obsolete after some experience with the vehicle, an experienced driver should be able to hit a target at any range without any assistance from the increased zoom.

Thermal Optics

Thermal Optics give the user an additional heat sensitive viewing system. While this can be a useful perk for spotting enemy infantry, the benefits do not outweigh that of IR smoke, and leave the tank vulnerable to enemy Fire and Forget systems. However, this perk is recommended solely for Damavand Peak, where infantry concentration is high, and the tunnels low ceiling protects the vehicle from lock on projectiles.

Secondary Weapons

Coaxial Light Machine Gun

The Coaxial LMG is the first secondary weapon unlocked at 2100 points. The LMG has a fast

fire rate but will overheat during sustained fire. The LMG is suitable for infantry targets but will do no damage to aerial vehicles.

Coaxial Heavy Machine Gun (Recommended)

The Coaxial HMG has a much lower fire rate than the LMG but makes up for this with its inability to overheat, allowing it to fire constantly for as long as desired. The HMG can also do significant damage to aircraft, allowing for the driver to chase off helicopters if the main shell misses. This is probably the most versatile secondary weapon so is highly recommended.

Guided Shell (Recommended for Gunner)

Guided shell is a Fire and Forget munition that will lock ground targets as well as laser designated air targets. However this leaves the tank lacking in anti infantry weaponry, especially when the gunner is repairing the tank. The limited angle of the tank turret makes the Guided shell easy to avoid by aircraft. I

f you feel more comfortable using lock on weapons to eliminate aircraft, having the gunner equip javelins and the driver switch to the CITV station is a better method for eliminating air threats.

Canister Shell

Canister shell fires a spread of pellets, similar to buckshot ammunition for a shotgun. This can cover a wide area, making it easy to hit infantry, and can do significant damage to aircraft. However the canister shell has to be reloaded after the main cannon fires, which gives the HMG an advantage for finishing enemies injured by the main shell.

Permanent Unlocks

CITV Station

The CITV station is the final unlock for the MBT class vehicles. The CITV station adds a 3rd position in the vehicle with a laser designator. This allows the CITV operator to designate enemy vehicles for his team. The CITV station is normally operated by the gunner, who can swap between gunner and CITV positions in the tank freely.

Tank Tactics

The Basics

When operating an MBT, the most important skill to learn is how to avoid taking damage, especially avoiding disabling damage in enemy territory. This is why Reactive Armour is a vital

upgrade for any tanker. Without it, it is possible to be disabled in one hit in the rear, leaving you totally unable to react to the threat.

If you have yet to unlock Reactive Armour, the MBT class is best use as a supporting vehicle. Hold the enemy on your frontline, and support the infantry assaulting the flags with limited risk to your delicate rear armour. The tank cannon is incredibly accurate, and you should be able to engage any target within line of sight given some practice.

Tank vs Tank

Tank vs tank engagements are the most common vehicle duels and are also usually the most poorly performed. The primary goal when engaging another tank should be avoiding damage, which leads to the first golden rule of Tanking.

1. Do not sit still!

A tank that is stationary is a guaranteed hit for your opponent. And when driving a tank, avoiding these hits should be a priority. If you can make your opponents shot more difficult, then you will survive longer, and your opponent will not. Just be careful when maneuvering, not to fully expose your side armor to a perpendicular hit. Which leads to golden rule number 2.

2. Always face your opponent.

Now this doesn't always mean sitting parallel to your opponent, tanks cannot strafe, so you will find it hard to avoid enemy fire. Sit at a slight angle, this allows you to constantly reverse and advance to keep your opponent guessing, mix it up, use both directions and varying angles. This also allows you to take a free hit on either side reactive and sustain no damage. But make sure you abide by golden rule 3.

3. Never Boost towards your opponent.

A tank using its boost has some seriously messed up hitboxes. If you boost at your opponent and they hit you on the front, the game will register this hit as a rear hit, so you can often take a one hit disabled from a frontal hit when using the boost. So don't get tempted during an engagement. Make sure to release boost before the opponent has time to fire.

The key to winning tank on tank, is avoiding the hits, and one of the best tactics is to deploy smoke cover. Deploying smoke and then maneuvering will break the enemy spot and force them to guess your position. This can lead to an enemy miss, which is often enough to force a win in the engagement. This is a vital tactic for winning, and saves my tank on countless occasions. For that it makes golden rule 4.

4. Always deploy smoke to break line of sight.

After playing with tanks for a while, you will begin to notice that some engagements you just cannot win on your own. This is down to one thing. Repairs. A tank with a repair man becomes an almost unstoppable force. You can win pretty much any engagement against a tank without one. And it is great to have that 50cal used for keeping away pesky C4 infantry.

Now I've seen a lot of tank players complaining about tank teams. Some tank players insist you should only play tank solo if you are good. And all I can say to that is good luck. Doesn't matter how good a tanker you are, you will not beat a tank team solo. So why try. Get yourself a friend who's handy with the repair tool and go beat some noobs. So my final golden rule is this.

5. Teamwork is key to tanking success.

Key Tank vs Tank Maneuvers

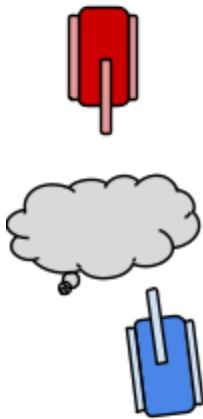
1. The smoke reverse.

The smoke reverse is one of the simplest, yet most effective defensive tank maneuvers I've learned. It's simple.



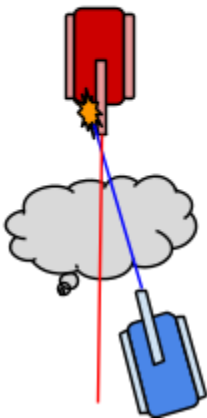
Phase 1: First firing Phase.

Both tanks engage directly, usually both dealing a hit.



Phase 2: First Reload Phase.

Blue tank deploys smoke and reverses at an angle. Any 3D spot is broken.



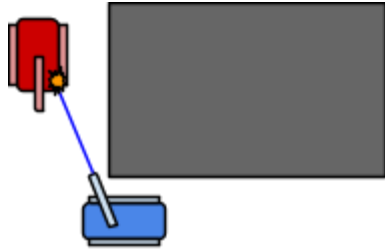
Phase 3: Second Firing Phase

Blue tank fires through smoke at opponent who should still be spotted. Enemy tank fires blind. Usually at last know position.

Using the Smoke Reverse will give you the upper hand instantly in a fight. You can repeat it during the fight, just make sure to change direction to keep the opponent guessing.

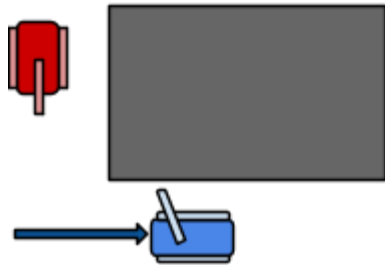
2. Corner Fake

The corner fake is usually most effective on urban maps, although it can be used at any building corner, or even natural corners.



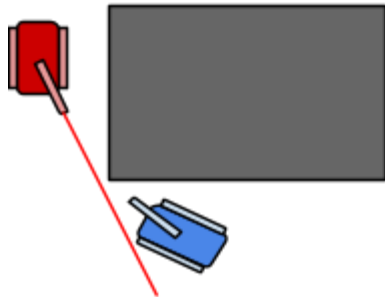
Phase 1: Fire Firing Phase

Try and get the drop on your opponent, Land a hit and reverse quickly to avoid retaliation.



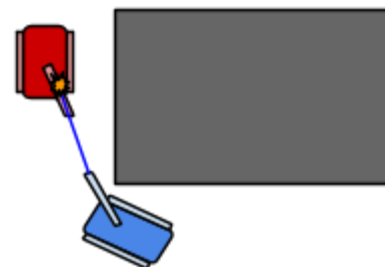
Phase 2: Reload Phase

Use the building as cover and allow your cannon to reload. If your opponent pushes, he will not be able to fire and retreat in time without taking a side hit.



Phase 3: The Fake

Peak the front corner of your tank round the corner and quickly reverse, the aim is to get your opponent to fire and miss. If he manages to hit you, make sure and round the corner to return the hit in order to even the damage, before retreating into cover. Remember to advance at an angle to avoid the perpendicular side hit.

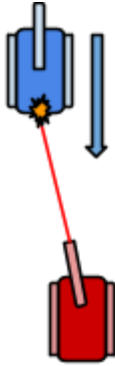


Phase 4: Return Fire Phase

Now take advantage of the enemy reload phase to score a hit. You can also deploy smoke at this point to mask your retreat back round the corner.

3. Reactive Reverse

The worst situation a tank can get into is having your opponent flank you. However, if you spot the move in time, you can quickly turn this in your favor.



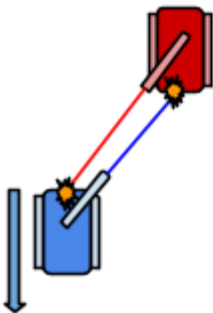
Phase 1: Enemy Attack

The enemy shoots your rear, taking out your reactive armour but doing no damage. You must really be on the ball here. As soon as you see the enemy tank you have to gun it in reverse. Boost the whole way.



Phase 2: Second Enemy Attack

When timed correctly, the enemy will only be able to hit you on the side, eliminating that reactive panel but still dealing no damage. Do not be tempted to shoot yet, we are waiting for the prize target.



Phase 3: Turn the Tables

Now engage the enemy in the rear. They probably will still not know what just happened. Rage will most likely ensue.



Phase 4: Block

Make sure they don't return the favor. Block any attempt at a counter reverse by your opponent.

Tank vs Aircraft

When fighting against aircraft, tanks have a major disadvantage. Because of this, it is best to try and avoid fighting aircraft whenever you can. However,

when engaged by enemy aircraft, there are a number of ways to improve your chances of surviving the encounter. Plus, who doesn't enjoy shooting them out the sky with the main cannon.

The key to fighting aircraft is remembering two things:

Cover & Angle.

The best way to survive an aircraft attack is to use cover. Buildings, rocks, trucks, anything that can break the line of engagement of the aircraft, especially jets. Jets need to attack in strafes, so anything you can put between you and them will hamper their attempt, block their rockets, and shorten their strafe time. Use cranes and other high structures to block strafing lines.

If you cannot find cover, the next best option is to manipulate their angle of attack. If you retreat away from the aircraft, you force them to decrease the angle of their attack, with the goal of bringing them into the attack angle of the main cannon.

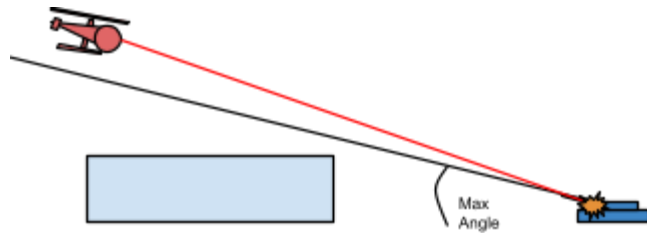
The second strategy is to advance towards the aircraft, forcing them to increase their attack angle, which shortens the length of their strafe and forces them to pull up a lot sooner.

Tank vs Aircraft Maneuvers

1. Helicopter Cover, Forcing Low.

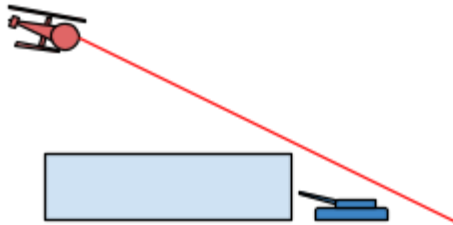
This maneuver works well in built up sections of the map, with decent buildings for cover. It also

works quite well with the artic trucks on some maps.



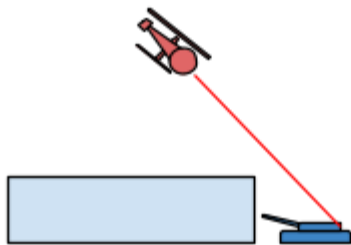
Phase 1: Helicopter Attack

Helicopter attacks tank from outwith the maximum angle of the tank turret and with a clear line of sight.



Phase 2: Tank Cover

Tank moves into cover behind the building, removing line of sight with the helicopter.



Phase 3: Chopper Attempts Line of Sight

The helicopter Pitches up to try and find an attack angle to attack the tank behind the wall.



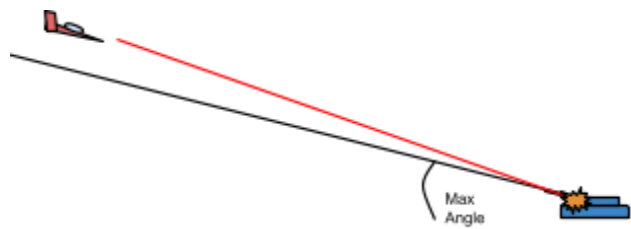
Phase 4: Tank attack

The increase in pitch will cause the helicopter to lose altitude as it passes over the tank. This results in it entering the tanks attack arc and gives the tank a shot at the large underside of the helicopter.

This maneuver can also be performed without cover by advancing towards the helicopter to shorten its attack run, however you should expect to take a lot of damage during the attack before you are able to return fire.

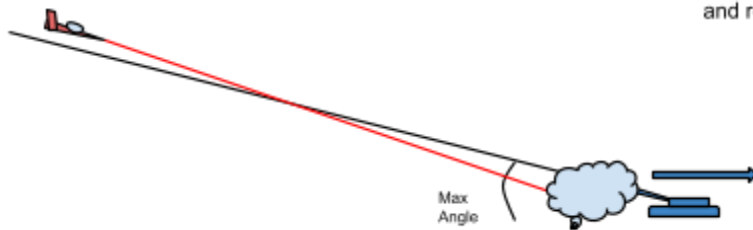
2. Jet, Narrow the angle

This is best used when the jet is within view of the tank turret, but just out of the arc of fire. The tank will probably take a good bit of damage. But the movement and the smoke will prevent as many hits.



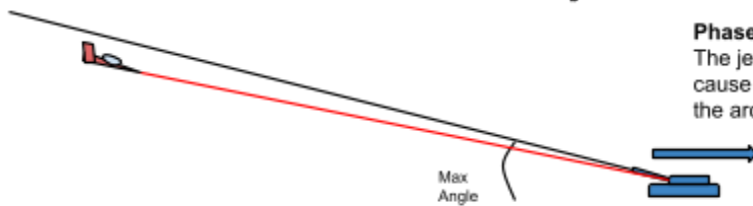
Phase 1: Jet Attack

The jet attacks from an angle too high for the tank to fire back but within the drivers view.



Phase 2: Tank Retreat

The tank smokes to disengage the tracking of the rocket pods, and reverses out of the jet attack.



Phase 3: Jet Adjustment

The jet pilot will then adjust his aim to retarget the tank, this will cause him to decrease the angle of his attack, and bring him into the arc of the turret.

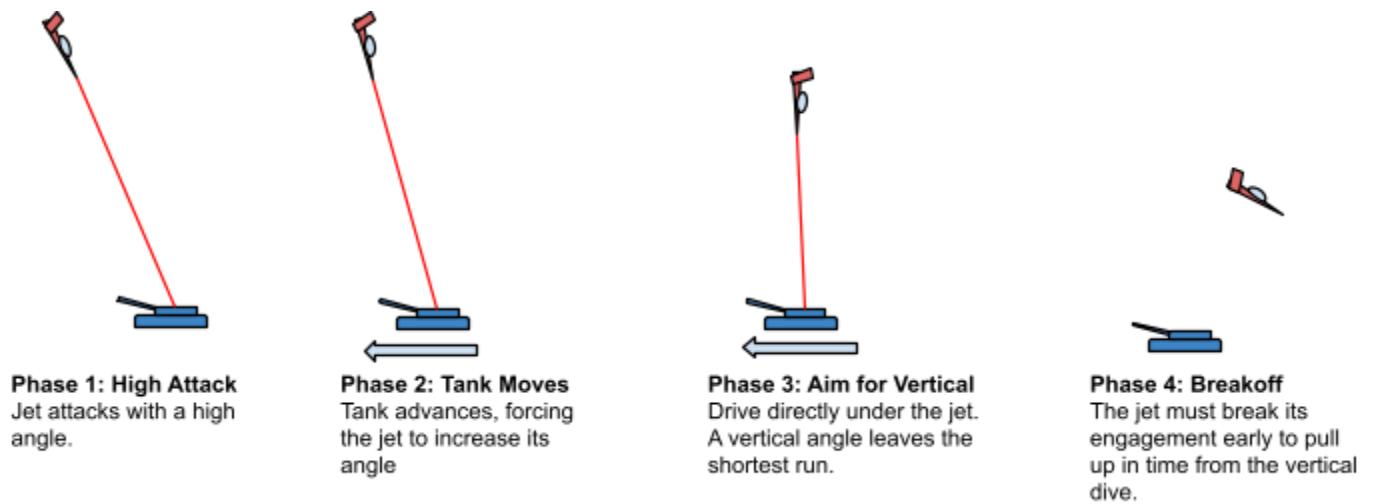


Phase 4: Tank Attack

As soon as the jet finishes its run, it will pull up. This is the best time for the tank to strike as the jet underside is the biggest target. Just remember to shoot slightly early to make up for latency.

3. Jet, Increase the angle

If the jet attacks from an angle outwith the drivers screen, it will be rare than the driver can reverse enough to get the jet into his arc. In these instances, it is best to increase the angle to shorten the time the jet can engage for.



While these maneuvers will not guarantee success, they will greatly increase survivability against aircraft. Just remember, tanks are easy pickings for aircraft, so do not expect to go toe to toe with them and always come out on top.

Fighting Infantry

While infantry might seem like easy prey for a tank, they can easily overwhelm you with great numbers. Don't charge blindly into enemy flags, pick them off at range and try and split them up and pick them off.

The tank has seen a serious reduction in splash damage over the life of the game so be prepared to have to finish infantry off with your HMG if you cannot get a direct hit. And remember a gunner will work wonders at thinning out infantry.