

Hell on Treads is a cooperative roleplaying game for 3-6 players, centered on the crew of a tank involved in a desperate total war. Tasked with an important mission, they must overcome challenges both internal and external to survive.

To start, players should craft their tank crew. Every player is one member of the crew. To create their crew member, they should give them a simplistic designation that describes their character's archetype. Then, assign each character twice as many dice as there are characters, or tokens to stand in for dice.

Then, they draw a position on the crew out of a hat. You need to at least have a driver and gunner.

- **Driver:** the Driver controls where the tank goes. They can only solve problems by changing the position of the tank or moving it. As a tank weighs dozens of tons on big grindy tracks and can move surprisingly fast, this can solve a fair number of problems.
- **Gunner:** The Gunner controls the tank's main gun, aiming and firing it. They solve problems by blowing them up, and don't really have any other means of fixing things. Not that they need any.
- **Assistant:** the Assistant mans the secondary weapons and features of a tank. If you have an Assistant, you can presume your tank has a hull machine-gun they control, and in addition the Assistant will also control any other weapons the tank may get, such as smoke grenade launchers, flamethrowers, minesweepers, and so forth. The Assistant is also responsible for the radio and intercom, navigation, and any advanced technology on the tank.
- **Loader:** the Loader has two very important jobs. First, they choose and load the shells into the cannon. If you want your cannon to do anything special other than just shooting a hole in something, the Loader needs to fish the shell up for it. Second, the loader doubles as the tank's mechanic, so they are responsible for anything related to the mechanical function of the tank.

In addition to the other positions, one player is the Commander; this is a very important position because the Commander acts as the Games Master, providing the challenges external to the tank, so you might want to designate a Commander player beforehand. Alternately, if you are all comfortable with the role, you can draw it like the others.

The Commander is a player for the purposes of assigning the tank a Feature and an Obstacle, and for numbers reasons. However, they don't participate in solving problems directly.

Then, once you have a crew, you make a tank. Your tank is a character too and has its own attributes. You should presume your tank has a turret containing a cannon, tracks, and heavy armour on every surface. Beyond those features, every player should list something specific they love about their Tank which makes it better than other tanks, a tank's Features. For

example, thicker armour, greater speed, the ability to climb unusually steep surfaces, extra weapons, good crew comfort, good visibility, and so forth.

Finally, you create the mission. A mission needs a Goal to accomplish and Obstacles. Obstacles are factors known beforehand that need to be dealt with before the Goal can be accomplished. Every player should contribute an Obstacle. Obstacles could be crossing enemy lines, a dangerous river crossing, a mine in the road, refugees approaching the tank, ambushes by snipers and anti-tank weapons, supply shortages, bad weather, and so forth.

To achieve the Goal, the players need overcome all the Obstacles.

The game will have as many turns as there are Obstacles. At the start of a turn, the Commander sets the scene by describing the world outside the tank. Then, going around the table, each player talks about what their crewmember is doing.

At this point, players have a few options. They can introduce a Complication to the crew related to their station. This Problem is something under their control that the tank can no longer do easily. For example, the Driver can say that the gearbox is acting up and they are having problems turning, or the Loader can say they have run out of a certain kind of ammunition. The Complication should have very specific consequences that should be spelled out. If they do this, they get an extra dice they can use later, but this problem interferes with the tank. Complications never go away.

After everyone has gone around, the Commander chooses an Obstacle for the crew to confront, then describes the exact circumstances of the Obstacle. They can use this as a chance to introduce twists and unexpected problems to the Obstacle.

Obstacles have two factors. The first is Intensity, the second is the Importance. The Intensity (from 1 to 3) is how big a threat the Obstacle is to the tank, and the Importance is how much Victory Points the Challenge is and how much work needs to go in to fix it. The two don't need to be related; high Intensity events are often low Importance. After all, combat is dangerous, but driving long distances in terrible weather can be far harsher on the crew's body and minds overall.

Total, challenges should have x4 times as much Importance as the number of players.

To overcome the Obstacle, the players need to start contributing to a solution. In any order, players can present their contributions. If their contribution is simple and is neither challenging nor will have the potential to solve the problem, the Commander can rule that it simply happens without a roll. In addition, the Commander can veto any contribution that won't actually help. In any other case, the players roll.

They wager a number of dice on their solution and roll a dice pool of six-sided dice, looking for Successes. Any dice that fail are discarded. Each Success reduces the Importance by one, until it is 0 and the challenge is overcome.

Normally, a Success is a 4+. If your plan takes advantage of one of the tank's Features, you need 3+. However, if your plan involves one of the Complications, you need a +5.

Additionally, you need more Successes than the Intensity of the Obstacle, or Bad Things happen.

-1 Successes: Roll to pick a random crew member. They must immediately come up with a Complication for the tank with the normal rules. They don't get any dice for this.

-2 Successes: Roll to pick a random crew member. They immediately lose 2 dice.

Once the Obstacle is overcome, everyone collects 1 dice and play continues.

If a player runs out of dice, their character dies. Assistants and Loaders can take over for Drivers and Gunners if necessary. A tank with no Driver can't continue.

Play keeps going until all obstacles are overcome or the tank no longer has enough crew to keep going.