

GG Warlight Strategy Guide

Foreword

Winning games does not depend on who is playing against whom, but rather on what strategies each player is implementing. Luck also plays a role. Thus, you can never know in advance if you are going to win or lose the next game. No opponent is too difficult to beat or too easy to ignore.

This guide does not offer to give exact moves for every situation, as that would fill considerably more than 19 pages. Simply treating every possible picking combination for a given set of warlords and wastelands on Strategic Medium Earth settings would necessitate billions and billions of case studies. Multiply this by the number of maps and amount of different settings, and the problem becomes intractable.

To keep the problem solvable and the number of pages reasonable, this guide gives the reader general ideas on what aspects determine the winner of a game of Warlight in which situations, as well as the means to quickly learn more by playing games.

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0. How to learn Warlight strategy as quickly as possible

(1) Reading this guide will give the reader a head start as it offers effective tools to analyze different game situations.

The game is very complex, however, and these tools cannot generally be used to find a simple, straightforward algorithm to determine what the best picks are. Should one, in Strategic Medium Earth, double pick an exposed first-turn-bonus such as Southeast Asia for quick income, or go for safer options, such as Central America and South America, even though chances for first-turn bonus are slim?

The answer is, it depends. Much depends on the exact positions of warlords as well as wastelands, and often even the best Warlight players cannot intuitively know which of the two strategies dominates the other. They have to play the game to find out.

(2) Playing the game is a necessity to see how the different ideas in this guide interact with each other. Also, lots of situation-specific or map-specific information can only be found out by playing the game as this guide only contains more general information.

(3) Variety is good. Play real-time to quickly test new ideas; play multiday when you want to find the best move. Play lots of different maps at least 1-2 times; play 1 or 2 maps, such as Medium Earth and Europe, very much to be an expert on them. Play random as well as cyclic move order. Play the same map with different numbers of picks. This should show you that making specific changes in settings can have a considerable impact on optimal strategy.

(4) After a while, re-read the guide. Upon re-read, some passages of text that did not make sense before might make sense now. Also, this guide is a collection of fundamentals which should not be forgotten.

(5) Analyze your games. Especially the ones you lost. Ask yourself: „Why did I lose? What could I have done differently to win?“ Sometimes you lost because of bad luck, but mostly that is not the sole reason.

(6) Play games that you are motivated to win. This will guarantee that you give your best in the game and analysis.

(7) People try to reach their goals the quickest and easiest way possible. To win Warlight games, you only need to be slightly better than your opponent. Thus, play against opponents of your level or somewhat higher, as this forces you to continually make small improvements while still giving you a chance to win. Do not play against bad players for learning purposes, as this only makes you become slightly better than a bad player.

(8) Play the same game over and over again until you find out the best picks and strategy for that game. Not only does this mean the same map and settings, but also warlords and wastelands placed in the same territories.

This can be done with the scenario tool. After having played the same scenario 4-5 times, you should have a pretty clear understanding on what works and what does not work in that specific scenario. This is especially useful in preparation to some important game, like a ladder or tournament game. You can either play it against a good opponent, or against an alt of yours. The latter option takes very little time.

This kind of scenario training works even after the game has left the picking stage, provided that you have a good grasp of what territories the opponent occupies.

1. (Quasi-)Victory condition

The player with higher long-term net income is the winner.

Let X be the number of opponent troops on board. Even if your net income advantage is only 1 troop per turn, you will, at the latest, after $2X$ turns be able to crush your opponent easily.

→ Net income means the sum of troops gained by a player per turn through base income, territorial income, and cards, minus troops lost by fighting and cards.

→ Long-term net income is the amount of net income that can (presumably) be sustained over longer periods of time. Hence, bonuses that will likely be spoiled soon do not count towards long-term net income.

→ The victory condition applies first and foremost to standard settings with comparable offensive and defensive kill rates, and maps where attacking bottlenecks can be avoided. Non-standard cases are not discussed here.

→ **After achieving a superior long-term net income, all you have to do is uphold the advantage by avoiding situations that would undo your advantage.** Time is working against your opponent, so unless he manages to change the status quo, you will unavoidably win.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4210603>

The game is decided in 7 turns. After that, Mannerheim has a clear 13-8 income advantage. All he needs to do is ensure that Anonymous does not spoil his bonuses or capture new ones.

2. Bonuses and Territories at the Start

To get a good start in the game, you should pick bonuses that are safe and flexible short-term and superior long-term. To know what to pick, you need to evaluate bonuses and territories in terms of different aspects. Things to look out for are:

a) Territory combination allowing quick reachability of all (important) parts of the map.

Reachability makes it faster to both capture new bonuses and spoil enemy bonuses. Team games, having divided income and territories, add a whole new dimension to this aspect.

→ As a rule of thumb, regions consisting of many attractive bonuses that border each other are important parts of the map, so they should be covered. Bonuses with wastelands are – especially at the start – not important.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=3851461>

In general, Asia provides many quick-to-take bonuses with good income. However, if the area is full of wastelands, then its value decreases rapidly. This game was over after picks, as Genschie could only get income from his starting bonuses as well as Caucasus and Middle East. Mannerheim, on the other hand, could expand to Australia, West Africa, East Africa, Central America, West USA, and East USA, thus getting a clear income advantage.

b) Bonuses that are difficult to spoil and capture by the enemy.

The cheapest way to improve your income advantage is to spoil some enemy bonuses, as you only need to capture and keep one territory to spoil a bonus, and do not need to fight neutrals. This should be made as difficult as possible for the enemy.

→ This can mean two things: either pick bonuses that only have bottlenecks to bordering territories, i.e. no bordering territory has a double or triple border to your bonus; or pick bonuses that are likely to be far away from any enemy territory.

→ Capturing bonuses with few borders shows its importance at later stages of the game.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4259250>

Dreuj's triple pick in the Asian region not only contained too many easily-spoilable picks, but also forced him to expand to more of them, as he could not reach other parts of the map.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4097096>

The WM team has about equal representation in the safe northwestern part of the map at the beginning, but the Relite team systematically captures those territories. Afterwards, WM has no way to spoil anything, whereas Relite can easily spoil every bonus WM has captured.

c) Bonuses with better income/territory ratio.

Getting more for less is always a good idea. That one more income you have, or that one less territory you need to capture, can have decisive consequences for the game – especially at earlier stages.

Example: In Strategic Medium Earth, North Africa, South Africa, West USA, and East USA have a bad income/territory ratio. Therefore, they should generally not be picked for any other purpose than spoiling. They may make good bonuses later, though, as they are safe from attacks outside their respective continents.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=5073929>

In Szeurope, with diminished income for some popular bonuses, Swizerland and Denmark in particular have suffered a great decrease of value as bonuses, with an income ratio of 1/3 each. As Michael put it on turn 3: „I don't even know if I should spoil Switzerland, as it doesn't make any real difference.“

d) Bonuses with few territories.

Every extra territory in a bonus means one more territory to capture before the bonus starts yielding income, as well as one extra chance for the opponent to spoil your bonus.

→ All other things being equal, two bonuses with X income and Y territories each are always better than one bonus with 2X income and 2Y territories.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4097047>

Mannerheim picks two bonuses with 6 territories each, both directly bordering an enemy bonus. This cannot lead to anything but a disaster. While Mannerheim defeats the last neutral in Greenland, Dead Piggy has already spoiled that bonus.

e) Picks allowing maximal speed and flexibility in capturing bonuses and spoiling them.

Double-picking a bonus may allow you to capture the bonus one turn faster. This extra income, in turn, may allow you to capture the next bonus one turn earlier. Double picking also allows you to divert more troops to other purposes, if you want to spoil enemy bonuses or defend against their attacks.

→ Note that this aspect is relevant only at the start. If you cannot achieve quicker bonus-capturing or better spoiling with your double pick, then that double pick's long-term advantages are minimal.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4507909>

FarmerBruins' double pick secures him good potential for getting both Scandinavia and Antarctica in 2 turns, and spoiling South America on 3rd turn with superior income. Ctrl Alt Del is forced to counter this by attacking Antarctica on 2nd turn, but then he fails to capture Central America in time and loses. Had FarmerBruins gotten unlucky and failed to capture one of the bonuses in 2 turns, however, (about 17% chance in this case) then his double pick would not have given him any advantage. Ctrl Alt Del would then have won the game, either by spoiling Antarctica directly, or by spoiling both Scandinavia and West Russia later, only getting his Central Russia spoiled. The bottleneck between Antarctica and South America would have made CA, SA and Ant unspoilable,

thus giving Ctrl Alt Del an income advantage of 12 to 8.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4107935>

The long way from Congo to Ghana, combined with limited resources, forces Mannerheim to take a risk in capturing West Africa and to fail. This leads him to not being able to deploy sufficient troops to South America on 4th turn and to lose.

f) All of the aforementioned aspects are relative and often contradict each other. Their relative importance against each other depends on the map, the settings, and the advancement of the game.

Number of picks relative to number of territories; number of safe bonuses; wastelands; contact with the opponent; reachability of different parts of the map; and the map itself vary and influence the importance of different territories.

→ In general, good defensibility of bonuses and good reachability of map are the two most important long-term aspects. Small bonuses with good income ratios play a role both short-term and long-term. Making picks with maximal flexibility by e.g. double-picking can be useful in the short-term, but it only has long-term effects if the double-pick leads you to getting a bonus faster or spoiling an enemy bonus that you otherwise could not spoil.

→ Getting more picks on the map means that reachability will be less of a problem. In this case you should concentrate on maximizing other advantages, especially securing many safe bonuses with high priority. Also double-picking to get a first-turn bonus should be considered.

Example: In standard Europe 3v3, with each player getting 4 territories, almost every bonus will be occupied from the start. Reachability will not be a problem, so you should make the safe northwestern bonuses Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, and possibly Britain, very high-priority picks.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4920270>

Mannerheim's team takes most of the northwest as highest priority. Also, both teams take first-turn bonuses that give them an edge in border fights that ensue right after first turn.

→ Conversely, if you get less picks on a map, then reachability is of greater concern, meaning that the safest bonuses cannot always be picked first. Also, with fewer picks, the probability of meeting the opponent early diminishes, so double-picking becomes less relevant.

Example: Strategic Medium Earth 1v1 gives both players 3 picks. Here it is important to secure at least one pick in both the Asian area as well as in the South America and surroundings area. This can be achieved by giving one of the areas the 2 highest-priority picks, and the other, in exchange, the 4 last picks.

3. Bonuses and Territories Long-Term

During the first turns of the game, you have limited resources and know relatively little about your opponent. Therefore the central theme here is to get your three starting bonuses captured and avoid unnecessary risks.

Once you have captured your three starting bonuses, you often have a pretty good idea about where the opponent might be. Also, as you now have much more income, so you do not generally need to make risky 3v2 attacks against neutral territories. Now the game starts to be purely about the victory condition, i.e. who has bigger income.

To keep your income from falling, you need safe bonuses. This means either bad reachability by the opponent or easy defensibility. To gain new income or diminish opponent income, you need to be able to reach the relevant parts of the map. Therefore, safety and reachability gain in importance when the game advances.

Other aspects lose in importance, respectively, when the game advances. The double pick that gave flexibility at the start does not amount to any advantage anymore. Quite the contrary, it now makes spoiling your bonuses easier because when the opponent finds one bonus of yours, he has actually found two of them. Small bonuses with good income ratios are still nice, but as your income grows, the disadvantage of having to capture one extra territory to get the extra bonus diminishes. What matters, now, is that you get more income than your enemy by whatever means thinkable.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=3982418>

As attacking between Africa and America becomes infeasible, Mannerheim captures Canada, Greenland and East Russia to gain extra income. Szeweningen, in turn, takes Middle East, Australia, and Indonesia. Had one of them deployed all troops to the African – American border instead of expanding, he would have lost because of inferior income.

4. Troops

a) Killing enemies is better than killing neutrals.

Fighting enemy troops makes the enemy weaker while fighting neutrals does not. Taking enemy bonuses diminishes his income and increases yours whereas capturing neutrals only does the latter.

→ After meeting the enemy first time, it is mostly good policy to invest most troops to fight the enemy instead of neutrals.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4254623>

Turn 7, PureMind loses a pretty equal game by prematurely attacking 2 neutral territories in North Africa, losing West Africa and East Africa as a consequence.

→ The game AI prefers attacking neutrals before attacking the enemy. This makes the AI very easy to beat.

b) When attacking or defending, kill at least as many enemy troops as you lose.

Troops killed in battle also contribute to net income. If you lose more troops than your enemy in battle every turn, then your long-term net income will suffer more than his.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4733386>

Turns 3-7, EZPickens pressures Mannerheim in Norway, even though he has inferior income. This also has the upside of binding Mannerheim to defend Norway. Most importantly, however, EZPickens continuously kills more troops than Mannerheim, thus negating Mannerheim's income advantage.

→ To quickly find out which side kills, on average, more troops in a certain setting: for the number of troops that both sides have, give 0.1 troop advantage to the defender. To this, add 0.6 for every troop that the attacker has more than the defender, or 0.7 for each troop that the defender has more than the attacker.

c) Make delay moves to manipulate move order.

Determining whether your attack comes before or after enemy moves is often very useful. Thus, a few reserve troops making delay moves each turn may be as valuable as an order delay card every turn.

→ This is even more effective if you know how many delay moves the opponent is capable of committing and ensuring that you make one more of them than him.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4237069>

Despite having a great strategic disadvantage, Michaelx almost succeeds in defending West Africa and wiping Mannerheim out of Africa with his 1 income advantage. Mannerheim eventually finds a counterstrategy, though, and wins.

d) Mobile troops are better than stationary.

Mobile troops can both attack and defend, whereas stationary troops can only defend. Therefore, mobile troops offer more choices of action.

→ A mobile troop is one that can move from one territory to another. A stationary troop is bound to a certain territory and cannot move away from it.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4948717>

Even though not a severe mistake, Maniek captures Beijing on turn 10, wasting 2 troops that could be used in Indonesia or West Russia.

e) Troops in the center of action are better than troops in the periphery.

Even big stacks of troops that idly sit far away from battle are useless. Troops that stand in the center of action, making multiple threats simultaneously, while also responding to enemy threats, are the best.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4099681>

Turn 8, Aranka is about to spoil Ponticia. However, she spoils Ponticia with minimal troops and moves most of them to Cilicia, knowing that Ponticia will not be defended against a stack of 25 troops. The next turn, then, she uses those troops to capture Cyprus and wins the game. Had she used them all to spoil Ponticia on the previous turn, then she would not have gotten Cyprus. Notice, in contrast, how Longhouse's stack of 25 moves aimlessly in Dacia, doing barely anything useful.

5. Anticipating and Deceiving

If you know what the opponent is doing but he is ignorant of you, then you can easily launch a surprise attack against him, spoil one of his bonuses and win the game by the following income advantage.

Having understood how to evaluate bonuses and territories, how to use troops, and playing in that manner, you can mostly assume that your opponent is doing the same. If he does not, he is probably doing something wrong and thus giving you advantages.

Mostly, though, you cannot completely guess what the opponent does. Therefore it is wise to execute a plan that leaves you on top in all likely scenarios that could occur.

a) Infer your opponent's starting bonuses.

If you know where the opponent is, then launching a surprise attack against him is easy. The one who spoils his opponent first will mostly win the game.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4716621>

Turn 5, Michael starts to pressure Frankdeslimste in Antarctica and breaks it quickly. Frank cannot spoil anything in return and surrenders.

b) Infer your opponent's strategy based on his picks.

Knowing where the opponent expands after getting his primary bonuses captured helps you spoil him more effectively. Knowing where he might attack with a big stack helps you keep your troops safe.

In the previous example, Michael anticipated that Frank wants to spoil Southeast Asia within the first turns. Thus, he attacked Myanmar to force Frank to deploy extra troops to Thailand for a blockade, then slowing down his development elsewhere. He also correctly anticipated that Frank wanted to capture his own bonuses before attacking Michael's ones. But then, it was already too late for Frank, as Michael spoiled Antarctica.

c) Check the order of deployment and move order of each turn precisely.

In Warlight, deployments and moves happen in turns. So if you see the opponent making a deployment after your 5th deployment or a move after your 5th move, then you know that he has made at least 4 other deployments or moves before that, even though you did not exactly see them. This can give you huge amounts of information about where your opponent is located, how much income he has, and how many delaying troops he has.

→ You can also make otherwise meaningless delay moves to find out exactly how many moves your opponent made that turn.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4822141>

Turn 5, Mannerheim sees exactly how many delay troops Frankdeslimste has, as Frank's important attack moves in Central Russia and Australia are obviously his last ones. So next turn Mannerheim makes exactly enough delay moves to get his important moves executed after Frank's attacks.

→ Also, deployment order is the same as move order. So, especially with Season XII settings, seeing the move order can give information about the opponent's income and vice versa.

d) If you have to guess opponent moves, expect the likely ones.

Often you cannot counter every possible opponent move. You should, then, think what the opponent will likely do and react to those moves. What to expect varies a bit opponent by opponent, but there are many similarities of conduct, especially with good opponents.

→ When unable to defend all important territories, good players tend to defend the more important ones, leaving the less important ones less defended.

→ When deciding which territory to attack to e.g. spoil a bonus, good players often attack the less important one, expecting it to be more lightly defended than the more important one.

→ When making starting picks, good players almost always pick bonuses that are good according to the criteria in the 2nd chapter. Picking unsafe bonuses with bad income ratio is rare on top level.

→ Good players tend to avoid risks and try to win with skill rather than by luck. For example, unless they know your whereabouts, they mostly try to have their 3 starting bonuses captured within the first 4 moves, and only then start attacking/spoiling other bonuses.

→ Good players tend to make moves that are likely to work. Good players avoid moves that are likely to fail or have a reasonable probability to backfire greatly. An exception to this rule is when they know that they have to take a risk to change a losing position to a winning one.

→ All in all, try to get into your opponent's head. This is not always possible but sometimes it is. The ideas outlined above will only work as long as the opponent is not expecting you to think like that. If, however, everybody starts thinking along the lines above, then they cease to be true and the opposite becomes true.

e) Give as little information about yourself as possible and make surprising moves.

Having too little information about the opponent makes it very hard to fight against him. Guessing wrong can lead to losing precious time or getting one's bonuses spoiled.

→ Make the opponent over- or underestimate your income and the number of your delaying troops if possible, and see if you can use that against him.

→ Always deploy troops first that are visible to the opponent, and other troops last.

→ Think what the opponent expects you to do, and do something else if his wrong guess could help you. Orient yourself on the above part 5d.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4916239>

Turns 5 and 6, Mannerheim deploys only 6 or 9 troops visibly to the opponents, making them think that he has Iceland instead of Britain. This makes it more difficult for them to locate and spoil him. Turn 6, Lobostrosity knows that she cannot defend both West Central Russian territories against Michael, so she decides to defend the more important one – after all, from Nizhniy Novgorod, Jupiter could reach the whole bonus, but not from Udmurtia. Therefore, Michael attacks Udmurtia and spoils it with ease.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4237071>

Mannerheim has bad luck with capturing bonuses but manages to win the game by a surprise entrance on turn 4. Had he come out of Poland earlier, then Michael would not have wasted troops in capturing Scandinavia and West Russia.

f) Deploy in the dark to make a surprise attack.

In case the opponent does not know how many defenders you have for a territory, he has to either attack with potentially too many troops or risk losing huge amounts of them in a failed attack.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4224463>

Turns 9 and 10, Mannerheim transfers troops from Borneo to Malaysia to defend and to help in counterattack. Robespierre expects the first transfer but not the second, and loses Thailand as a consequence.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4765266>

Though not originally deployed to surprise, the surprising first-order transfer on turn 8 helps Mannerheim to turn the fight in East China from a loss to a win, make a counterattack, and consequently win the game.

6. Team Games

Team games are just like 1v1 games, with a few notable differences:

- 1: If base income is more than 0, then having more teammates means more income.
- 2: If cards are used, then more teammates give more cards.
- 3: Team territories are divided.
- 4: Team income is divided.

a) Out of 1 and 2 follows that all teammates should be kept alive if possible. Taking base income away by elimination is always at least as difficult as spoiling a bonus, so a teammate with 5 base income is more valuable than a bonus with 5 income.

b) Out of 3 and 4 follows less flexibility. If the cumulative team income and all team territories were united under one player, then that player could deploy all the income on any of the territories. Teammates, however, can only deploy a small part of the income on a small subset of territories controlled by the team. To increase flexibility, a team should choose one player that gets most of the income, as well as territories lying in many parts of the map.

c) As each player gets less picks, reachability of map is generally a greater concern in team games than in 1v1's. To get more flexibility, it is better for each teammate to have at least one pick in multiple parts of the map rather than all teammates making picks exclusively in one part of map.

d) The fact that one teammate can not use the whole team income can be combined with the fact that attacking enemies is generally better than attacking neutrals. This gives us a strategy of multiple teammates ganging up on a single opposing teammember while ignoring the rest of the opposing team. The side with more teammates is likely to have an income advantage and therefore can easily capture enemy territories and spoil enemy bonuses. This strategy can be aided with the gift card.

Example Games:

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4025413>

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4044979>

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=3938187>

The wins are greatly attributed to the fact that Michael and Mannerheim ignore one of the opponents and create a temporary 2v1 against the other.

e) As some of the bonuses on a given map are superior to others, multiple teammates should pick these bonuses with high priority (i.e. mirror-pick). For example, in the standard Europe map, Iceland, Ireland, Denmark, and Norway are so much better than other picks that they should, in general, be picked first by all teammates to ensure that the team gets as many of them as possible.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4733386>

Mannerheim, Unknownsoldier and Dunga all pick Denmark, Iceland, and Ireland as first picks. Especially Denmark is important as it is both a safe bonus and a first-turn bonus.

f) There are some situations, though, where complete mirror picking is not called for. First, if double-picking by a single player ensures a first-turn bonus better than two players of the same team picking one of the territories each. Secondly, assigning certain territories to certain players can help each teammate to get picks from different parts of the map, rather than from just one or two.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4733386>

Same game as above. After the initial 3 picks, the players' picks differ as Dunga tries the first-turn bonus in West Central Russia, Mannerheim in Norway, while Unknownsoldier is taking other important territories. It would make no sense to mirror-pick WCR or Norway.

7. Miscellaneous

a) **Double Threat:** Take your army stack to a territory where you get a double border on an enemy bonus. Mostly, he cannot guess your next move completely right and will lose the bonus. Another way to make a double threat is to make two distinct threats that have to be dealt with during the first move. As the moves happen in turns, your opponent cannot get two moves before your first move.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4957325>

Turns 4, 5, and 6, Mannerheim is only one territory away from eliminating Bzox from Asia and Africa. The only way Bzox can avoid elimination is to get first move and deploy enough troops to the right place.

b) **Reuse of troops:** Rather than letting troops sit idly or even be transferred, their maximal utilization comes from fighting every turn. For example, when capturing Medium Earth West Russia from Moscow, it is better to attack Moscow → Murmansk and Moscow → Ufa first turn, then Murmansk → Arkhangelsk and Ufa → Vorkuta second turn. Another option would be attacking Moscow → Arkhangelsk first turn and then Arkhangelsk → Murmansk, Ufa, Vorkuta second turn. The second option reuses troops less effectively and thus makes it necessary to deploy extra troops to the area second turn.

c) **3v2 vs. 4v2:** With 16% luck weighted random settings, attacking neutrals 3v2 may be better if all extra troops are needed elsewhere. However, if this is not necessary, it is mostly better to attack 4v2. If capturing a bonus depends on the attack's success, then the higher expected value of extra income almost makes up for the troop deployed to attack. Also, sometimes failing the 3v2 attack would mean giving the opponent vital information about your location while not getting any information about him.

d) With Strategic Medium Earth settings, it is very important that a player gets at least one territory in both the South American region and Asia. **To secure that, you can make picks #1 and #2 in the South American region, and picks #3 - #6 in Asia, or vice versa.** Thus you are guaranteed to get at least one pick in both regions.

e) With 3 picks for both players: if you get your #6 pick, then the opponent is guaranteed to have your picks #4 and #5. **Therefore the pick #6 can be used to spoil picks #4 and #5.**

f) **Bottlenecks can be defended with less troops.**

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=3982418>

As the defensive kill rate is higher than the offensive one, attacking between South America and West Africa would be suicide. Therefore, both players do well by deploying a part of their income in other areas to capture new bonuses.

g) **To get a head start in a Strategic Medium Earth game, you may try to capture two 3-bonuses within the 2 first turns, getting thus 11 income afterwards.** This has a probability of 83% if you can only attack 3 of the relevant territories on 1st turn, but the probability rises to 95% if you can attack 4 territories on 1st turn, thus having one extra 3v2 attack on 1st turn.

You may also try to capture a 3-bonus and a 4-bonus within two turns, thus getting 12 income afterwards. Your chances of success are around 29% in any case.

h) As a rule of thumb, if a territory having X troops (and thus $X-1$ troops able to attack), attacks a territory with $X+1$ troops, and the attacked territory later counterattacks, then the **counterattacker is likely to capture the territory** by the smallest possible margin. With 16% luck, this applies for $X \leq 20$.

h) **In games with local deployment, a triple pick in Asia is mostly the best strategy.** This is because the lack of obstacles and bottlenecks between Asian bonuses makes it quick and easy to capture one Asian bonus from its neighbour. Moreover, income coming from other regions cannot be deployed in Asia, making bonuses in other regions useless.

Example: <http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=5003564>

i) As a rule of thumb: With Strategic Medium Earth settings, **if a player picks 3 4-bonuses, then he will need all troops within the first 4 moves just to capture the bonuses.** Thus, if he attacks some territory with 10 troops on 4th turn, then he either has not captured all his bonuses, or he has picked smaller bonuses.

j) In games with 0% luck straight round, attacking with $10 \cdot x + 1/3/6/8$ troops maximizes the **utility** of troops, as those numbers are rounded up. Attacking with $10 \cdot x + 2/4/7/9$ troops minimizes the utility, as those numbers are rounded down. **Defending with $10 \cdot x + 5$ is ideal**, as 0.5 damage is rounded up.

k) With cyclic move order and local deployment, like with Season XII settings, **defending is particularly easy.** First, the attacker cannot deploy income on the battlefield, as his income sources are mostly far away from it, and secondly, the defender can count on having a first move every second turn, enabling a crushing counterattack on the attacker.

l) Another consequence of cyclic move order is that **coordinating double attacks is easier.** If you know that you have first move, then you can also count on having your 2nd and 3rd move without the opponent getting any move in between and so on.

8. Example games

Following some interesting example games with short comments to show Warlight strategy in action.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4765266>

Surprising transfer on turn 8 changes the course of the game. Also, lobostrosity has expansion problems after the triple-pick.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4800626>

After picks, game was completely open. Falker could have won by attacking Pakistan full on 1st turn. However, then Mannerheim could have started capturing Scandinavia. Thus, the game was partly decided by luck.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4822141>

Turn 5: Cannot afford to lose Australia. Russian bonuses easy to spoil on both sides, so a simple exchange is OK. Turn 6: Counted Frank's number of delay troops based on his moves on turn 5.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=5056730>

Left both first-turn-bonuses to dreuj in exchange for spoiling his double pick with a single one. Income advantage 13-12 after turn 3 so time is playing against dreuj.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4716621>

Attack on Myanmar on turn 1 forces Frank to react somehow. He chooses to blockade Thailand which slows down his development. Turn 4: taking the initiative, forcing Frank to react instead of acting.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4904257>

Simple strategic advantage, a single pick spoils a double pick. GG.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4803290>

Leaving ftb to Gnuffone, deciding game by a surprise attack. Also noteworthy that Southeast Asia ftb was not that great as Middle East has a bad income ratio.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4771835>

Double pick spoiled by single pick.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=5106590>

A bit more complicated. West China pick spoils ftb. Attacking West China first turn would still be too slow, as Michael would come from Russia and win with income advantage. A risky strategy that paid off.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=5175823>

Another successful risk-taking. North American bonuses have a bad income ratio. However dreuj does not expect Michael to be in North America, so Michael can surprise dreuj and spoil his bonuses.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4733386>

After 6 turns, team B has all the safe bonuses and team A has only unsafe bonuses.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=4025413>

Turn 3, decision to give up Russia with 50% probability and concentrate on one opponent. One player cannot fight well against two.

<http://warlight.net/MultiPlayer?GameID=3938187>

Gifting Argentina on turn 1 or 2 would have resulted in immediate win for team B.