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Guide setup summary

This guide is gonna contain a lot of information. Some of the information will be plain wrong. Even the amount of time I put into this game and the time I spent strategically analysing almost every match-up does not guarantee a fail-proof understanding of the game. Feel free to disagree and feel free to ask for further explanation when you do.

The civ guides will be built up the following way:

For every particular civ I will give a short summary of their strengths and weaknesses, then list all the possible match ups and give a short description of what to do in each one. Before that, there will be at least one basic BO for each civ and the MU descriptions will if necessary give a variation to one of those BOs and/or tell you which one is the best way to play that MU. Something to note is that if in the MU description I'm pretty much contradicting what I said in the basic BO, the MU description overrules the BO. The BOs are just a basic standard to go from.

Lastly, I will show my own deck (non water map) and comment briefly on possible deck variations you might want to consider.

I will make clear that in the future when writing this guide I will assume you and your opponent have at least 1 hunt (not counting the starting hunt) of more than say 6k food within reach of your TC (meaning it's herdable towards your TC and will not backherd before it gets there (this happens when the hunt gets too far from its starting position)). I assume this because when one of the players is mapscrewed, the balance of this game takes such a drastic hit that almost everything I mention in this guide will be void. Mapscrews I consider a bug, a bug that completely screws over the game because it forces both players into doing 1 particular strat. It takes all the strategy out of the game and usually gives one of the civs (the one who can take map control) a huge advantage right off the bat.

Water map strats are not included in this guide because there are too many, they are only viable in a small variety of situations and I'm inexperienced with or against them.

In some cases I will be mentioning which unit combos are preferred by a certain civ or certain match up, but in most cases I will assume you know how to counter every combo and know how to set up a strong 3 unit combo army. Knowing which unit to make is not something that can be included in a guide. You have to adapt to your opponent.

Also, vill distributions will rarely be covered in detail. Rough estimates are given in some cases, but I will assume that if you practice a given BO enough times, the vill distributions will start to come natural to you. Small details in the BOs are for you to find out by yourself. I didn't decide to do this only because it's a lot less work, but also because I feel that if you're following a detailed and specific BO and the situation forces you to adapt, you're unable to do so effectively. Having to find out the small details of a BO yourself is the best way to get a good feel of the civ, and to develop your own BO-making skills.

Abbreviations used

5v/4v = Villager shipments
AA = Advanced arsenal
AR = Axe rider
BH = Blockhouse
BO = Build order
BR = Bow rider or Black rider
Ckn = Chu ko nu
Clubs = War clubs or the clubs from Jap consulate.
Ctrl = Control
ERK = Eagle runner knight
HD = Hunting dogs (age1 food market upgrade)
FF = Fast fortress
FP = Fan Patch
Jag = Jaguar prowler knight
HI = Heavy infantry
Huss = Hussar
Lb = Longbowman
Mace = Macehualtin
MM = Minutemen
MU = Match up
Rax = Barracks/WH/BH/War academy/etc.
RR = Rifle rider
ST = Steel traps (age2 food market upgrade)
SW/sw = Settler wagon
TC = Town center
TP = Trading post
WC = War Chief
WH = War hut
WP = Warrior priest
WW = War wagon

Civ guides

Aztec

Aztec have their WP shipment which is the only reason they are still playable. And playable they are though, if you make proper use of this shipment. Many players still play 2 skull knight all ins and it makes me cry when they do. This is a completely and utterly wrong way of playing Aztec. Yes it can work on lower levels (and on RE patch obviously) but viable? No. It can never work against a player who knows what he's doing unless they neglected to scout and got caught completely off guard by it.

Aztec's real strength lies in their early age2 boom and their mid age2 mass. Their eco gets strong and their age2 units are better than people say they are. Coyotes are cost effective, pumas are great (who ever started the rumour that they suck?) and maces are cost effective as well.

Something to note with Aztec is that you shouldn't run away from age3 fights! Aztec have great units in age3 (maces with the range card, ERK with the range card, and strong cost effective coyotes) and an 8 vill shipment.

Viable strats

Fast age WP boom:

This is the basic build order that is used in almost all Aztec games. Arguably better than the WH age up because of how much faster you get the 3 WP and second age2 shipment. This can be a big boost to your economy.

- If you have 300 wood at the start, chop 50 more for hunting dogs. 50 coin from treasures is almost always doable, otherwise mine it.
- Warrior priest goes on XP dance. First card is 3 vill.
- Fast age up to colonial. Put all except 3 vill on wood, and switch 2 more over to food when you age. This is to keep a steady vill production in early age2. Now if you had a 200w start, get the market before war hut and get hunting dogs. If you had to build your market during transition, get a house up before WH.
- You should age up around 3.50. Your first colonial shipment is 3 warrior priests. Get steel traps if you had over 50 gold left after researching hunting dogs (gather 75). Your first batch is coyote, scout with them and get a few vill if you can. If you're expecting cav out of his base before you can get there with coyotes, stay in your base.
- When 3 WP arrive, generally you put the dancers on holy dance (spawns warrior priests) until you have 2 more and then put the 6 WP on XP dance. If you're being aggressive in early colonial or being rushed, put the 4 WP on XP dance right away without getting 2 more.
- 3rd shipment is typically 5 vill (usually in this build you will be going as heavy on eco as you can afford) but it varies.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

The misconception about 2 skull knights being a viable age up will win you most games, because you will use the fast age politician, get the war hut up before market (which is unusual but necessary), make some maces, ship 3 warrior priests (WP) followed by 6 puma and have a strong defence against his rush. If he doesn't rush, you have a strong push around 7 or 8 minutes when your WP shipment starts to pay off (have 4 WP dancing XP).

Vs Brit:

Rushing is no good. Pressure him with coyote raids while booming and attempt to outmass in mid colonial. If he's being aggressive don't panic, simply ship units after 3 WP instead of villas and you should be just fine.

Vs China:

Make sure you scout whether he's FF-ing or staying colonial (does he have guys on wood?). If FF, ship 3 WP 6 puma and rush as fast as you can. If colonial, 3 WP 6 puma is preferred but 3 WP 5 villas can be viable if he went with the 700w BO (which is hard to scout so I like to be safe with the puma shipment).

Vs Dutch:

3 WP 6 puma and immediately start pushing afterwards. If you can prevent him from aging (his building placement must've sucked then) you're happy, and if not you're probably still in a good position because you will be able to kill off his army while he's still age2 and maybe kill off a bank before he gets the ruyters out (which maces actually deal with just fine if you have enough of them)

Vs France:

3 WP 5 villas is preferred but if you're not comfortable defending try sending a military shipment instead of the villas because his musk huss start can be quite aggressive if he wants it to be. Scout if he's dual raxing by the way, you don't want his rush to catch you off guard. Against a dual rax 3 WP 9 mace is strong.

Vs Germans:

Germans will pressure you in early colonial with xbow pike uhlan, and the best way to deal with this is 3 WP 6 puma while massing maces.

Vs India:

You can probably get away with 3 WP 5v 4v. If you feel like you don't have enough units at any point, don't hesitate to ship them. India can still rush (ship 4 sowar first and make units out of agra) but this is basically suicide and you will see it coming in time and ship coyote or puma depending on which unit he made from agra.

Vs Iro:

3 WP 5v and a push in mid colonial. If he doesn't age fast you don't have to worry about a rush, if he does then sending pumas after 3 WP might be wise.

Vs Japan:

You can definitely get away with 3 WP 5v 4v, and will have an insane mid colonial mass with which you will overwhelm the Jap.

Vs Otto:

If he's not building the second TP he might be rushing. Scout which 2 military buildings he started with, and prepare accordingly. 3 WP first, then whichever military shipment is best against his combo. If he isn't rushing you can maybe afford a 5v shipment before sending units, but it's risky.

Vs Ports:

Depending on how aggressive he's playing, you will either go 3 WP 5v 4v or 3 WP military shipment. It all depends on the Port, because he can choose to cav start (against a semi-FF I would actually argue following him into fortress is viable), to musk huss pressure you or even to start 2 rax and push you fast with inf.

Vs Russia:

Russia and Aztec are alike in their strengths. This will be a mid colonial war where both players attempt to get ahead, Russia with their insanely cost effective units and aztec with their strong shipment spam and eco. Try to do damage before late colonial when you run out of shipments. Shipment order depends a lot on his strat. Some Russians will attempt to do some damage with a quick 4 coss 5 musk push, in which case 3 WP 6 puma would be best, but if his BH is not built forward you should get away with 3 WP 5v.

Vs Sioux:

Very hard match up. Your best bet is probably 3 WP first and then depending on if he went colonial AR+cetan or AR semi-FF, either send 6 puma for a quick push to damage him before he hits fortress or send 5v if he's staying colonial and be defensive for a bit longer.

Vs Spain:

3 WP 5v and depending on how aggressive he is either 4v or units. Basically boom as hard as you can and try to push out when you feel comfortable. If he ages don't panic, simply keep massing in age2 and rely on your map ctrl to outlast him.

The Aztec deck:



There aren't many viable variations here. You pretty much need all the cards in this deck. Maybe taking out 6 jags for the knight HP upgrade in age3 is viable. Keep the ERK range upgrade card even though it costs 1000 gold, because ERK+mace is such a great combination in age3 with both those cards sent.

British

The top civ in FP 1.2. They were unjustly boosted and now their early game is so good they've become unrushable where a rush used to be the only strat that could really beat them. Brit can still lose to rushes on imbalanced maps (a map where games get decided by the amount of hunts is officially imbalanced), but they win easily when they have a decent hunt. If I have to mention a civ that's the best way to counter them I guess I would have to say... No they really all die equally hard.

Viable strats:

Standard manor boom:

This strat has been the best start for Brits for as long as I can remember. I honestly don't remember a time where people didn't use it. In FP 1.2 after the manor pop boost Brits definitely have other options, they have strong aggressive strats that get a ridiculous amount of units out while still being backed up by an acceptable eco, but this strat is still in most cases superior. I love how it can start 1 unit and then scout the opponent and decide based on that information which building he gets up second, stable or rax. Also don't underestimate the tower as Brits, it can help secure hunts for mid/late colonial. I will advertise this strat in almost all cases, even when you're being aggressive, but will still include an aggressive variation that is usable as Brit.

- Note with Brit that if you start with 100 coin and 200 wood, get a market up first! Mine some coin and sell it for wood as soon as you can, then get the manor up and keep mining/gathering coin treasures until you get HD as well.
- 3 vill first shipment.
- Age with tower and 200 coin. Switch about 90% of your villas to wood and start massing market upgrades. If you already had the market, build 2 manors in transition. Otherwise build 1, but market first.
- Stop chopping wood when you reach 325. Put a couple villas on coin and rest to food
- When you hit age2 you will typically build a rax and go musk. Get ST asap. Send 700w.
- From the 700w you will get a couple more houses up and either a stable or a second rax.
- Next shipments are typically 5v 600w 4v musk upgrades.

Aggressive dual rax longbow/pike:

This strat is viable in all match ups, but less solid than the standard build in most. It's insanely strong because it gets so many units out while still having a strong eco to back it all up, and lb are just such a great unit to pressure your opponent with. They can't get hit and ran by anything and their range makes them great at picking off villas.

- Note with Brit that if you start with 100 coin and 200 wood, get a market up first! Mine some coin and sell it for wood as soon as you can, then get the manor up and keep mining/gathering coin treasures until you get HD as well.
- 3 vill first shipment.
- Age with 500 food. Switch about 90% of your villas to wood and start massing market upgrades (no placer mines yet). If you already had the market, build 2 manors in transition. Otherwise build 1, but market first.
- Start gathering food with about 70% of your villas when you get over 400 wood.
- When you hit age2 build 2 raxes right away. Send 700w and mass lb/pike
- Send 600w, then 5v 4v or maybe even 6 lb or musk if you're really persisting with the push.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Start musks, mix in huss and make sure you know what he's up to. If he's booming really hard, push him asap and keep him on his toes. Musk huss is a very mobile combo so don't be afraid to push out. Only if he has a significantly bigger army will you be at risk of getting caught.

Vs Brit:

Start musks, mix huss to raid and another rax at 600w for steady dual rax. Mix in some lb when the musk masses are getting big, and if he's attempting lb/pike at you, switch to lb huss. Keep an eye on the map, because having control over the right portions of it will decide the game.

Vs China:

Start lb or musk, scout if he's FFing and against his FF mix in huss and push him as soon as you can while booming. Against a colonial strat also mix in huss and simply outmass him with lb musk huss and watch your eco grow too large for him to handle.

Vs Dutch:

Start cav, mix in musks and don't let him age. With musk huss in age2 you can't lose, and you will most likely keep him from aging by simply pushing him as soon as you have both unit types. If you see his buildings placed very well with skirms behind it, simply go fortress yourself and win there.

Vs France:

Scout if he's dual raxing or not. If not start cav and mix musk, if he is dual raxing start lb and mix cav. If you scout only a stable from him in early age2, push him fast with musk huss and fight his fortress in age2. Your eco will end up superior.

Vs Germans:

Musk huss in colonial pretty much takes care of German's colonial, but beware of doppel uhlan traps so don't move out too early. If they semi-FF, following into fortress is probably the best way to counter. 700w 5v 700g.

Vs India:

Start cav, boom hard in early colonial and outmass them with a 3 unit combo in mid colonial. India simply won't be able to keep up with your unit mass, but don't wait too long with your push because India WILL come out on top in late late late colonial.

Vs Iro:

Start musk, mix cav and switch to main unit lb, unless he brings a lot of kanya which almost no Iro player will ever do.

Vs Japan:

In this MU I would actually advise the aggressive dual rax lb/pike. Jap simply have no answer to it.

Vs Otto:

Here I would also advise fast pressure with a dual rax lb pike. Otto will never start abus huss against Brit (if they do you can still adapt into musk huss because he ages faster than you) and full lb will do quite well against abus jan. Also, the otto will attempt to get TPs up and an aggressive strat will help keep his TP count to a minimum.

Vs Ports:

Musk start into musk huss with lb mixed in. Basically a good boom in early age2 followed up by a 3 unit combo and pressure his resources while keeping map control.

Vs Russia:

Start cav mix musk and outmass in mid colonial. Take map ctrl to secure hunts and keep massing in age2.

Vs Sioux:

Cav start and musk start are both viable. Key is to make him stay age2 and not going too cav heavy (Sioux have amazing anticav in age2).

Vs Spain:

Start musk and mix in a second rax with 700w. Full musk and pressure around 6/7 mins can keep him from aging. If he actually dares to go xbow against you, simply mix in the stable instead of the rax with 700w.

The British deck:



Colonial gets a bit crowded with brits. Ideally you want both the cav upgrades too, and the 6 lb shipment. It's definitely viable to have a seperate deck for cav heavy BOs where you add in both the cav shipments, and maybe remove one of the musk ones and 600w. If you think you need 6 lb, it's viable to put that in instead of AA, or instead of 6 musks. It depends on how aggressive you're planning to be, and on the MU. Against civs that are likely to rush with infantry I would maybe prefer the 6 lb shipment over 6 musk.

China

One of the harder civs to rate on this patch because they haven't been played much. I would put them below the top tier, but not far below. They are strong in colonial now, and can stand up against civs that used to beat them easily such as Germans, France, Spain, etcetera.

Their strength is their 700w build, which gets the early consulate up and allows for a very strong mass around 8/9 mins. This is when China is at their most dangerous, but it doesn't stop there. They have a very cost effective army and like Russia can beat almost every civ in late colonial.

Viable strats:

Colonial:

- Get 2 villages up (put 3 on wood after gathering the 300).
- Northern refugees first card.
- Age with summer palace, put 4 vill on the wonder. During transition put all but 5 (vill production) on wood and get a market up, research food and wood upgrades. Only do the coin one if you're planning on going cav (standard army).
- When you hit age2 get a rax up (you should have almost 200 wood as soon as you age) and send 700w.
- From 700w build a consulate, a village and get more market upgrades.
- Military shipments next. Ally with Brits in the consulate and send the musk batch as soon as you have 400 export.
- Generally your combo is old han, and starting to mix in standard armies when you mix 2nd rax.
- Add in a second rax at around 30 vill.

Aggressive variation: Don't send 700w first in age2, but a military shipment. If this is viable in a particular MU I will specifically mention it.

Naked FF:

- Get 2 villages up (put 3 on wood after gathering the 300w).
- Northern refugees first card.
- Age with summer palace, put 4 vill on the wonder.
- During transition put a couple of vill on gold (say 3 or 4). Depending on what civ you're up against, market is sometimes viable. Mostly not yet.
- When you hit age2 switch the summer palace to either old han army or keshik+pike army depending on what civ you're up against. Send 700g.
- Age with the confucian academy with 3 or 4 vill on it. Send 700w afterwards.
- With 700w build market and get upgrades, build a rax, a village and a consulate. Yeah, you should still be chopping wood even though you sent 700.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Normal colonial strat and attempt to outmass. Push him asap. Prepare for a rush if necessary by gathering coin for MM.

Vs Brit:

Colonial is hopeless. My best bet would probably be an FF (old han from summer palace and market during transit to age2), and a fast push in early fortress.

Vs China:

Colonial start, mainly old han. Keep him on his toes make sure he doesn't age. Battle for map ctrl in mid/late colonial.

Vs Dutch:

Colonial start and a fast push. Siege banks and try to keep him from aging. If he went skirm start and you see no way into his base, follow him into fortress and fight it there.

Vs France:

Colonial start and stay back a little in early colonial defend from raids until you get a decent army then push out. He will most likely go musk huss so don't let him mass. Don't underestimate the keshik+pike army against musk huss!

Vs Germans:

Colonial start, let him push you in early colonial and push out when you get 2, or all 3 military shipments. You have a strong timing push before Germans get their dopp uhlan xbow combo going.

Vs India:

Colonial start, boom the market ups, mix in a 2nd rax fairly quickly and swarm him with units before the game gets to late colonial.

Vs Iro:

Colonial start, be aggressive when you see him taking TPs, otherwise stay in your base until you get all 3 military shipments. Make sure you have enough anticav to hold off 4 kanya at all time, but mainly go standard army.

Vs Japan:

Boom in early colonial while killing shrines around the map with pikes. Mix in 2nd rax fairly quickly and outmass in mid colonial. Jap won't be able to keep up with your mass if you play it right.

Vs Otto:

Colonial start, burn his second TP down and sit back while massing standard army if he went jan abus, and old han if he went anything else.

Vs Ports:

Colonial start then adapting to his play is necessary. Against his musk huss stay in colonial and try to maintain map control and a containment. Against his (semi-)FF, make some units in age2 to harass his vills and follow into fortress.

Vs Russia:

Against a forward BH the aggressive variation of the colonial start is viable. You beat his rush easily and just after you get all 3 military shipments you have a push that will almost definitely beat his army and kill his fb. Against a normal defensive BH, go 700w colonial and be aggressive.

Vs Sioux:

Colonial start, aggressive variation. Push him hard and fast and hope to do some damage before he throws his insanely strong cetan+AR mass on you.

Vs Spain:

Colonial start, but beware of rod huss musk. Don't get yourself trapped and don't push out too early. FF may also be viable.

The Chinese deck:



Variation is mostly in age3. Viable is taking out refrigeration and putting in meteor hammers if you're planning to be very aggressive in age3 and relying on your shipment spam. 4 iron flails can also be substituted by 4 meteor hammers, if you feel like they're the better cav. This depends on the situation but I prefer iron flails in most cases. Taking out 13 ckn for 4 meteors or for royal mint is also viable.

Dutch

Dutch are one of the weaker civs because against most civs they have trouble getting to fortress unharmed. Building placement is extremely important with this civ because it can be the gate to their much needed age3 anticav. Consider placing strategic walls to hold off musk huss timing pushes, and whenever you get a military advantage with Dutch by no means push out, but rather age and finish the game there.

Use walls for defence! I can't stress this enough with this civ.

Viable strats:

Bank wagon build:

This is the most common build Dutch use. It's safe, will hold off any rush if you see it coming in time, and still gets a decent eco out. It's obviously less eco heavy than the 3 bank boom but a much safer way to go if your opponent could be aggressive in early age2.

- First card 3 vill. You age with 15 vill (400w politician), so put enough vill on gold to queue 12. I usually put 2 on gold from the start, sometimes 1 depending on the amount of gold treasures.
- Put all your vill on food and wood in such a way that you get 350-350 at the same time. If you start from 0-0, vill allocations would be something like 5-10 and switch to 6-9 somewhere along the way. Build a bank (make sure you get it up before aging for the XP, if you can't get it up before aging then put 4 vill on it so you get the shipment asap).
- From the 400 age up wood, build a military building (which one depends on opponent) and 2 houses. First shipment in age2 is bank wagon.
- Typically your next shipment is 700w for another bank and second military building. In some cases you will need 8 pikes, which is icky because of the housing and the way your eco suffers. I prefer the 3 bank boom in many cases mainly because of this dilemma. Sending 8 pikes will mean you'll be stuck with 2 banks for a pretty long time and will force you to chop some wood for houses, while sending 700w gives your opponent chances to push with cav before you get the time to send 8 pikes after that. The 3 bank boom solves this by simply skipping the bank wagon and going 8 pike after 700w. You will basically be in the same situation, but with 1 more bank.

Quick 3 bank boom:

This strat is boomy and can be dangerous in some MUs. However I prefer it in most MUs because of the option it gives you to do a relatively fast 3 bank semi-FF. Look at it this way: this strat improves your chances of getting to fortress but can end up hurting you in early colonial if your opponent is being aggressive. It can definitely hold off aggression though, but it may be hard defending it. That's why in some MUs I will say I prefer this build, but still advise the standard build unless you're very comfortable defending early aggression.

- First card 3 vill. You age with 15 vill, so put enough vill on gold to queue 12. I usually put 2 on gold from the start, sometimes 1 depending on the amount of gold treasures.
- Put all your vill on food and wood in such a way that you get 350-350 at the same time. If you start from 0-0, vill allocations would be something like 5-10 and switch to 6-9 somewhere along the way. Build a bank (make sure you get it up before aging for the XP, if you can't get it up before aging then put 4 vill on it so you get the shipment asap).

- After bank starts building put 5 or 6 on coin for just a little while to get your vill production started again. When your bank is up, 2 on coin is enough for now.
- From the 400 age up wood, build another bank.
- First shipment in age2 is 700w. Another bank and a military building (which one depends on your opponent), and 2 houses (you should have 50 wood left over before 700 arrives).
- Switch some villas to gold, say 6 or 7 to keep up a steady production.
- Next shipments depend on opponent.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Because it's very hard to scout whether Aztec is being aggressive or not, you have to play safe with the bank wagon build. Start skirms and camp them behind buildings. If he's being aggressive and you really can't hold with minutemen + skirm alone, send 8 pikes second, but don't do this too lightly because it will slow you down quite a bit.

Vs Brit:

3 bank boom and cav start unless you scout an aggressive start coming from him. To scout the brit, check what he aged up with and whether he's building 1 or 2 military buildings right away. If he's being aggressive, go skirm instead of cav and mix cav with 600w.

Vs China:

Play it safe with the bank wagon build. Start skirm, he might rush but if he doesn't switch to a skirm semi-FF. If he rushes really fast, send 8 pikes after bank wagon but otherwise always 700w. Your buildings and MM should be enough protection against his cav. Skirm huss in age2 should hold them back for a while and might give you a chance to age.

Vs Dutch:

Quick 3 banks into a cav semi-FF. 700w 8 pike is viable to pressure him a bit while you're both aging but I'm a bigger fan of 700w 600w. Usually from the 600w you get the 4th bank up after you start aging (have a bunch of villas on food during transition) and the second military building. Chop wood for houses and a market. If you feel like the map doesn't allow you to be passive in early age3, don't get the 4th bank up just yet, this will get more units out in early age3 because you won't have to chop wood yet.

Vs France:

Skirm semi-FF. 3 bank boom (even against a dual rax you should be fine (transition into skirm huss in age2 and push him before he can mix in a good amount of cav) but if you scout a dual rax play it safe with the bank wagon). Start skirm either way and send 8 pikes second. Build your base well! This is extra important in this MU because he has a musk huss timing push just before you age that can screw you up completely if you don't have your base built perfectly. A small wall just to dodge his cav with skirm can be game deciding.

Vs Germans:

Bank wagon build against his early age2 pressure. Start skirm and use MM to get rid of his uhlands. Try to delay sending 8 pikes until after 700w, but if you were unable to build your base very well then it might be necessary to send 8 pikes after bank wagon.

Vs India:

3 bank boom and cav semi-FF. 700w 600w to get the 4th bank up and chop wood during age up to get the second military building up. If he disrupts your build by rushing in early colonial, simply transition into a colonial build (still 700w 600w and 8 pike afterwards), beat back his rush and then age. His eco will have suffered more than yours unless your defense was bad.

Vs Iro:

3 bank boom and cav start. If he uses the fast age up, go skirm start and 700w 8 pike. You'll beat back his rush and again, his eco will have suffered more than yours. Preferred is to get some skirms out before aging, because if you do a cav semi-FF he does have chances to pressure just before you age.

Vs Japan:

3 bank boom and skirm start. If he tries anything in early colonial you should be able to hold by sending 8 pikes and follow it up by 600w and aging. If he doesn't rush simply skirm pike semi-FF and kill shrines in fortress while hit and running his army/pushing his vills with skirms..

Vs Otto:

Play it safe with the bank wagon build. Scout which 2 military buildings he's making. If you scout jan abus, start skirm. Try to age before he can mix a lot of cav. If you scout jan huss, also start skirm and camp behind your buildings, send 8 pikes (again, if your base is full of holes send the 8 pikes after bank wagon, if you feel like you can hold with MM send it after 700w).

Vs Ports:

3 bank boom and cav start. Ports can try to do damage with musk huss in which case you'll have to mix skirms and delay your age up (700w 600w 8 pike), but if he also plans on a cav semi-FF keep your cav in your base and defend against his raids while not making more than 5 and aging as fast as you can. Pressure in early fortress, going cannons is viable.

Vs Russia:

Bank wagon build and cav start to defend against his possible 4 coss 5 musk pressure. 700w second to get a rax up and mix in some skirms to keep his musks from sieging stuff. Building placement is vital! Use walls if you have to. After you hold off his cossack shipments it will be safe to age.

Vs Sioux:

Play it safe with the bank wagon and go cav start. Whatever he does, switch to skirm huss in age2 to get a decent defence and then try to age. (bank wagon 700w 8 pike 600w).

Vs Spain:

Mind your building placement, go 3 bank boom and skirm start. Go skirm pike semi-FF and try to hold off his rod+huss timing push with good micro and some well placed walls. Even if you hold it off he will most likely still win in age3 but you pretty much have to age in this MU if you want to have any shot at it at all. In age3 if he's massing rod lancer, don't forget to mix in halbs as a meatshield (that's right, halbs)! They're actually your only hope of beating this combo.

The Dutch deck:



BR > hackapell. No contest. Hackapells are easily dealt with by proper hit and run, and BR are the unit that's actually useful to Dutch when they just lost their army to a musk huss timing push but did manage to get to fortress, and are now sitting in their TC, their only income being gold. In this case 7 BR can be a game saver because musk huss doesn't do that well against them.

Fort for royal mint is viable although the fort can come in quite handy with Dutch. They usually struggle to get to late fortress because their eco lags behind, in which case a fort can be a game saver. Your opponent's army is usually low on siege units (mostly it's mainly skirm goon), and you can take advantage of that by placing the fort pretty much in his face (but not too close) so that he scouts it just a little too late, tries to move in to kill it but finds your army protecting it. To kill a building fort he will have to commit his entire army and it will easily be worth it because you'll be killing his army in the meantime.

France

The most versatile civ of all, France will most likely be one of the very few civs in this guide with 3 completely unique viable build orders. Their musk huss start is very strong, their dual rax can disrupt their opponents' booms, and their cav semi-FF is a great way to take advantage of civs that have trouble against strong semi-FFs.

France gets very strong in mid to later colonial because their cav ups start to kick in and their heavy food eco is supported by spice trade, market upgrades and furriers if it really drags on in age2. The best way to beat them in age2 and force them to age is to play Sioux and throw that insane 4 unit combo at them. The best way to beat musk huss in colonial is cetan club BR and a couple of AR.

Viable strats:

Musk huss start:

A revolutionary strat that is relatively new (thought of by Samwise12 somewhere late 2009) and ended up to be the most used build order in FP 1.1. In 1.2, it is still quite solid and can be considered one of the strongest strats in the game. What's so special about it is sending the 700w first, not making any houses from the 400 age up wood, and waiting for the 700w for housing. It gets a minimum of 5 musks and 3 huss out in very early age2 and manages to keep up a solid musk spam.

- Mind early market! Always go early market even with 100 wood start. With 100w start, chop wood with 3 villas from the start and put the first vill you produce on wood also. Get the market up before house! With a 200w start same thing, but chop wood with 2 villas.
- 3 villas first card.
- Gang saw is optional if you get a lot of food in age1 and feel like you can research it before you start to age and still not have idle TC time. Otherwise leave it for now.
- When you start aging (400w) put about 6 or 7 villas on wood and research placer mines as soon as possible. Typically you'll switch all wood villas to gold when you have 125 wood, but sometimes if you had good gold treasures you can put 6 or even 5 on gold and get more units out with the first batch.
- When you hit age2, send 700w, gather the crates as fast as you can and get both a stable and a rax up. And research steel traps!
- Queue 1 musk and 1 huss in the military buildings and wait for the 700w for housing. Fill up the batches when you get houses. Generally get 5 musks always and fill it up with however many huss you can afford. Either mix in a second rax with 700w or get amalgamation (second gold market upgrade).
- Next card is 4 villas. Card after that is generally 600w, sometimes 8 xbows when being aggressive. If you sent 8 xbows, chop some wood with 3 or 4 villas for 2 or 3 houses until the 600w arrives. If you hadn't already, mix in the second rax with the 600w.

Aggressive dual rax xbow/pike:

The French rush build that's viable and even preferred in some MUs. Strong because it simply gets a huge mass of units out while the French eco keeps growing steadily.

- Mind early market! Always go early market even with 100 wood start. With 100w start, chop wood with 3 villas from the start and put the first vill you produce on wood also. Get the market up before house! With a 200w start same thing, but chop wood with 2 villas.

- 3 villas first card.
- Put 8 villas on wood when you start aging (400w). Gang saw in market. Mine up to 125 coin to get steel traps in early age2.
- In early age2 switch most of your villas to food. The greater amount of wood income will come from shipments, for now.
- Card order in colonial is 700w 600w 8 xbow 4v. This allows for the biggest mass around 7 mins. Almost no exceptions. If you feel like sending 4v sooner is preferred in your current situation it is of course viable (and strong in some, rare situations) but if you're doing that then maybe a musk huss start would've been better. Dual rax is a build you do to be aggressive, and 4v doesn't help with that.

Cav or musk semi-FF:

One of the oldest build orders in the game. There are many, many variations and I will discuss which one to use in the MU descriptions. This will be the most basic version of it.

- Mind early market! Always go early market even with 100 wood start. With 100w start, chop wood with 3 villas from the start and put the first vill you produce on wood also. Get the market up before house! With a 200w start same thing, but chop wood with 2 villas.
- 3 villas first card.
- Put 6 villas on wood when you start aging (400w). Gang saw then placer mines in market.
- Depending on which one you're doing (cav or musk semi), put either 8 or 4 villas on gold after you get 125 wood. It also depends on how much coin you have.
- First card in age2 is 4 villas, from age up wood build military building and 2 houses. Research steel traps.
- You will typically get 5 cav or 10/15 musks before aging. Send 700g second in age2 and age with the fast politician. Chop lots of wood during age up, houses up and the second gold upgrade in market is optional if you think you can afford it. In most cases you don't need the rax just yet (will specify in MU descriptions if you do).

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Musk huss start, send 8 xbows after 4 villas and mix in second rax with 700w. Push him after the bows arrive to stop him from booming fully. Keep up the aggressive play, because you've already sent all your eco cards but he's still waiting for an opportunity to send 4v (if you're lucky he hasn't sent 5v yet either).

Vs Brit:

Cav semi-FF and dual rax are both viable. It depends strongly on the map. If the Brit has good hunts a semi-FF (get the rax during age up) is probably your best bet because they will hold off a dual rax relatively easily, but if he has bad hunts try to pressure with a dual rax to keep him off hunts, in order to overpower him in mid colonial.

Vs China:

Start as if you would cav semi-FF. 4v first in age2 and cav start. If you scout a colonial strat coming from him send 700w second in age2 and mix in 2 raxes. Next shipment is 600w and then 8 bow. Switch to bow musk huss in age2 (mainly bow unless he's going cav heavy). If you scout his FF send 700g instead of 700w and semi-FF.

Vs Dutch:

Musk huss start and fast pressure with cav. If you feel his base is too well built to do a musk huss timing push at 7 mins, turn your strat into a semi-FF. (700w 4v 700g). Otherwise, push into his base around 7 mins and keep massing in age2. If you killed his army decisively and got his villas to garrison you've won the game, otherwise you might be in trouble. In almost all cases however this timing push will beat the Dutch, unless they walled a whole lot and invested in their defense in which case you can go fortress and be ahead.

Vs France:

Musk huss start. 2 viable variations: either 700w 4v 600w and second gold upgrade with 700w instead of rax, or the much more aggressive 700w 4v 8 xbow and second rax at 700w. The defensive BO relies on your huss raids to keep him in his base and MM if he pushes. It can be risky but is a great way to get ahead if you had a small advantage upon hitting age2 or if you feel your opponent isn't in a position to push out.

Vs Germans:

Musk huss start. If the German xbow rushes you can win with a switch to bow huss (and a couple of musk to counter uhlan) and if the German goes for an eco heavy doppel uhlan build do the 700w 4v 600w variation and don't push out too early because doppel+uhlan traps will cost you your army, but rather wait until you have ~30 musks and make sure you know where his army is before pushing out. Don't let it come between you and your TC. If the German goes cav start and doesn't mix a rax, push out as soon as possible and do damage before he hits fortress.

Vs India:

Start as if you would cav semi-FF. 4v first in age2 and cav start. If he rushes you switch into a colonial build by sending 700w. Otherwise continue your semi-FF, do the second gold upgrade and don't build a rax yet. Push him early in age3. Cannons are vital.

Vs Iro:

Musk huss start and cav semi-FF are both viable. If you decide to semi-FF and scout a rush coming (if he did the fast age up) send 700w instead of 700g and switch to bow musk huss.

Vs Japan:

Dual rax wins. Place your raxes not too far from your base unless you scout age1 consulate, because Japan does have means to surprise you with 100% no eco builds, but building them a little forward won't hurt. If you scout a stable from him in early age2 stay a little defensive until you get 3 batches of units out. Go heavy on pike in this case. Vs a rax start, push with full xbow as fast as you can and keep his villas garrisoned. Don't push on his shrines around the map until later, his town is where you can do the real damage.

Vs Otto:

Dual rax is doable but when scouted and prepared for accordingly won't do much. Safer is a defensive musk huss (or bow musk huss against jan abus). Raid him as much as you can.

Vs Ports:

Cav semi-FF. If he tries to push you fast with inf, send 700w instead of 700g, raid him and mix in 2 raxes, then switch to bow musk huss. Against a cav start from him, make 8 huss before aging instead of 5, but make sure you know how many just came out of his stable before you engage in cav fights. Musk semi-FF is also viable and somewhat safer against fast musk pressure.

Vs Russia:

Wall off your town with buildings so he won't do anything with a 10 strelet 4 coss push, and start musk huss. If he didn't go for a fast push, try to age after you get about 10/15 musks out (700w 4v 700g), you can't win in colonial. If he did push fast, go for the colonial wars. Raid him well and try to pressure him before late colonial.

Vs Sioux:

Musk huss loses to cetan club AR and some BR mixed in. Your best bet might be a dual rax that will hopefully catch him off guard. You can also try a cav semi-FF.

Vs Spain:

Musk semi-FF is viable but preferred is a musk huss start into full musk in age2. Try to keep map ctrl and don't let him age. Push out quickly and keep raiding. A Spain who went dual rax musk will be in pain later when your 2 huss raids are making him die of frustration, and a Spain who cav started into huss musk is pressurable in early age2. Don't overextend your push however, it's just meant to show strength and keep him from aging, and maybe getting some of his vills garrisoned.

The French deck:



AA for the skirm & xbow upgrade in age2 is viable but I prefer AA because whenever your dual rax gets at a certain point where it becomes viable to send the RI upgrade, you should already be mixing in huss musk and you won't be making a lot of xbow for very much longer. Only against Japan I would consider putting this card in.

Team skirm upgrade in age3 for fort is also viable. As explained at the Dutch deck the fort can get very strong in mid/late fortress, and even though France doesn't need it as much, it can still be useful. This I guess is a matter of preference.

Germans

Germans became one of the top civs after players realised how strong doppel uhlan is. Pushing out against doppel uhlan is dangerous because when they suddenly pop up behind you and you are forced to hit and run into their base, it's not gonna be a very pretty sight. And even their fast semi-FF build which gets 7 cav out but still lets them age at 7.40 with a shipment ready is very deadly to some civs. Germans are very much like France with a colonial rush build, a HI+cav build and a cav semi-FF. They may not have musks but are still a very versatile civ.

Viable strats:

Xbow/pike:

Some players have been arguing for German dual rax pressure. I disagree for a couple of reasons: Germany has very strong vill shipments that they can send in early age2 and a dual rax is not worth it if you send these shipments. In that case it would be better to simply send 8 xbow 3sw and mix in the second rax a bit later. For the 2 raxes to be worth it they would have to go 700w 600w, which is icky as Germans because they get the 600w shipment too slow for it to supply a steady 2 rax production. Lastly, a dual rax for Germany is almost never good in mid/late colonial. They are much better off mixing in cav and switching to doppel uhlan, and they won't have the eco to support 2 rax 1 stable until very late. Hence single rax start is better in the long run because it allows them to mix in the stable that much sooner.

- 2sw first card. Go early market only with a 200 wood start.
- When you age (400w) put all your SW on wood. If you don't have a market yet, put 1 or 2 normal villas on wood as well.
- Get the wood and food upgrade from market. Mine enough to get steel traps in age2.
- When you hit age2 get a rax up (generally not forward, I will specify in MU descriptions when a forward rax is viable) and send 8 xbow, and research steel traps.
- Next card is generally 3sw. Sometimes 2sw for the 2 uhlan, but this is almost never preferred.
- Card after that is 2sw or 700w. 700w for a somewhat better military spam in the short run, 2sw for the long run. Mix in a stable either way.

Doppel uhlan colonial start:

A strong colonial build that is used mainly against musk huss to take quick map ctrl and be able to boom fully without having to worry about getting pushed.

- 2sw first card. Go early market only with a 200 wood start.
- When you age (400w) put all your SW on wood. If you don't have a market yet, put 1 or 2 normal villas on wood as well.
- Get all 3 market ups and gather enough for steel traps. When you have enough for steel traps, take villas off wood and put them on gold.
- First shipment in age2 is 700w. From the 400w age up wood build a stable and 2 houses and get some cav out. With the 700w, get the second gold upgrade (generally), a rax, and some houses.
- Next shipment 3sw. Go doppel+uhlan and trap his army with the help of MM if he pushes out. Wait for 8 xbow shipment if you can.
- Next shipment 8xbows.

Cav semi-FF:

There are many variations to the German cav semi-FF. This will be the fastest (fort time ~7.40), least eco heavy variation where they only send 1 of the vill shipments but have a very fast age time with a shipment ready and 7 uhlans in age2. This strat is only viable if there is a trade route on the map, preferably a post you can easily defend.

- 2sw first card. Go early market only with a 200 wood start.
- When you age (400w) put all your vills except 1 or 2 on wood. On Great Plains you have time to get a market and get hunting dogs first, then build a TP in your base. I'm not sure about other maps, you will have to test out the timings yourself (basically it depends on when the trade cart comes near your TP)
- Get placer mines and gang saw as well, and after you get all that stop gathering wood completely and put all your SW on gold, rest on food.
- First card in age2 is 3sw. From the age up wood get a stable and 2 houses up. Get 5 uhlans out and send 700g.
- Age to fortress with the fast politician and after you start aging put a bunch of vills on wood (say 15 pop) for housing and 2nd gold and food market upgrades. Don't build the rax yet, you won't need it yet. Make sure you get enough wood for the uhlan upgrade as well.
- You should hit fortress with a shipment ready. Usually this is 8 skirms, but it depends on your opponent.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Xbow/pike pressure to keep him from booming. Contain him while going eco and switch to uhlan xbow pike. Adding in dopps is viable later when you get the eco to support it. Keep up pressure to keep him from sending his remaining eco shipments and if you play it right you can overwhelm him in mid/late colonial with a superior eco and the possibility to keep him from gathering outside his base.

Vs Brit:

Cav semi-FF is your best bet. Xbow/pike pressure is viable if the Brit has bad hunts, but if not go semi-FF and push him quickly in early age3 to keep him from booming too hard and to do some damage while he's aging (he most likely is). Make WW against his musk huss.

Vs China:

Xbow/pike pressure. Keep him from securing additional hunts. Defensive rax and take a break from the pressure around 7 mins when his military shipments have the ability to overwhelm you. Switch to dopp uhlan around 10 mins.

Vs Dutch:

Xbow/pike pressure, forward rax, in early colonial to keep him from even thinking about aging. Send eco shipments while containing him and overwhelm him with dopp uhlan xbow in mid/late age2. If he manages to age at any point follow him into fortress.

Vs France:

Dopp uhlan start, take map ctrl and try to trap his musk huss if they move out of his base. Keep massing units in age2, pressure him with xbows a bit, and finally when he does get enough units to push out it comes down to how well you can trap his army. Against a scouted dual rax build coming from him, go uhlan xbow instead of uhlan dopp.

Vs Germans:

Dopp uhlan start. This is strong against xbow pike because you can always hold off a rush with MM and cav, and you get a significantly better eco and long term unit combo than him.

Vs India:

Cav semi-FF. If he rushes you, you can easily hold him off with MM and uhlans and an 8 xbow shipment which you can send instead of 700g. Adapt by adding a bit more cav before aging and sending 700g next. Usually he will not rush and you can cav semi-FF safely, and push in early fortress as soon as you get skirms out.

Vs Iro:

Cav semi-FF is strong if you see him taking TPs. If not, xbow/pike pressure will keep him from booming while you get a strong eco and should be able to outlast him in age2.

Vs Japan:

Xbow/pike pressure. Mix in a second rax instead of stable if he's going ashi naginata. Don't push into his base as aggressively as French do with their dual rax, but rather pressure his army and his villis into garrisoning while killing shrines around the map with 5 pikes you make in early colonial. Your eco will get ahead and you will outmass him in age2.

Vs Otto:

Cav semi-FF is strong if you see him taking a second TP. If he doesn't, go defensive xbow/pike and if you hold off his rush you'll be in a strong position.

Vs Ports:

Cav semi-FF. Pressure in fortress and keep him off resources as much as you can. If he pushes you in early colonial with musks, usually you'll be able to hold him off with xbows (ship instead of 700g) MM and uhlans, adapt into making a bit more uhlans and aging when the next shipment (700g) arrives.

Vs Russia:

Cav semi-FF. If he rushes you will hold it off the same way as against Ports, and if he doesn't you will push him fast in age3 and make sure he doesn't follow you into fortress. Beware of large masses of coss musk though, WW can come in very handy in this case.

Vs Sioux:

Dopp uhlan start. Be aggressive to keep him from aging.

Vs Spain:

Colonial is unwinnable due to rods. Cav semi-FF is probably your best bet, but you'll have to delay pressure until you know for sure your army can take on his. You don't want your early fortress army to get trapped by a large mass of rod huss.

The German deck:



The main dilemma you're looking at in this deck is spice trade vs HI attack. I chose spice trade because I'm a big fan of this card, but since you'll be mainly mining gold instead of gathering food in late colonial and you'll be bringing a lot of dopps in your combo, maybe the dopp upgrade is better. Again, a matter of preference, because it's too close to call.

India

Easily the bottom civ on this patch, India is a civ to play if you like a challenge. Their rush sacrifices too much eco to be viable, and what they're left with is a defensive boom strat that doesn't boom hard enough to make them deal with strong semi-FFs or fast, better booms. The main problem is that if they choose to do this boom build, they don't get nearly enough units out in early age2 to have any means of pressuring, and if they choose not to do the boom build, they hurt their own eco more than they can hurt their opponent's. Still, their mid/late colonial is very strong, so if you by some miracle manage to keep your opponent from aging and the timer says 20 mins, your chances have significantly improved.

Viable strats:

300 export build:

India can rush. But they can't do it well, not anymore. Their rush may be relatively fast, but they end up hurting their own economy so much that no matter how much damage they do to their opponent it's hard to come back from it. The rush is still (arguably) viable in very few situations, but I will not include it in this guide because this agra boom build is much stronger in all cases.

- Age1 can be a bit tricky with India. Usually I put 2 on food at the very start, gather crates with the rest and as soon as I have a vill queued I put 3 of them on wood and 1 remains to gather crates. With vill waypoint on wood this is mostly enough to keep up vill production. Keep in mind that without the wood trickle shipment you need 7 vill on wood, and with it you need 5.
- First card wood trickle. Don't take vill on wood for a faster age time, but rather keep a steady vill production.
- Age with agra fort. Build it defensively (I will specify in MU descriptions when it may be viable to build it aggressively) with 4 vill tasked to it. You should age around 4.50.
- While aging put say 8 vill on wood and get a house up. After the house is up, take 3 vill off wood again. No market yet. Decide whether your first batch will be sepoy or gorkha and distribute your gold and food vill accordingly.
- First card in age2 is 600w. From this, build a consulate, houses and a market. After it arrives all new vill should go to wood to support housing and a second military building soon.
- Next shipment is 300 export. Use this to ally with Otto in consulate (don't ally with them before the shipment arrives since the shipment also makes allying cheaper) and send the 4 vill shipment from consulate. 3 huss as soon as you get 400 export.
- When you can afford a second military building build it and take a bunch of vill off wood again.
- Next shipment is usually 4 sowar. After that the big wood trickle is viable, but I personally like desert terror first if I'm going cav. Sometimes 5 sepoy is necessary.
- India usually pushes out around the time they get 3 huss from the consulate.

TOV (tower of victory) variation: BO is the same except age with tower of victory and get the market up from the age up wood instead of from the 600w. From the 600w get a second military building up. This is a slightly slower build (as in you will get units out slower) but more eco heavy and will allow you to use inspiration in fights. In most situations the standard agra build is preferred because this one gets military buildings up so late it gets very hard to defend against even mild early colonial pushes.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Agra build. Aztec will also boom in early colonial and the game will be decided in mid colonial. Don't push out too early, let him come.

Vs Brit:

Agra build. Your only hope is to survive his pushes in mid colonial and transition into a late colonial where India really excels. Try to keep scouting his army because if it's small he may be aging and you need to push to take advantage of that.

Vs China:

Agra build. Go heavy on gurkha against a colonial build. Against an FF, pressure his villas with gurkha and fight his age3 in age2.

Vs Dutch:

Agra build. TOV variation may be viable. You don't really have much of a choice but to let him age and your fate is to fight an uphill battle against his fortress units. Try to keep map ctrl and make sure you scout it in time if he goes cannons.

Vs France:

Agra build. Scout his build. Against dual rax go heavy on gurkha and keep hit and running his army. You have a chance here. Against musk huss also hit and run his army and hope he overextends his push. Against semi-FF, boom as hard as you can, don't even bother trying to push his town at any point, and try to get a good position to fight his cannons.

Vs Germans:

Agra build. Against a semi-FF, boom hard and mass and hope he screws up. Against a colonial based strat you may have a chance if you survive his early/mid colonial pushes.

Vs India:

Agra build. TOV variation is not viable because if your opponent scouts it he can do damage with a quick sowar shipment and sepoy batch.

Vs Iro:

Agra build. Go heavy on gurkha in early colonial and try to survive his early game pushes until your eco starts to jump ahead.

Vs Japan:

Agra build. TOV variation not viable because a smart jap will scout and adapt into a somewhat more aggressive strat.

Vs Otto:

Against a TP booming otto India can just not do anything. Best hope is Agra build and outmicro, and hope he screws up in his macro or something.

Vs Ports:

Agra build. Fighting age3 Port in colonial is hopeless so against a Port semi-FF I would advise to send 600g (instead of 4 sowar) and following him into fortress (TOV wonder).

Vs Russia:

Agra build and against a defensive BH pressure so he doesn't age. If his army is big go back and try again later. The late colonial wars make this a fun MU, India is strong in late colonial but Russia might just be the one civ that can beat them at it.

Vs Sioux:

Honestly, just resign. Best bet is Agra build with sepoy to defend against his cav raids and then fighting a very uphill battle against his OP units in fortress. Rushing is entirely not viable because Sioux can so easily turn their semi-FF into a colonial strat and completely demolish you because you sacrificed eco to rush him.

Vs Spain:

Agra build. Against his (semi-)FF build your agra very defensively, get as many sepoy out as you can and wait for the 3 huss from cons before you engage his army. Call both minutemen and hope you get lucky against the cannons.

The Indian deck:



No variations imo.

Iroquois

Arguably one of the weaker civs, they are very map dependent. I would advise against playing Iro on a non-TP map because they simply can't boom hard enough to keep up with any civ's eco. Civs that get outboomed by Iro in early colonial will simply age and Iro will be behind because an Iro semi-FF is not great. They have acceptable units in age2, but in fact their units are just not good enough to keep up. FP are great, sure, but their anticav is mediocre and their cav costs a lot of wood which is icky. However Iro do okay on TP maps because they can use the TPs for a strong shipment spam and can afford to fight most civs' fortress in colonial.

Viable strats:

TP strat:

Obviously this only works on TP maps. Iro have a whole bunch of good shipments in age2 and the best way to take advantage of that is to get TPs up, get all your shipments sent and then upgrade the trade route.

- Always get a market up and research hunting dogs. With 100w start, put a couple of vill on wood to get the necessary 50. Your travois goes to scout a bit and then turns into a house before you get popped (and before you get your first shipment because building the house gives XP).
- 3 vill first card
- Mind your vill micro in age1. If it's bad you may age late, or have idle TC time.
- In most cases age with the wise woman at 3.05. If you don't have say 650f yet, make another vill before aging.
- While aging put all except 1 or 2 of your vill on wood. Make sure your WC is near a TP in time.
- Preferably build the first TP as near your base as you can. If you build a second one, keep chopping wood until you get both TPs up and another house.
- Make sure you have 25 coin when you age. That plus another 100 from age up will get you steel traps.
- First card in age2 is 5v. Get steel traps as soon as possible.
- Build the WH defensively
- Typically you will mix in a stable around 8/9 min, later if you had to delay vill shipments.
- If you took 2 TPs, after all your age2 shipments are sent, upgrade the TP route to have them gather resources.

On a non-TP map: The exact same build but without TPs. Fast age up for faster vill shipments and/or a little early pressure might be viable I'm not sure. In this guide I will assume you're playing on a TP map for my own sake, because I'm inexperienced with any other build (Plains ftw).

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Both will boom in early colonial. Take 2 TPs and try to defend the second one. He may sacrifice the 5 vill shipment to get it killed which is not bad for you by any means, but know when your army is beat and let the TP die.

Vs Brit:

Send both your vill cards and take 2 TPs. Scout if he's building 2 raxes forward or even a stable+rax forward, and if he is don't send 4 villas yet but 6 toma against stable+rax and 6 aenna vs 2 rax instead. Unless he's going lb/pike, mix in rax instead of stable.

Vs China:

Scout him during transition and if he has a bunch of villas on wood get only 1 TP and delay 4v (send 4 kanya instead) for a solid defense. Vs an FF (if he has no villas on wood) get 2 TPs, send both vill cards and pressure a bit with toma and mix in the stable early and spam a 3 unit combo.

Vs Dutch:

2 TPs and 5v 4 kanya 6 aenna, or 6 toma if he started cav. Pressure him around 6.30 mins to keep him from aging, but if you don't see a way to get into his base go back and follow him into fortress if you have enough hunts to survive that long, and fight in colonial if you have to hunt outside your base.

Vs France:

If you scout colonial musk huss, go 1 TP, both vill shipments and don't push out too early. Musk huss is a dangerous combo in the open field so you wanna wait until you have a decent amount of toma. You do push around 8/9 mins to keep him from aging, and to keep his eco from getting ahead or his cav upgrades to kick in. Mix in a second WH instead of stable. Against his dual rax also get 1 TP send a kanya after 5v and defend, but push out (if you can) before he gets a chance to mix in cav. Against a semi-FF get 2 TPs, send both vill shipments and fight his age3 in colonial.

Vs Germans:

Scout if he has villas on gold. If he does, go 2 TPs and pressure him with toma. If not, take 1 TP and send 5v military shipment.

Vs India:

2 TPs and both vill shipments. Swarm him with units in mid colonial. Best to mix in a second WH instead of stable. If he attempts to rush, you should be able to hold it off with tomas.

Vs Iro:

1 TP. If he takes 2, put up a forward WH, send a military shipment instead of 5 villas and kill the TP, then push his base a bit until your 5v shipment arrives. Keep map ctrl and you'll win it in colonial. If he takes 1 or 0 TPs, send vill shipments and keep scouting his army to check if he may be aging. If he pushes you in early age2 send a military shipment after 5v, and if he does the fast age up scout his WH placement and if it's forward send a military shipment instead of 5v. If you scout no wood villas during transition to age2 go 2 TPs and both vill shipments, let him age in peace you don't care, because you'll beat his fortress units with your much better eco.

Vs Japan:

2 TPs and both vill shipments, then swarm him with units in mid colonial. Kill shrines around the map with 5 toma from the very start.

Vs Otto:

1 TP and both vill shipments. Mix in the stable early (say after 4v shipment), and hope he screws up. There really isn't much you can do against his TP boom and jan abus combo because aenna kanya just doesn't cut it unless you manage to severely outmass him. If he rushes you, send 4 kanya instead of 4v and if you hold him off you're in a good position.

Vs Ports:

If he semi-FFs, it's hopeless fighting his fortress in age2 so take 2 TPs and follow him into fortress (5v 4v 600g). If he does a colonial strat take 1 TP and send both vill shipments, try to pressure him around 7/8 min. Mix in a second WH instead of stable unless he went xbow/pike.

Vs Russia:

1 TP and send kanyas first if he went forward BH. Otherwise vill shipments. Pressure him around 8/9 mins before his insane spam starts to overwhelm you.

Vs Sioux:

2 TPs and both vill shipments. Your best hope is that he doesn't semi-FF and you manage to outmicro him in age2, but if he cav semi-FFs there is honestly almost nothing you can do. A rush isn't viable because he will turn his semi-FF into a colonial strat and because you sacrificed eco to pressure him he will win easily in age2. Your best bet against his semi-FF is to follow him into fortress, however icky that may be. 5v 4v 600g.

Vs Spain:

2 TPs and both vill shipments. First batch toma to deal with his cav raids unless he went 2 rax in which case you spam full aenna with some toma as a meatshield for rods. Add in second rax instead of stable. If he (semi-)FFs, rather mix in the stable and go full toma+kanya. Not too many kanya. If you hold off his cannons and have a sizeable army left you're in a good position.

The Iroquois deck:



No variations imo. Iro don't have the luxury to choose which eco cards they put in, since they have almost no eco cards to choose from.

Japan

Japan may be a little better than India, but they face the same problems. Their boom is strong, but takes a big investment, and most civs will take advantage of that by either rushing or aging for superior units. Japan can be playable in match ups where civs have trouble rushing them hard enough to stop their boom, but in most match ups they won't be allowed to boom unharmed and their rush defence is not strong enough to keep up, not in 1.2.

Viable strats:

Standard colonial start:

The strongest build since FP 1.0 in almost all MUs. Shrine booming is no longer viable in most MUs because it no longer gives you the OP economy it used to and will have trouble against rushes. Something to note about this build is that at every point in age2 when your opponent isn't being aggressive, the best thing to do is usually mass shrines even if it holds back your military spam. Pushing in early age2 is almost never viable. Your push comes around 10 to 12 mins if you managed to survive that long with an unharmed eco, and is merely meant to scout your opponent's army and keep him from aging, not to end the game.

- First card depends on MU.
- From the starting wood build as many shrines as you can.
- Age with Toshugu shrine, put it next to some hunts even if you have to go relatively far out of your base. Build it with 1 vill.
- During transition build 1 shrine and a consulate. When you age you should have 200 wood for the rax.
- First card in age2 is 600w.
- Go for jap isolation in consulate, make some clubs first (4 against rushes where they might bring cav, 3 against all else) and then send the military ricksjaw. With that, get the 2nd military building up.
- From the 600w build a market, 1 or 2 shrines and fill up your first yumi batch.
- Send 4v cards whenever you can afford them. If necessary, send military cards. After 4v cards send yumi attack whenever you can afford it, and then daimyo. Before you send each card though make sure you have enough food left on orchards. When you have about 2000 total food left you should be sending the orchard card next.

Quick 2 rax yumi variation: Strong against fast infantry rushes, like the German or French one. Instead of building a shrine first during transition to colonial, you build the consulate first and go jap isolation as fast as you can. Send the military ricksjaw before you make clubs and go 2 rax yumi for a quick military mass. Sacrifice a bit of shrine booming for this so you get 15 units out quickly.

Shrine boom:

This is basically _H2O's WCG boom build adapted into an FP variation. It's almost exactly the same, but considerably weaker because shrines are more expensive, have a lower gather rate and ashi aren't nearly as strong.

- If you started with 300 wood, gather wood with 1 vill (chop 10 wood), start building consulate as soon as possible and ally with Ports (makes buildings cheaper). After allying with Ports get a shrine up just before you get popped. If you started with 200 wood simply

- build a shrine.
- Heavenly kami first card.
- Age with toshugu shrine. During transition to colonial get as many shrines up as you can. Keep building them in age2.
- When you hit age2 and already have a consulate, cancel Ports in consulate and go jap isolation. If on a water map get the fishing boats first.
- First card in age2 is 600w. From 600w build 2 raxes, a market and a consulate (jap isolation) if you didn't have one already (yes you need 700 wood for that so don't stop gathering it).
- After the 600w arrives, depending on whether you're going ashi or yumi, you should have vill on either wood or gold. If you're going ashi and have 2 mines in your base, it's best to put the shrines on food. If you're going yumi always put shrines on wood.
- Next cards 4v 4v ashi/yumi attack, daimyo, orchards.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Standard colonial start, 2 vill first card. Second military building is stable. Against a rush mind building placement and mix in ashi (send 5 after 600w). Make sure you have gold for MM if you scout a rush.

Vs Brit:

Your best hope is to try a shrine boom and hope he doesn't rush too hard. Mass yumi against his lb mass, ashi against musk huss.

Vs China:

Standard colonial start, 2 vill first card. Against an FF, pressure him with ashi club and kill a village if you can. Mass ashi naginata with some yumis mixed in against his age3.

Vs Dutch:

Standard colonial start, heavenly kami first card. If he rushes you with skirm pike, you should be able to hold with yumi. Follow this up by pressuring him with yumi nagi club before he gets the chance to age. A colonial fight is good for you. Against a semi-FF from him do a soft push with yumi club, keep booming and mass yumi in age2.

Vs France:

Standard colonial start, 2 vill first card. If you scout him having 8 or more vill on wood during age up, do the quick 2 rax yumi variation to hold off his xbow rush. Mass yumi and keep hit and running his army. If his raxes are forward, try to push out and kill them before he gets the chance to mix in cav. If he attacks your shrines push on his rax to keep him from doing that.

Vs Germans:

Standard colonial start, 2 vill first card. Scout if he has vill on gold. If he does, start ashi and boom hard. Against his fort, mass ashi nagi with a bunch of yumi to counter WW. If he doesn't have vill on gold, do the quick 2 rax yumi variation to hold off his rush. You should be able to take care of his 2 uhlands with MM, TC fire and decent hit and run.

Vs India:

Standard colonial start, heavenly kami first card. India will sometimes try a 4 sowar 5 gurkha 2 sepoy push in early colonial to keep you from booming too hard. This push comes early so make sure you have gold for MM. Building placement is important.

Vs Iro:

Standard colonial start, 2 vills first card. If he ages fast make sure you have gold for MM.

Vs Japan:

Shrine boom. Go mass yumi. In this MU it may be viable to go early consulate even with a 200 wood start. This I haven't tested enough to make a judgement.

Vs Otto:

Standard colonial start, 2 vills first card. If he doesn't take a second TP he's rushing and you need yumi shipments after 600w to hold him off.

Vs Ports:

Shrine boom is viable. If he goes for fast colonial pressure you may get into trouble but should be able to hold him off with 5 yumi shipment after 600w, good use of MM and yumi hit and run. Place raxes behind TC if he does this. If he does any sort of FF strat, go ashi nagi in age2, harass his base a bit and follow into fortress after you've maxed shrines.

Vs Russia:

Standard colonial start, 2 vills first card. Mind your building placement!

Vs Sioux:

Your best hope is a shrine boom. With 200w start go standard colonial start with kami first card. If you're shrine booming and he rushes you should be able to hold it off with yumi ashi combo. 600w 5 ashi will be needed. If he ages you're gonna have trouble against wakina RR but your best bet is to stay age2 for at least another while and mass your 3 unit combo.

Vs Spain:

Shrine boom and hope he doesn't rush is probably your best bet. Again, if he rushes send 5 yumi after 600w. Against his FF/semi-FF you can go full ashi with a couple of nagi and you should be okay.

The Japanese deck:

Ottomans

Like Iro, if you don't know for sure the map is going to contain TPs, I would suggest playing a different civ. On TP maps however, Otto are very strong civ because of abus and the fast push they have while being supported with a solid TP eco. Jan abus is a very dangerous combo in early colonial because abus still do a little too well against cav, and can hit and run entire armies if your micro is good enough. Otto's weakness is cav raids, and for many civs this is the only way to beat Otto. As soon as their villas have to go outside the base for hunts, they become very vulnerable to raids because jan abus lacks a fast anti raid unit. Camping 5 jans on your villas is viable but considering the large amount of cav players make against jan abus this will mostly not be enough. Mixing in cav becomes necessary to deal with these raids, and that's when musk huss with a strong eco to back it up really starts to get strong against Otto.

Viable strats:

TP boom:

Because without TP's, Otto is unplayable. This strat takes 2 TPs which is the max amount on Great Plains. On maps with more than 2 available TPs, you can probably justify building 1 more from the 700w and putting them on wood for a bit to get a 4th one up. Don't do this against aggressive civs though.

- With 300 wood start, chop 50. Get a TP and a house either way.
- 3 villas first card.
- Age with 400w.
- During transition put all villas on wood (on Great Plains) and you should start building the TP in time for it to be up just before the cart reaches it. On other maps you're gonna have to figure out the timings yourself and distributing villas accordingly.
- After your TP starts building, take 5 or 6 villas off wood and put them on food. After you get 100 wood, have the following amount of gold villas: 4 on gold if you're going jan start, and 10/11 on gold if you're going abus.
- From the age up wood build a rax or art foundry and your first card in age2 is 700w. From the remaining age up wood start upgrading the trade route (on Plains do this about 10 seconds after the rax started building because then you will still get the XP from second TP before the upgrade finishes). Build a house from the remaining 100 wood.
- Make 1 batch of jans or abus while building the 2nd military building from the 700w. From this you also build a market and housing.
- When trade route finishes upgrading put 1 TP on wood and the other on gold. After a while when you have enough houses or if you're pushing/being pushed and losing units you can put them both on gold.
- Usually you'll be making jan abus. Sometimes jan huss. Your shipment order after 700w is in all cases 700g, 600g, 5 jans. In the case of you going jan huss, 700g 700f is also viable.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get the first batch of abus out unless he's rushing in which case you can sit back a little longer.

Vs Brit:

Jan abus, jan start. If he's going lb/pike consider mixing in hussars by putting both TPs on wood and getting a stable up.

Vs China:

Jan abus, jan start. Push after you get about 10 abus and 10+ jans.

Vs Dutch:

Jan abus, jan start. Push immediately.

Vs France:

Jan abus. Scout his wood vills (around 3.40 min). If he has 8 or more, go abus start and defend against his dual rax. Push when you get 10 abus and 5 jans but don't engage. Just hit and run all day. If he has ~6 wood vills (and maybe some on gold) go jan start and push when you get the first 5 abus out.

Vs Germans:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans.

Vs India:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get the first 5 abus out.

Vs Iro:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans.

Vs Japan:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get the first 5 abus out.

Vs Otto:

Don't bother chopping all that wood during transition. Only chop wood with about 5 vills and build 2 military buildings from the 400 age up wood. Get jan+abus out right away. First shipment in age2 is 700g to support your spam (mining 125 gold is enough to queue 1 jan and 1 abus) and after that 700w to build the 2nd TP. If he took TPs during transition you should be able to take them out with your early military advantage.

Vs Ports:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans. If he's FFing, garrison all his vills by harassing with abus and take out a couple of houses. This should slow him down enough for you to have time to follow him into fortress and get cannons out.

Vs Russia:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans.

Vs Sioux:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans. One of the few match ups where otto have trouble. Try to push him hard so he can't get that critical mass of cav and doesn't get a chance to age. Watch your vills.

Vs Spain:

Jan abus, jan start. Push when you get 10 abus and 10+ jans.

The Ottoman deck:



Not a lot of eco cards since Otto rely on fast pushes in either age2, age3 or even age4. Res crates to keep supporting an abus+jan spam. I prefer royal mint over refrigeration because Otto do gather a lot of gold in age3, and royal mint gives that extra 5%.

Portuguese

Also a very strong civ. Their very fast age time (3.40 with 1 good food treasure) and colonial musk upgrades gave Ports one of the strongest colonial potential in the game. Their second TC keeps up a steady boom while all other civs' booms basically stop after they max banks, shrines, manors or whatever. This is why Port get stronger and stronger the later the game gets, and now that they can't be beat in colonial the only way to beat them is to age to fortress. Some civs can do this and can pressure the Port successfully with a large unit mass in early/mid fortress, but most civs will be on the receiving end when the Port eco starts to jump ahead.

Viable strats:

Cav start:

The most common Port strat, because it's strong in such a wide variety of situations. Have constant vill production at all times.

- If you start with 200 wood, build the market before you get the first shipment. It gives XP after all.
- First card economic theory.
- Age with 400w, during transition put about 6/7 vill on wood. Get gang saw and placer mines and chop up to 25 wood. Then put the wood vill on gold.
- From 400 wood get steel traps, a stable and a house. 2nd TC provides you with another 10 population.
- Send 700w. From this get 2 raxes up. Typically you'll switch to musk huss, sometimes bow huss.
- Next shipment is generally spice trade, then 600w. Less eco heavy and also viable in some situations where you're getting pushed or have to be aggressive is 8 bow then spice trade, or 8 bow then 600w.
- Next shipments are generally musk upgrades.

Cav semi-FF variation: From the 700w, build a couple of houses, a rax, get the second gold market upgrade and a house or 2. Then send 700g and age (usually with the cassador politician). TP from the 700w is viable.

Eco semi-FF variation: From the 700w, build a couple of houses, a rax, and either another rax or second gold upgrade. And a couple of houses. Then send spice trade while getting some musk huss out, then 700g to age. TP from the 700w is viable.

Xbow/pike start:

Mostly aggressive but can be used defensively. However if you're not planning to be aggressive I would advise a cav start. Again, have constant vill production.

- If you start with 200 wood, build the market before you get the first shipment. It gives XP after all.
- First card economic theory.
- Age with 400w, during transition put about 6/7 vill on wood. Get gang saw. Put some vill on gold and mine up to 125 coin.
- From 400 wood put up 2 raxes and send 700w.

- Switch some villas off wood onto food because you'll need a lot of that for constant vill production.
- Next shipment 600w. Mind vill production.
- Next shipment either 8 xbow for aggression or spice trade for eco. Depends on the MU and situation.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Cav start. 8 xbow second and a quick musk huss push is strong because it keeps him from booming. Make sure your army is better than his first by scouting with huss.

Vs Brit:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. Xbow/pike start is also viable on maps where the Brit has bad hunts. Even musk huss is viable but I would prefer one of the former.

Vs China:

Cav start into semi-FF if he doesn't push in early age2, or into musk huss xbow if he does push.

Vs Dutch:

Cav start into eco semi-FF is arguably best but a musk huss timing push is also viable. Go for the latter if he built his base poorly.

Vs France:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. If he rushes you with xbow/pike go colonial xbow huss rather than musk huss.

Vs Germans:

Exactly the same as vs France, but musk huss in colonial instead of xbow huss. The first few batches xbow though, to keep him from doing damage in early colonial.

Vs India:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. If he rushes, scratch the semi-FF and win with xbow musk huss.

Vs Iro:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. Again, if he rushes scratch the semi-FF and win with xbow musk huss.

Vs Japan:

Xbow/pike start and be aggressive. Forward base (2nd TC forward) and push into his town as fast as possible. If his army is too large for you to push into his base you've already accomplished your goal which was preventing him from booming. In that case simply go back and keep massing while killing shrines around the map.

Vs Otto:

Cav start into xbow musk huss. Keep raiding him if he went jan abus.

Vs Ports:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. If he plays aggressively with musk huss you should still be able to semi-FF, but if you feel like you're not in the position to age (bad hunts, wasted MM before, bad TC placement, etc) stay age2 until he's no longer in a position to push you.

Vs Russia:

Cav start into xbow musk huss. Eco semi-FF is best if he doesn't push in early colonial and didn't build a forward BH.

Vs Sioux:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. He will also semi-FF and if he doesn't won't be able to do enough damage in age2 to fight your fortress.

Vs Spain:

Cav start into eco semi-FF, or into musk huss. Depends on how aggressive he's being. Stay colonial if he's playing aggressively, until he's no longer able to push your base.

The Portuguese deck:

The only civ where I actually have a spot to spare in age2. I prefer 1000g instead of 1000w in age3 because when going organ in age3, I rather not rely on infinite mines. Besides, they cost a lot more gold than they cost wood.

Russia

Arguably the best late colonial civ in the game. Maybe they get beat by Japan but it's close. Russia will always be looking to stay age2. They will not be trying to end the game in early/mid colonial, but rather will keep pressuring softly in order to keep their opponent from aging up, and in the meantime for every second the game progresses Russia's chances improve. Some civs will almost certainly get away with aging, and this is when Russia starts to get less comfortable. They might get a small advantage out of a quick push in age2 and following in to fortress, but they have to work hard to keep this advantage in fortress. Even in fort, Russia will rarely push to end a game quickly. Again they excell in the later stages of the game, and will try to delay fights as long as possible. In fort however, Russia can have trouble against strong skirms properly microed.

Viable strats:

Defensive boom:

A very eco heavy strat that exploits Russia's biggest strength: Their mid/late colonial mass. Any civ that stays colonial against Russia where Russia does this strat is pretty much doomed, except the ones that can boom so hard even Russia's crazy cost effective army can't keep up with their mass, they may stand a chance. Against aggressive play from your opponent when doing this strat, send a military shipment instead of spice trade and generally send spice trade after 700w.

- 14 vill age up. Early market only with 200w start.
- Economic theory first card.
- When you age put about 8 vills on wood, get a market up and get all the resource upgrades. When placer mines finishes put some vills on gold so that you have enough for steel traps when you age and can afford a musk batch when your BH goes up.
- Keep about 4 vills on wood after you get 125 for ST, until you're at 55 pop.
- From the 400 age up wood get a BH up (build with 3 or 4 vills if you're worried about aggression, otherwise with 2 vills) and 2 houses (you should have the wood).
- First card in age2 is spice trade. Spam musks in the meantime.
- Next card is 700w. From this build the second military building and some houses. The second gold upgrade in market if you're going heavy on cossack musk, otherwise use the remaining wood for strelets.
- Next cards are the military shipments. Generally start pushing right about the time you get the first one out.
- Send advanced arsenal after military shipments if your opponent is going cav heavy.

Eco semi-FF variation: Send 700 gold after 700w and age. Second military building in this case is always stable.

Fast pressure/Rush:

This build is popular with Russia. Not on a top level which is why I dislike it, but the build is still strong in some match ups and can indeed do damage on lower levels. The biggest problem with it is that the civs it's viable against will almost always see it coming and have means to prepare with perfect building placement and walls if necessary. Because of this, this build is in my eyes never viable, but on lower levels it can definitely do damage because players are almost never able to have good enough building placement to effectively hold it off. This build will not be mentioned in the MU descriptions (which is odd because that's generally the requirement for a build to be

mentioned in this guide) but I will still include it because of its popularity and its strength on lower levels.

- 14 vill age up. Early market only with 200w start.
- Wood trickle first card.
- When you age put about 12 vill on wood and get the BH up as fast as you can. Build it forward with enough vill for it to be up before you hit age2, or slightly after.
- When the BH starts building gather 100 more wood (build a house from this) and then put all your vill on food.
- Queue vill. This is not a no vill all in.
- When you hit age2 gather the wood crates as fast as you can and as soon as you can afford it queue a strelet batch. Send 4 cossacks and make sure they arrive at your forward BH.
- From the rest of the 400 age up wood get houses up and a market.
- Your second batch is musk. Make sure you have enough gold for this.
- Push him with the first strelet batch and 4 cossacks. If he has any military buildings going up, the vill building them are priority. Otherwise simply force him to garrison but don't go too close to his TC. You don't want to give him a reason to use OP MM.
- If he has a stable up get far away from his TC after you've been in his base for say 20 seconds. MM + cav is the worst thing that can happen to you.
- Push again when your musk batch finishes.
- Next card is 700w. If you think you can still do damage by persisting with your push, send either 4 coss again or 13 strelets. But be careful with this, don't go too far with the push. Most civs will be able to hold it off and if you persist too long, your eco may be too weak to support you in mid colonial. Generally you will transition into an eco build with 700w spice trade etc.

First batch musk variation: First batch in age2 is musk instead of strelet. Don't gather 100 wood during age up but rather 100 coin for the musk batch. This is actually the most popular variation which is undeserved because the strelet variation is in most cases much stronger (TC still needs 2 hits to kill them). You should get the 2nd batch (musk) out fast enough to take care of cav (in combination with the 4 coss). The musk variation is only stronger against civs that age quickly and will likely start cav.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Defensive boom, second military building stable. Be aggressive with musk coss, it's a very mobile combo that can easily retreat when in trouble so you can afford to push even when at risk of facing a larger army.

Vs Brit:

Defensive boom, second military building BH. Mass strelet musk, don't be too aggressive in early colonial. Simply raid with cossack shipments and try to keep him off hunts outside of his base later in the game.

Vs China:

Against a colonial build go defensive boom, second military building BH. If you scout an FF, rush and make his vill garrison. Take out his villages while he's aging and keep his vill in TC as much as you can. Second shipment is 700w to transition into an eco build (mix in stable), preparing to fight his fortress mass.

Vs Dutch:

Defensive boom into eco semi-FF, unless he's being aggressive in age2 which is basically suicide. In that case don't send 700g but 4 coss and mass musk coss in age2. Beat down his army and push for the win.

Vs France:

Defensive boom, second military building BH. Try to keep map ctrl while he tries to push out of his base in mid colonial. Second BH can be built somewhat forward to secure a big portion of the map. Keep scouting his army by being aggressive and if he has a small army that means he's aging. Follow him into fortress unless you feel like you can do a timing push that will beat his army and leave you with an advantage. Against a cav semi-FF, transition into your own eco semi-FF.

Vs Germans:

Defensive boom, second military building stable. If he went semi-FF transition into eco semi-FF.

Vs India:

Defensive boom, take map ctrl with the second BH and prepare for a late colonial fight. Keep scouting his army and if it's unusually small, push. This means he's aging.

Vs Iro:

Defensive boom, second military building BH. Take map ctrl with the second BH.

Vs Japan:

Defensive boom, second military building BH (take map ctrl). This however is assuming you're playing an expert Japan player who knows this MU very well. On lower levels, rushing is strong.

Vs Otto:

Defensive boom, second military building stable.

Vs Ports:

Defensive boom. Against a cav start from him, transition into eco semi-FF. Against aggressive play by him stay colonial.

Vs Russia:

Defensive boom, second military building BH. Take map ctrl and build a stable if you're out of coss to raid with.

Vs Sioux:

Defensive boom. Against a cav start transition into eco semi-FF, against colonial play stay colonial and be aggressive (second military building BH (map ctrl)).

Vs Spain:

Defensive boom, second military building BH. Against an FF from him your best hope is to delay the fight as long as you can and hope he microes poorly. Try to surround his army with a sheer mass of musk. Use MM.

The Russian deck:



I know some players consider Russia to have this all in strat where they send 700f in early age2 and mass a huge amount of units. This is bad play. If you insist on rushing there are better ways, and if you're looking for the biggest mass around 7 mins then sending 700g and putting all your villas on food is better.

Sioux

One of the top civs in FP 1.2. Arguably the top civ. Not because they win all match ups (I still believe Brit to be the civ that wins all match ups) but because they win most match ups really easily. Most civs have absolutely no hope of beating Sioux. The best way to counter them is probably Germans, who manage to put enough pressure on Sioux to keep them from aging and have the very strong doppel uhlan combo to counter Sioux's lack of musks. Brits also do well because they are the only civ that don't have to follow Sioux into fortress in order to beat wakina RR.

Sioux's fortress unit combo is almost untouchable in colonial by all civs (except Brits) because they have a 20 ranged, insanely cost effective skirm, and RR are a rock solid way to counter musk huss. Wakina are my personal favourite unit, microing them to beat armies almost twice the size of yours is just one of the greatest pleasures you can get out of this game. I still see even top players being lazy with their wakinas and not constantly hit and running their opponent, and I cringe when I see this happening. This is why I don't tend to watch Sioux recs or obs games unless they were played by old experts. Apparently the new guys have yet to learn how to micro.

Viable strats:

Colonial start:

A very strong strat because Sioux's early colonial army is mildly OP. All their units are very strong and they even get ranged cav on top of it, and have the possibility of getting a very strong mass of this in early age2. Most civs have almost no hope of beating this 4 unit combo in early/mid colonial.

- If you start with a wood crate, chop 50 and mine if you have to for HD.
- 3 villas first card.
- Age with 400w. During transition chop wood with ~13 villas and get a market up if you didn't have one already (don't bother with placer mines just yet), then a WH. Build the WH with enough villas so that it will be almost up when you hit age2. In MUs where your opponent can hardly be aggressive in early colonial, building the WH with 1 villa should be enough.
- Get ST somewhere in early age2. Most of the time you can mine enough gold before you age and take wood from the age up 400.
- From 400w put up a stable.
- Put some villas on gold to support a cav spam (say 2 or 3) and keep 5 or 6 villas on wood to support the spam from your WH.
- First shipment in age2 is 5 villas.
- Next shipment is 5 cav. This costs 300f so make sure you're going food heavy.
- Unit combo is entirely dependent on your opponent. Will specify in MU descriptions.
- Send spice trade and that other age2 Sioux hunt card after you've sent your military cards (5 cav, 7 club and 6 cetan). Cav ups if you have a lot of cav.

Cav semi-FF:

Note how this strat has the exact same start as the colonial strat (up to when you get your first batch of units out). It can almost be considered a variation to that BO even though it's a completely different strat. This is strong because it gives you the opportunity to immediately switch into a colonial build if you get rushed (you have spare wood for a cetan batch), and it makes you completely unscoutable until you get 5 AR out.

- If you start with a wood crate, chop 50 and mine if you have to for HD.

- 3 vills first card.
- Age with 400w. During transition chop wood with ~13 vills and get a market up if you didn't have one already (don't bother with placer mines just yet), then a WH. Build the WH with enough vills so that it will be almost up when you hit age2. In MUs where your opponent can hardly be aggressive in early colonial, building the WH with 1 vill should be enough.
- From the 400w get a stable up, and ST.
- First shipment in age2 is 5 vills.
- If you get pushed before 7 mins consider staying in colonial.
- Get 5 cav out, raid, and send 700g to age.
- If you get pushed by HI while aging, use the spare wood for cetans to keep him out. Don't do this too lightly though, because you do need that wood to upgrade your AR later on.
- In fortress against an age2 army, wakina RR is absolutely untouchable. Because all civs have to age in order to deal with wakina, you have a very strong push in early fortress that can damage your opponent.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Colonial start, turn into a semi-FF if he doesn't push early. If colonial, go cetan AR club.

Vs Brit:

Colonial start, turn into a semi-FF if he doesn't push early. If colonial, go cetan AR club BR or cetan AR depending on if he went musk huss or lb/pike.

Vs China:

Colonial start. If you hold off his shipment spam you've won the game. But do send 5v first, if you don't you'll lag behind too much in eco. Don't send 5 AR second in age2 but rather 7 clubs. Go heavy on cetan.

Vs Dutch:

Colonial start and pressure with AR cetan and clubs to siege buildings. Don't overextend yourself, simply contain him and keep him from aging.

Vs France:

Colonial start. Against a dual rax go cetan AR, against musk huss go 4 unit combo with mostly BR cetan. Against a semi-FF, make a timing push around 8 mins with a swarm of AR and some cetans.

Vs Germans:

Colonial start. Against xbow pressure go cetan AR and some clubs, against a cav start go BR cetan and clubs as a meatshield. Beware of dopp uhlan. You have to try to age in this MU, I would say go for it after you get about 10 cetan 10 clubs and say 5 BR. His spam in early age2 is not that massive so you may be able to get away with it.

Vs India:

Cav semi-FF. Type GG. (if he rushes turn your strat into the colonial build and win in age2).

Vs Iro:

Cav semi-FF. If he pushes early switch into a colonial build. You win easily either way.

Vs Japan:

Cav semi-FF. Colonial AR cetan and clubs to kill shrines around the map wins as well.

Vs Otto:

Colonial AR cetan against his jan abus. Against jan huss go BR cetan with some clubs.

Vs Ports:

Cav semi-FF. Against an early musk rush from him, turn it into the colonial strat.

Vs Russia:

Cav semi-FF and have fun microing wakina against a civ that can only touch them with cannons (God I love this match up). Against a rush, be disappointed because you don't get to use wakinas, and end it in colonial.

Vs Sioux:

Colonial AR cetan club. Some BR later on is viable if you can micro them effectively. Don't try to age, this is a mistake many players make in this MU. You will get overwhelmed by a massive number of cav.

Vs Spain:

Try to cav semi-FF, but against early pressure from him (which he will most likely go for since a colonial fight helps him greatly) you will have to stay colonial.

The Sioux deck:

No variations. Sioux also have the handicap of not having any eco cards in age3.

Spain

One of the top civs too. Their semi-FF into one of the best fortress unit combinations in the game (rod lancer) is very strong. In colonial they can also win against the majority of civs due to dogs, their very strong anticav and their fast boom in early colonial, with both vill shipments. Their hardest match up is Brit. They can rush, they can semi-FF, but the Brit boom usually jumps ahead too far for them to keep up with the Brit mass.

Viable strats:

Cav or musk start:

You can get away with this very strong start in almost all MUs. It's strong because it is later given the choice to transition into a colonial combo (rod huss, bow huss, musk huss, bow rod huss, you name it) or to transition into an eco semi-FF.

- Early market only with 200w start.
- 3 vill first card.
- Age with the tower and 200c. During transition put 12/13 vill on wood and get a market up if you didn't have one already. Do all the market upgrades (you already have gang saw).
- Switch some vill off wood onto gold before you hit colonial so you'll have enough for steel traps.
- As soon as you age build a stable or rax depending if you're going musk or cav. Send 700w, and 5v right after.
- When you get a house up after this, and ST, switch most civs to food and gold. Leave say 4/5 on wood.
- From the 700w build the second military building (sometimes dual rax is viable but mostly you'll want a stable+rax up) and distribute vill however you see fit to support your combo. From the remaining 700w (so you already have 2 military buildings up) either build a second rax (if you're staying colonial this is generally preferred) unless you have 2 already or do the second gold market upgrade.
- Next cards are any combination of 4v, 600w and military shipments. To continue the eco build because you neither have to be aggressive nor are being pushed: 4v 600w spice trade military shipments.

Eco semi-FF variation: After 4 vill send 700g and age (generally with the 5v politician). Strong semi-FF because it gets a big eco and can support a very strong spam in early fortress, combined with Spain's age3 shipments. Upgrade your rods and spam rod lancer in most cases, with some skirms mixed in. Caballeros is one of the first cards you should be sending in fortress.

Aggressive xbow/pike:

Viable in only a couple of MUs, but still has to be included in this guide. Like the French dual rax it's only actually best in very few situations but is just an overall very strong rush strat, arguably ever stronger than the French one because Spain gets their shipments so quickly they can send rods to support their xbow mass.

- Early market only with 200w start.
- 3 vill first card.
- Age with the 500 food. During transition put all except 2 vill on wood. Get hunting dogs.

- Build a house and when you get enough wood for 2 raxes, put all but 4 or 5 villas back on food.
- First cards in age2 are 700w and 600w. This will be your main wood income.
- When you age put the 2 raxes up immediately. Spam xbow/pike.
- After 600w you have the option to persist with a military heavy build by sending 6 rods, but usually you'll be going 5 villas first to help support your 2 rax spam.
- 700w 5v is also viable if you're doing a defensive dual rax.

MU descriptions:

Vs Aztec:

Musk start in case he rushes. Eco semi-FF if he doesn't, and stay age2 if he does.

Vs Brit:

Cav start into eco semi-FF is your only hope when the Brit has a decent hunt, but if the Brit has bad hunts aggressive dual rax is probably your best chance.

Vs China:

Cav start and transition into a colonial ros huss musk combo.

Vs Dutch:

Cav start and go rod huss. Timing push around 8 mins. If his base is defended too well go fortress and mass rod lancer with a couple of skirms (which is just insane against Dutch).

Vs France:

Cav start into colonial musk huss. If he semi-FFs, transition into an eco semi-FF and push him a bit just before he ages.

Vs Germans:

Cav start into rod musk huss. Rods for meatshield against his dopp uhlan combo. If he semi-FFs, transition into an eco semi-FF.

Vs India:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. India can't stop this unless they do some weird no eco rush in which case you can easily transition into a colonial build and finish them there.

Vs Iro:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. Same deal as India. If Iro ages fast and doesn't take TPs, forget the semi-FF and finish him with xbow rod huss in colonial.

Vs Japan:

Xbow/pike pressure is strong (push his base with full xbow unless you scout an early stable). Don't build the raxes too much forward but not in your base either. Japan can surprise you with no eco builds. I believe cav start into eco semi-FF wins as well, although it gives Japan chances.

Vs Otto:

Cav start into xbow musk huss. Raid him to delay his push as much as you can, and try to survive to the point where he has to hunt outside his base, which is when your raids will become very effective.

Vs Ports:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. Take map ctrl in fortress and keep him off resources. If he does an early colonial musk push, you should be able to hold it off with proper MM use. Don't hesitate delaying your age up by sending a couple of military shipments first if he's being very aggressive.

Vs Russia:

Cav start into eco semi-FF. Against an aggressive Russian in early age2, stay colonial and mass rod huss xbow. You can win this before he reaches late colonial because he had to sacrifice economy to rush you.

Vs Sioux:

Musk start into aggressive musk huss. Keep him from aging and fight in colonial with musk rod huss and a couple of xbow to pick off BR.

Vs Spain:

Cav start into eco semi-FF or into aggressive musk huss, your choice. Only go for the semi-FF if your hunts are strong and you will most likely not be pushed in early age2, but if he's aggressive in early age2 you'll be forced to stay colonial. If you go for the age2 musk huss, be aggressive so he doesn't age.

The Spanish deck:



Possibly unction for one of the rod shipments, but unction starts to become worth it too late in the game for it to be a viable shipment to substitute a military shipment with. AA for the age2 cav upgrade is I guess viable, but I prefer the immediate boost the cav upgrade gives, instead of having to spend additional resources.