

2026 Army Build – Official Rules (v1.4)

1) Goal

Build a legal, tabletop-ready Warhammer 40,000 army totalling **2,000 to 2,026 points** within the calendar year **2026**.

2) Start & Finish (Pacific/Auckland)

- **Start:** 12:00am, **1 January 2026** (Pacific/Auckland).
- **Finish:** 11:59pm, **31 December 2026** (Pacific/Auckland).
- No models may be opened/assembled/painted toward this army before the start time.

3) Eligibility / No Head-Starts

- You **may not** choose a faction for which either player already has a **ready-to-play 2,000-pt army** on 1 Jan 2026.
- **No pre-built/pre-painted models** may be counted if any assembly or painting occurred **before** 1 Jan 2026.
 - Exception: bits harvested from old kits are fine for conversions, but **those specific old models can't be counted** toward points.

4) Army Declaration

- Declare your **faction** by **7 January 2026**.
- You may change subfaction/detachment during the year (as rules evolve), but the **main faction** must remain the same.

5) Combat Patrol Allowance (exactly one) & Cross-Challenge Limits

- Exactly **one** Combat Patrol built in 2026 may contribute models/points to this army.
 - You must **declare which quarter's** Combat Patrol is allocated to your army by the **end of that quarter**.
- **No other** quarterly extras (e.g., **Kill Team**, **Necromunda**, **Spearhead**, or other boxes triggered by the Buried Under Plastic challenge) **may be counted** toward this army.
- **Bases & tabletop-ready** standards in §6 also apply to any models counted from your single allowed Combat Patrol.

6) What “Complete” Means (tabletop-ready standard)

By **31 Dec 2026**, the army is **complete** when:

- You field a **legal list** per the current edition’s matched play force-org rules.
- Your total is **2,000-2,026 points** using the **Points Lock** in §8.
- Every model is:
 - **Fully assembled** and **WYSIWYG** for wargear taken (reasonable, good-faith clarity).
 - **Tabletop ready** (more than primer; at least **3 colours**; clean enough to read on the table). **Primed-only does not count**.
 - **Based** to the cross-challenge standard: **not plain stock bases** — add texture/terrain (e.g., texture paste/sand/tufts/rubble), painted.
- **Decals/stickers**: optional but encouraged where the kit provides them.
- **Magnetised options** are allowed; only **one loadout** counts toward points at a time.

7) New in 2026 Only

- Models must be **newly built and painted within 2026**.
- Priming/sub-assemblies begin **on/after** 1 Jan 2026.
- **No stripping and re-using** previously painted models for points credit.

8) Rules & Points Lock

- Use the **current edition’s matched play** rules.
- For completion verification, army points are calculated using the **official points as of 15 December 2026 (Pacific/Auckland)**.
 - Later updates don’t penalise you for completion.
 - For casual games during the year, use whatever is current **on game day**.

9) Proof & Tracking

- **Timestamped “sprues/unopened” photo** on/after 1 Jan.
- Light-touch **monthly WIP** photo (one image per month is fine).
- A final **army photo + list** (export or PDF) submitted by 31 Dec.

10) Conversions, Proxies, and Third-Party/Printed Parts

- Conversions are welcome. 3rd-party or 3D-printed parts are fine if they clearly represent the unit/wargear.
- **Proxies**: keep silhouette/base size appropriate; max **10%** of total points may be proxied. (Converted = not a proxy.)

11) Swap Token (sanity clause)

- Each player gets **one** Swap Token in 2026 to replace **one unit** that became invalid/unavailable or was a bad fit.
- The replacement must be built/painted within 2026 and keep the army within **2,000–2,026** at Points Lock.

12) Completion & Tie-Breakers

- **Primary:** All of §6 met by 31 Dec.
- If both complete:
 - 1) Fewer unused points **under** 2,026 at Points Lock (closer to 2,026 wins).
 - 2) More games played with the army in 2026.
 - 3) Coin flip.

13) Cross-Reference: Buried Under Plastic Addendum A (Legacy & Gifted Boxes)

To harmonise with **Buried Under Plastic 2026** and **Addendum A**:

- Your **single allowed Combat Patrol** for the army **may** be a **legacy/previous or gifted Combat Patrol** if it complies with Addendum A:
 1. It was **unopened at the time of purchase or receipt** (factory sealed or sealed sprue bags).
 2. **Acceptable sources** include online retailers, local gaming stores, **eBay/marketplaces, private sellers, and gifts.**
 3. You must still **not open** the box before **1 Jan 2026** and you must meet all standards in §6 (tabletop-ready, basing, WYSIWYG).
 4. Provide the usual **timestamped sprue/unopened** photo on/after 1 Jan as proof.
- This cross-reference **does not** change the limitation that **only one** Combat Patrol may contribute to the army and that **no extras** (Kill Team, Necromunda, Spearhead, etc.) may be counted.

14) Pre-Start Preparation (Allowed)

Before the official start window, you **may**:

- **Gather supplies** (paints, brushes, tools, glue, magnets, basing materials, decals/tufts) and **plan paint schemes and lists.**
- **Test paints and basing on spare/test bases** not used on challenge models. You **may not:** open boxes allocated to this army, assemble, prime, or paint challenge models before the start.

15) Instagram Verification & Public Space

This is a **personal challenge conducted in a public space**. Verification is intentionally light-touch and trust-based.

Official hashtags

- Always include **#BuriedUnderPlastic2026** and either **#MPArmyBuild2026** (Army posts) or **#MPCombatPatrol2026** (if the post is about your single allowed Combat Patrol).
- Posts using the legacy tag **#TrappedUnderThePlastic2026** remain valid; using both is fine.
- Other relevant hobby tags are encouraged (e.g., **#Warhammer40000**, **#Warhammer**).

Handles

- Tag your **opponent's handle** in local head-to-heads if applicable (e.g., you tag Joash).
- Tagging other accounts is **not required** for completion.

Army Build cadence on IG

- **Aim for monthly photos** showing progress. Include unopened boxes before beginning, and completion shots of finished units/boxes as the months go on.
- Captions are **encouraged but not required**; narrate your progress if you like.

Disputes (“kangaroo court” honesty box)

- Any dispute is resolved by the participants themselves in good-faith: this is a **kangaroo court** model where each person is their own **honesty box**.
- The point is public accountability and fun—**not** policing. Decisions can be recorded by a brief comment under the relevant post if needed.

16) Sportsmanship, Disputes, & Consistency

- Any grey area: use **most conservative** interpretation for that session; amend rules after with a note.
- Aim for clarity for your opponent; the fun is finishing and playing, not rules-lawyering.

Adjustments

*Updated to allow **gifted** Combat Patrols (if unopened at time of receipt) via cross-reference to Buried Under Plastic **Addendum A**, and to permit **pre-start gathering/planning**. Also updates Instagram section to use **#BuriedUnderPlastic2026**.*