

“Indian Wars 1872-1886” Prototype Concept



This map is currently incomplete and not public. Its name will probably be "Wild West: The Last Indian Wars" instead of "Indian Wars" to avoid confusion with the South Asian country. If the reader really wants a playable product the information in this document can easily be adapted to paper & pencil or tabletop miniatures.

USA UNITS

- Settlers Militia - Local armed civilian volunteers defending against Indian raids.
- US Infantry - U.S. Regular Army infantry armed with Springfield trapdoor rifles.
- US Cavalry - Mounted dragoons with 1873 carbines for rapid frontier pursuits.
- Scalp Bounty Hunters - Civilian contractors paid per scalp, armed with Sharps rifles and Bowie knives.
- US Heliograph Station - Using mirrors to reflect sunlight and flash coded signals across long distances, it enabled real-time tracking of small Indian bands.

NATIVE UNITS

- Indian Infantry - Foot soldiers armed with rifles, bows, and war clubs.
- Indian Cavalry - After the Spanish brought horses to the Americas, Native warriors quickly mastered riding, becoming swift and devastating mounted fighters.
- Comanche Warrior - Legendary mounted warriors of the Southern Plains known for their brutal raids for horses and captives against Whites and rival Indian tribes alike.
- Apache Guerrillas - Long range militia. Fierce irregular fighters who waged a relentless war against the United States.

THE IDEA: Major Indian Wars from the 1870s through the end of the **Apache Wars** (considered to end with Geronimo's surrender on **September 4, 1886**). Overall, it covers:

- 1) Modoc War (1872–1873):** A small but costly conflict in northern California/Oregon where a band of Modoc people under Captain Jack resisted forced relocation to a Klamath reservation. They held off a much larger U.S. Army force from a volcanic lava bed stronghold for months before being captured and executed.
- 2) Red River War (1874–1875):** Comanche and Kiowa bands fought and raided against United States. Major battles include Battle of Adobe Walls and Battle of Palo Duro Canyon.
- 3) Apache Wars (1879–1886)** A prolonged guerrilla conflict spanning New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and northern Mexico, the Apache Wars represented the final and most enduring chapter of Native resistance in the American Southwest. Apache leaders exploited their intimate knowledge of the harsh desert and mountain terrain to strike swiftly and disappear before the army could respond, often retreating across the Mexican border where U.S. troops could not legally follow.

Part of the overall Apache Wars was Victorio's War (1879–1880), which saw the Warm Springs Apache leader launch devastating raids across New Mexico and Texas, defeating multiple army detachments and evading capture for over a year. Unable to pin him down, U.S. forces coordinated with Mexican troops, who cornered and killed Victorio at Tres Castillos, Chihuahua in 1880. Nana's Raid (1881) followed shortly after. Despite being in his seventies and crippled, the Apache leader Nana led a band of fewer than 40 warriors on a sweeping raid across southern New Mexico, and escaping back into Mexico. Geronimo's Campaign (1881–1886) proved the most drawn-out and costly phase of the Apache Wars. He launched raids across Arizona, New Mexico, and northern Mexico before vanishing back into the Sierra Madre. From these remote hideouts they launched cross-border raids into American and Mexican settlements alike, with the populations of Sonora and Chihuahua suffering some of the heaviest losses of the entire war. U.S. forces repeatedly struggled to dislodge them, as the terrain was as formidable an enemy as the Apache themselves.

Interestingly, **scalp bounties** were offered by Mexican states (Chihuahua, Sonora) and sometimes Texas, attracting American mercenaries like the notorious James Kirker, who led mixed groups hunting Apache scalps for payment.

The next page covers event messages, spanning Summer 1872 to Winter 1886. There are two seasons per year, summer & winter. The Black Hawk, Bannock and Sioux Wars are mentioned in event messages only as background context, and will not be featured in the final map.

TURN EVENT MESSAGES:

Turn 1: Summer 1872. Since long before the United States existed, Native tribes and European colonists clashed over land and resources, even as tribes warred among themselves for territory and dominance. By the 1870s, centuries of conflict and westward expansion had brought a final chapter of significant Native violence against settlers. Throughout the entire Southwest, the U.S. Army is responding to crush resistance and confine the Indian tribes to reservations for good.

Turn 2: Winter 1872. In Utah Territory, pressure from the United States Army has ended Ute resistance to Mormon settlement of that region, ending the Black Hawk War. In California, the Modoc War begins when the U.S. tries to force the Modoc people onto an Oregon reservation shared with their traditional enemies, the Klamath.

Turn 3: Summer 1873. The Modoc War continues.

Turn 4: Winter 1873. General Canby is killed during peace talks, ending any chance of a peaceful resolution. The Modoc War ends soon after with holdouts giving up. Modoc leaders are executed.

Turn 5: Summer 1874. The Red River War begins because of Southern Plains tribes' frustrations with the illegal poaching of buffalo by white hunters and overall failures of promised supply deliveries.

Turn 6: Winter 1874. General Sheridan leads the U.S. Army's campaign during the Red River War.

Turn 7: Summer 1875. The Red River War ends as starving bands of Comanche, Kiowa, and others surrender.

Turn 8: Winter 1875. Gold is discovered in the Black Hills of the Dakota Territory.

Turn 9: Summer 1876. The Great Sioux War erupts in the Dakota/Montana region.

Turn 10: Winter 1876. Humiliated by Custer's defeat at Little Bighorn, the U.S. Army launches a relentless winter campaign against the Sioux.

Turn 11: Summer 1877. The Great Sioux War ends with Sioux and Cheyenne leaders surrendering.

Turn 12: Winter 1877.

Turn 13: Summer 1878. Scattered fighting is occurring in Idaho territory between the Bannock tribe and U.S. Army forces.

Turn 14: Winter 1878.

Turn 15: Summer 1879. Victorio leads renewed Apache resistance across New Mexico and Texas.

Turn 16: Winter 1879.

Turn 17: Summer 1880. Victorio is killed at Tres Castillos, ending his campaign.

Turn 18: Winter 1880. Apache resistance continues.

Turn 19: Summer 1881. Nana leads a remarkable raid across the Southwest.

Turn 20: Winter 1881. Geronimo emerges as a key leader of Apache resistance.

Turn 21: Summer 1882.

Turn 22: Winter 1882.

Turn 23: Summer 1883.

Turn 24: Winter 1883.

Turn 25: Summer 1884.

Turn 26: Winter 1884.

Turn 27: Summer 1885. Geronimo escapes again, launching new raids across the Southwest.

Turn 28: Winter 1885. U.S. forces intensify their pursuit of Apache bands.

Turn 29: Summer 1886.

Turn 30: Winter 1886. Geronimo has officially surrendered to U.S. General Nelson A. Miles at Skeleton Canyon, Arizona on September 4th of this year. His surrender marked the end of major Apache resistance in the Southwest and concluded the Indian Wars.
