



It has been ten thousand years since Mankind returned to the stars to reclaim that which was lost in the cataclysmic wars of the Age of Strife. Led by the Immortal God-Emperor and his sacred Primarchs ten millennia ago Mankind rose again from the mire of barbarism and cast back the darkness in the legendary times of the Great Crusade. A new age was forged, the Age of the Imperium.

The glittering achievements of the Dark Age of Technology have been all but lost, obscured by uncounted centuries of superstition and fear. The worlds of Man are scattered across the galaxy, with vast gulfs of wilderness space separating one from another. But the Age of the Imperium has cast the Emperor's Divine Light across a million worlds. It has established an iron regime only maintained through flesh and blood, endless toil, monumental sacrifice and unthinking loyalty to distant Terra. Man has learned to embrace war as its religion, billions take up arms against galaxy of foes. Great ships sail the void, their guns charged to rain death upon the enemies of the God-Emperor.

Still it is not enough to guard the fragile worlds of Man from a cruel and uncaring universe.

Still it is not enough to guard against the unnumbered horrors which lurk upon forgotten worlds, the alien races which prey upon the scattered outposts of humanity and the heretics who dare to defy the Emperor's will.

And even these dire threats pale before the ancient and implacable hatred of the traitors who took up arms against the Emperor in the earliest days of the Imperium. Traitors who gave their worship to the dark and terrible gods which dwell in the Realm of Chaos.

Traitors who wounded the immortal Emperor unto death and forced him to seek solace upon the Golden Throne from where he rules still, his essence maintained only by the sacrifice of supplicants from across his vast realm. By the Emperor's supreme sacrifice these minions of evil were defeated and driven forth from the sight of Man to join with their foul masters in the outer dark. Ten thousand years has not slaked their thirst for vengeance and their plots to bring ruin upon Mankind are pursued with undimmed malice.

This the Age of the Imperium. A time of war and carnage among the stars, of great fleets and mighty armies, selfless heroism and blackest infamy.

If you dare enter these dark times, read on.



BATTLEFLEET GOTHIC

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INTRODUCTION



Welcome to Battlefleet Gothic, the game of spaceship combat set during the Gothic War in the 41st millennium: a grim time when the Imperium of Mankind battles for survival in a hostile galaxy. Battlefleet Gothic allows you to command fleets of warships in deadly conflict among the stars, though whether as Mankind's saviour or its destroyer remains to be seen.

This first section of Battlefleet Gothic details the core rules of the game – the nuts 'n' bolts of how different ships move and fight in space. Later sections cover the history of the Gothic War and how to fight a series of battles as part of an ongoing campaign. You don't really need to have learned all of the following rules to start playing; in fact, if you try to learn everything at once, you may end up getting a bit confused. Very few games, especially if you're just starting out as a Battlefleet Gothic player, will involve all of the rules detailed over the entire book. Our advice is to have a quick look through the rules once. You don't have to read every word, just get an idea of what's going on and where different rules can be found. After that, the best idea is to get stuck in and play a few games! As you come across situations that you're not sure how to deal with, look up the relevant section and read the rules as you are playing.

In particular, the sections on Unit Types, Leadership Tests, The Turn, The Movement Phase, The Shooting Phase, The Ordnance Phase and The End Phase contain all the core rules you need to play and it is there you will find most of the information you'll need. If you start in this way you will find that you pick up the basic rules in a few games and will be able to play for much of the time using just the information on the playsheets.

As you introduce other elements into your games, such as squadrons, attack craft and lumbering battleships, read through the appropriate rules to refresh your memory and refer to them during play.

The Battlefleet Gothic book is divided into six sections containing rules, advanced rules, a guide to painting your models, battles to fight, background information and details of how to fight a campaign set during the Gothic War.

The Core Rules give you rules for staging your own battles using miniatures and dice. Types of ships, leadership, special orders, movement, shooting, weaponry and damage are all covered.

The Advanced Rules introduce extra rules for ramming, boarding actions, ships fighting in squadrons, planetary defences and advice on setting up a tabletop battlefield using celestial phenomena (asteroids, planets, etc).

The Painting and Modelling Guide gives a step by step guide to painting your models, fleet colour schemes, advice on modelling and converting ships, planetary defences and celestial phenomena plus useful pointers on collecting war fleets.

The Scenarios Section contains ten mission scenarios for you to fight and sub-plots to add extra spice to your games.

The Gothic War details the history of the conflict portrayed in Battlefleet Gothic, with information on the ships involved, fleet lists for you to use in choosing your own forces for battles, plus rules, ship details and fleet lists for Ork pirates and Eldar corsairs.

The Campaign Rules tell you how to run an ongoing series of battles through the Gothic War, with rules for crews gaining experience, commanders winning (and losing) renown, repairs, refits, upgrades and capturing star systems.

The very first part of this book, the bit you're reading now, is given over to discussing common conventions used in Battlefleet Gothic, model scale, what you will need to play and so on. Even if you are familiar with wargaming in general you may find it useful to read over this section before going on to the rest of the book.

War is Peace,
Freedom is Slavery,
Ignorance is Strength.

Inscription across the ceiling
of the Chapel Primus on the Divine Right

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

As well as the Battlefleet Gothic rulebook, there are a number of other things you'll require to be able to play. For a start, you will need two or more players, with models to represent their ships. You will also need a battlefield to fight over. Any firm, level surface will do, such as a tabletop or an area of floor – most kitchen tables will do fine! It's a good idea to use an old sheet or blanket to protect the table from scratches and chips. Some players make a special gaming board from chipboard or other similar material, which they can place on top of a table to extend their playing area. Onto this surface, you can then place the celestial

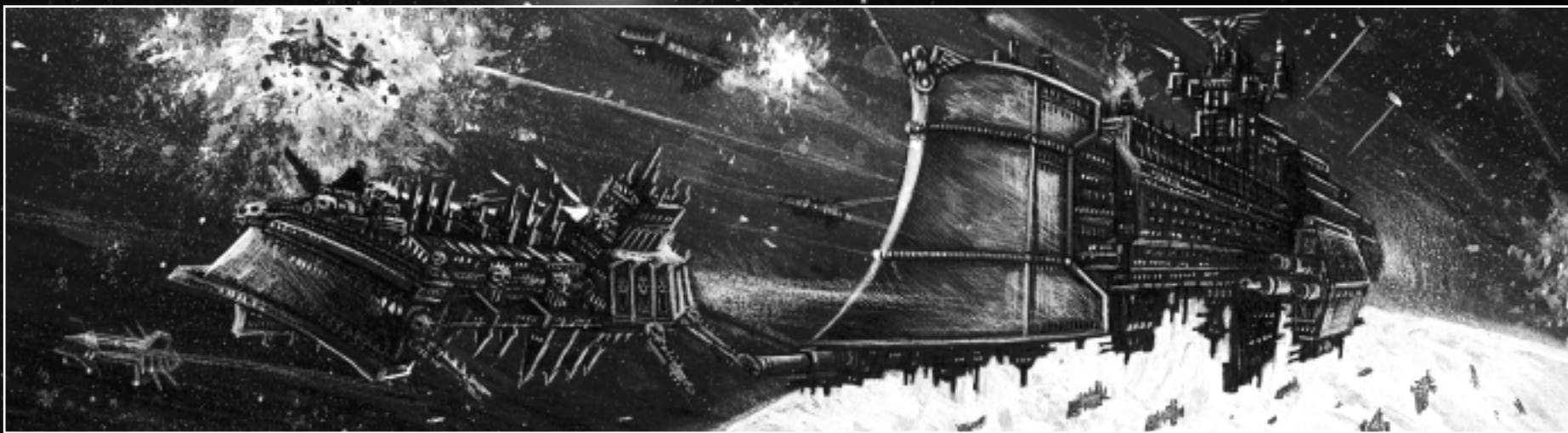
objects around which the battle is fought, such as planets, moons, asteroid fields and dust clouds. You can find out more about fleets and the battlefield later on.

As well as players, ships and a battlefield there are a few other things you will need. At least one measuring device marked in centimetres (such as a retractable tape measure or ruler). All distances in this book are given in centimetres. You will also need some ordinary six-sided dice and a pen and some paper for noting down damage to ships and other details.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



Above are some of the items you will need to play Battlefleet Gothic – pens, paper, ordinary six-sided dice, special order dice and some sort of measuring device (in centimetres). As well as these you will also need a tabletop to play your battles on.



“You are expected at all times and in all situations to conduct yourself in a manner appropriate to, and mindful of, the great duties and traditions of the Emperor's Most Glorious and Honourable Navy.”

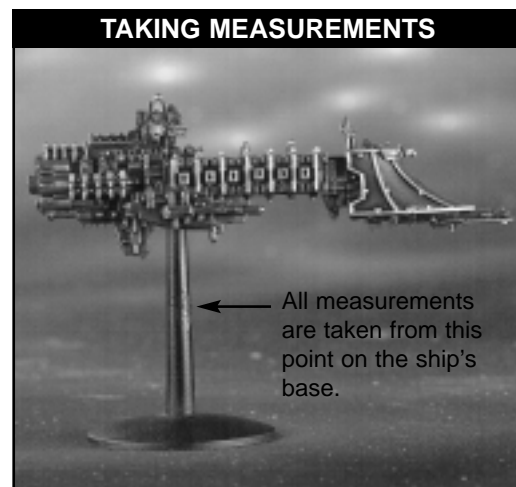
Opening line of the Imperial Navy Articles of War.

FIRST PRINCIPLES

At this early stage in the book it's worth establishing some initial principles about the Battlefleet Gothic game.

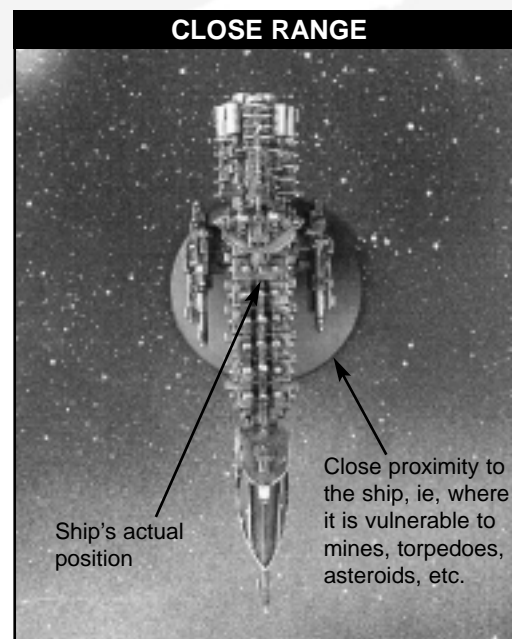
SCALE

First of all – space is big! Very, very big. Take your conception of a long way (ie, down to the shops when it's raining hard) and multiply it by a million, then by another million... and then by another million and you're still not even close to how far apart things are in space. In order to include interesting and exciting features such as planets and moons on the battlefield and have ship models which are not the size of molecules, Battlefleet Gothic takes some liberties with scale. In short, the ship models are designed to look good and be nice to paint, but they are not intended to be in scale with planets. To prevent this becoming a problem in the game it is assumed that the ships actually occupy the point in space shown by the stem of their base.



In keeping with this principle, movement distances are measured from the stem on the ship's base and distances for firing are measured from the stem of the ship's base to the stem of the target model.

The actual base of a ship model represents very close range around the ship, no more than a few thousand kilometres. At this distance all kinds of dangers can affect the ship itself such as torpedoes, deep space bomber squadrons, other ships exploding or asteroids striking. Hence, for the purposes of the game, if something affects an area of the battlefield, like the markers used to represent torpedo salvos or the boundaries of an asteroid field, a ship is affected if its base is touched, or if a ship moves so that its base comes into contact with the hazard.



3D OR NOT 3D?

As well as being very big, space is also infinitely wide, high, deep etc. Despite this, Battlefleet Gothic is played on a flat tabletop. To allow for the vagaries of three dimensions and the vast distances involved, ships can move and fire past each other without any risks. It's easy to imagine that individual ships are just a few hundred kilometres higher or lower than each other and so have plenty of clear space to manoeuvre in.

The reason for the lack of 3D movement is twofold. Firstly, making the game work in three dimensions would add little to the tactics of it, because unlike aircraft combat, where the force of gravity means whoever is highest has an advantage, combat in the zero gravity of space would turn fighting in three dimensions into little more than a range modifier. Secondly, for the practical mechanics of the game, working in 3D would complicate the rules immensely.

DICE ROLLS

There are lots of occasions in a battle when you have to roll dice to see how a ship's actions turn out – how effective shooting is, what damage is done to an enemy ship, how well captains and their crews react to the stress of battle and so on.

All dice rolls in Battlefleet Gothic use a standard six-sided dice (usually shortened to D6). Sometimes you will need to modify the result of the dice roll. This is noted as D6 plus or minus a number, such as D6+1 or D6-2. Roll the dice and add or subtract the number indicated to get the final result.

For example, D6+2 means roll a dice and add 2 to the score, giving a total between 3 and 8.

You may also be told to roll a number of dice together, which is written as 2D6, 3D6 and so on. Roll the indicated number of dice and add the scores together, so that with a 2D6 roll, two dice are rolled and added together for a score between 2–12, 3D6 adds together the scores of three dice for a total between 3 and 18 and so on.

For example, a 2D6 roll of a 5 and a 3 are added together to score 8.

Another method used is to multiply a dice by a certain amount. Thus, D6x5 means the result of a D6 roll multiplied by 5, giving a total between 5 and 30.

Sometimes a combination of these methods may be used, such as 2D6+5 giving a score between 7 and 17, or 3D6-3 which will total 0–15.

In a few rare circumstances you may be told to roll a D3. Since there's no such thing as a three-sided dice, use the following method for determining a score between 1 and 3. Roll a D6 and halve the score, rounding up. Thus a 1 or 2 equals 1, a 3 or 4 equals 2 and a 5 or 6 equals 3.

Re-rolls

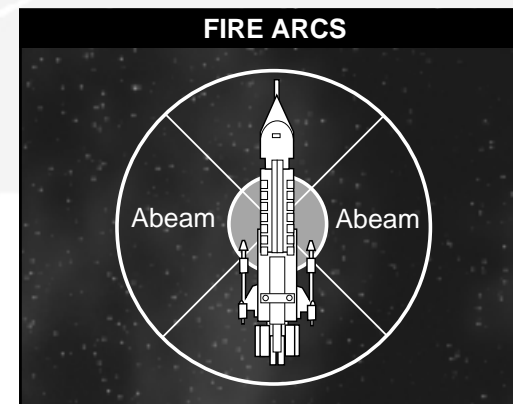
In some situations the rules allow you a re-roll of the dice. This is exactly as it sounds – pick up the dice you wish to re-roll and roll it/them again. The second score counts with a re-roll, even if it means a worse result than the first and no single dice can be re-rolled more than once, regardless of the source of the re-roll.

THE BEARING COMPASS



A vital instrument in Battlefleet Gothic is the bearing compass, a circular card template with a hole punched through the middle. It is used for two purposes.

Firstly to check the fire arcs of your own ships to see which weapons they can bring to bear against the enemy. Doing so is simple, place the template over your ship so that the hole in the centre is above the centre of the flying stand and the two arrows are pointing along the length of the ship:



This places the 90° quadrants so that one is in front, one is behind and one is to each side of the ship. Fire arcs and ship's gunnery are explained in more detail in the Shooting Phase section.

Secondly, it is used to find out what aspect a target is presenting to a ship firing at it. In this case the bearing compass is placed over the target in the same way as described above. The aspect of the target is shown by which quadrant faces the firer.



"The whole principle of naval fighting is to be free to go anywhere with every damned thing the Navy possesses."

Captain Grenfeld of the Hammer of Justice

SHIP TYPES

Battlefleet Gothic allows you to fight space battles amidst the cold, bright stars of the Gothic Sector during the period of raging war and unbridled destruction heralded by the ninth Black Crusade of Abaddon early in the 41st millennium. At this time Imperial, Chaos, Ork and Eldar ships of all sizes clashed in deadly conflict. Massive beweaponed battlecruisers joust with lances of fusion fire, lumbering battleships duel with coruscating salvoes of destruction while their agile escort ships dart through the fray to slash at the battling leviathans.

The Citadel miniatures used to play Battlefleet Gothic are referred to as ships (or sometimes vessels) in the rules that follow. Each ship is an individual playing piece with its own capabilities. Different ships can have very different capabilities, so they are separated into the following types: battleships, cruisers and escorts.

Battleships are the largest fighting ships in space. They can absorb a tremendous amount of damage and mount weapons batteries capable of laying waste to entire continents. These vessels are so huge that they are comparatively slow and ponderous to manoeuvre, so they need support from other vessels to bring the enemy to battle.

Cruisers are the workhorses of any fleet. They are manoeuvrable, well-armed ships, capable of operating away from a base for extended periods. This means that cruisers are used for extended patrols, blockades and raiding deep into enemy held space. In a major battle, cruisers screen the approach of the fleet in support of the escorts and form the gun line once battle begins.

Escort Ships are the commonest warships in any fleet. They are fast, lightly armed and capable of running rings around heavier ships, which they accompany to protect them against torpedo attacks and to fight off enemy escorts. They are also used for independent actions such as scouting, raiding, protecting transport ships, and chasing pirates.

Note that for reasons of brevity, battleships and cruisers are often grouped together under the general heading of *capital ships*, a term which applies to all ships of both types.

SHIP DATA SHEETS

In the Ships of the Gothic Sector section you will find a complete set of characteristics for each vessel available in Battlefleet Gothic. These characteristics will tell you how fast, manoeuvrable, well-armoured and hideously armed they are.

The table below represents the characteristics for an Imperial Lunar class cruiser and a Murder class Chaos cruiser.

NAME: AGRIPPA

CLASS: LUNAR

LEADERSHIP: 7

TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/8	20cm	45°	2	6+ front/5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED	FIREPOWER/STR		FIRE ARC
Port lance battery		30cm	2		Left
Starboard lance battery		30cm	2		Right
Port weapons battery		30cm	6		Left
Starboard weapons battery		30cm	6		Right
Prow torpedoes		30cm	6		Front

NAME: UNCLEAN

CLASS: MURDER

LEADERSHIP: 7

TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/8	25cm	45°	2	5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED	FIREPOWER/STR		FIRE ARC
Port weapons battery		45cm	10		Left
Starboard weapons battery		45cm	10		Right
Prow lance battery		60cm	2		Front

Name: All ships deserve a name! Well, except escorts maybe. There is a list of some of the most famous ships that fought in the Gothic War in the Ships of the Gothic Sector section, so feel free to use those or make up your own.

Class: Ships are not all the same, so they are listed as belonging to a particular class. Different classes may be approximately the same in terms of size and weight but vary a lot in details. What is basically the same hull may carry different weapons, bigger engines, more or less armour, etc. Ships may even be converted from one class to another in the course of a major refit. The two ships shown on the previous page are a Lunar class Imperial cruiser and a Murder class Chaos cruiser. You will notice that while they are the same type their actual characteristics are different.

Leadership: A ship's Leadership value indicates how experienced and well trained its crew are and/or how clever and decisive its captain is in combat. In a one-off game of Battlefleet Gothic the Leadership value of ships is randomly generated. If the ship fights in an ongoing campaign its Leadership can improve or worsen depending on how well the ship performs.

Type/Hits: A ship's Type tells you if it is a battleship, cruiser or escort. Its number of Hits indicates how big and strongly built its hull is and how large a crew it has. In Battlefleet Gothic, a ship's Hits represents how many times it can be hit and damaged before it is reduced to a floating wreck (note that Hits are also referred to as damage points: don't be confused – both mean the same thing). Both cruisers in our example have 8 Hits, which is average for a cruiser.

Speed: The Speed characteristic tells you how far a ship moves in one turn. Vessels can potentially move faster than this but the additional power output needed will divert energy from weapon systems. The Chaos cruiser has a slight edge over the Imperial one in terms of speed, which gives it an important advantage in combat.

Turns: Ships can usually turn just once during their move. This characteristic shows how sharply it can turn. In this case both ships can turn up to 45°, which is again about average for cruisers.

Shields: Nearly all ships are protected by powerful force field generators that can absorb or shunt aside incoming hits. Shields are rated according to how many hits they can absorb in a turn before they temporarily collapse. Both the ships shown have shields capable of absorbing two hits.

Armour: The ship's Armour rating shows how well protected it is and/or how difficult it is to damage. When the ship is fired upon, the attacker needs to roll equal to or over its Armour rating on a D6 in order to score a hit. The Chaos cruiser has Armour of 5+ all round, but the Imperial cruiser has a heavily armoured prow which makes its Armour 6+ against shots from its front.

Turrets: In addition to their main armament, most ships carry numerous small, quick-firing turrets. These are mounted over the length of their hull to shoot down incoming torpedoes and fighters. Both cruisers mount enough of these lighter weapons to have a Turrets value of 2.

Armament: This section lists the ship's main armament and its location.

"There is nothing better that a man can do than lay down his life in the service of the Emperor."

Inscription at the top of the Gothic Monolith in the Chamber of Heroes

Range/Speed: The maximum range of weapons is shown in centimetres. In the case of ordnance weapons which move towards their target, such as torpedoes or fighters, the speed of the weapon is shown rather than its maximum range. As you can see, the Lunar class cruiser mounts more weapon systems than the Murder class but they all have a shorter range.

Firepower/Strength: This number represents how effective a weapons system is when it shoots – the higher the number the better. Special weapons systems like torpedoes and lances have a Strength rating instead of a Firepower value. In this case the greater firepower of the Murder class cruiser is counter-balanced by the lances and torpedoes of the Imperial ship.

Fire Arc: Weapon systems may only fire in particular directions depending on where they are mounted on the ship. Both the cruisers shown mount most of their weaponry in broadsides on either side of the ship. Few vessels mount any rear facing weapons – their engines are too massive and the thermal 'backwash' they create makes targeting almost impossible.

+++INCOMING ORDERS+++FLEET TO ASSEMBLE AT GRID 586/A.[GETHSEMANE]+++LORD RAVENSBURG COMMANDING DIVINE RIGHT+++BATTLEGROUP FEROCIOUS
TO ATTEND+++BATTLEGROUP IMPETUOUS TO ATTEND+++PATROL FLEET ERINYES TO ATTEND+++OPERATION: TOTAL ERADICATION OF ENEMY FORCES BY ALL
MEANS NECESSARY+++MAY THE EMPEROR GUIDE YOUR GUNS+++

+++BY YOUR COMMAND+++PRAISE THE EMPEROR+++

LEADERSHIP

"A magnificent ship no doubt, but I would rather have a crew who knew their airlaps from their transons."

Admiral Rath on receiving command of the Emperor class battleship Dominus Astra.

Even the smallest stellar craft is a marvel of engineering, packed with machinery and technology of the highest sophistication. The truly massive stellar warships are almost impossible to comprehend in their complexity, with thousands of crew members performing millions of tasks to keep the whole vessel in working order. It is said that no single man could fully understand all of the machinery and systems that work together to make

such a vessel function. Nonetheless, it is ultimately the captain and crew who will determine how well a ship performs in combat. A ship under the command of an inspiring captain with a dedicated, well-trained crew can consistently outrun or outgun enemy vessels.

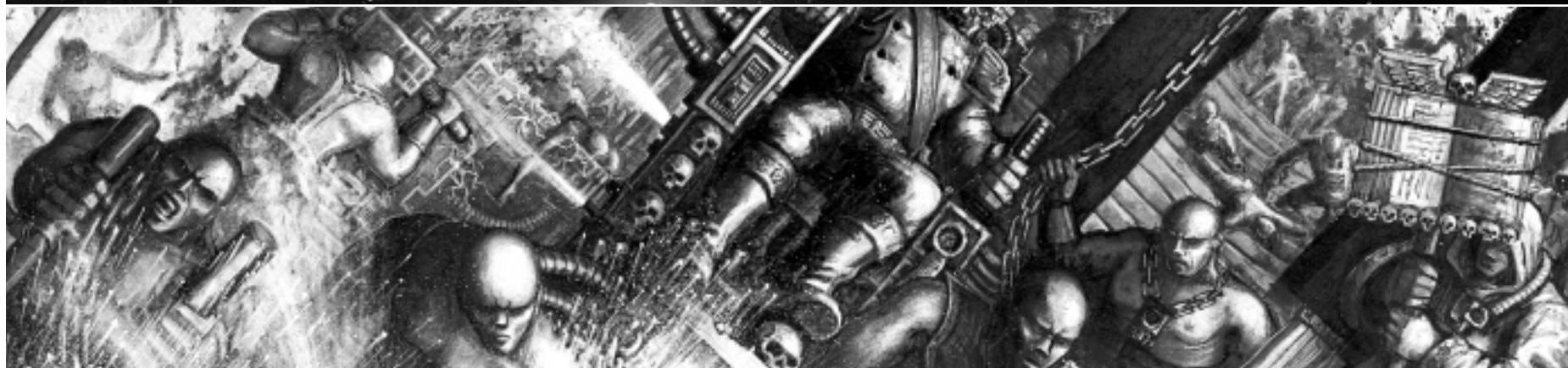
In Battlefleet Gothic, the expertise of a captain and his crew is shown by the ship's Leadership value: the higher it is, the better the captain and crew. Leadership is very important, because ships must test against it if they wish to use special orders.

STARTING LEADERSHIP VALUES

As mentioned earlier, in one-off games you roll a D6 to determine each ship's Leadership value

before the start of the game. Look up the result of the dice roll on the table below to see what Leadership value the ship has. Escorts roll once per squadron, with the whole squadron sharing the leadership value rolled. Each capital ship rolls individually for leadership, even if it is in a squadron. Squadrons are explained fully later in the rules

D6 ROLL	LEADERSHIP
1	Untried (Ld 6)
2-3	Experienced (Ld 7)
4-5	Veteran (Ld 8)



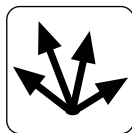
"The Emperor is master of the galaxy, but the captain is master of his ship."

Popular naval saying

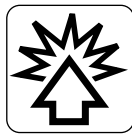
SPECIAL ORDERS



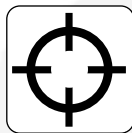
There are six different special orders and each one allows a vessel to perform better at something, such as gunnery or navigation, during its turn. A ship or squadron can only ever be on one special order at a time. The six special orders are:



All Ahead Full: A ship going *All Ahead Full* directs more power to its engines to produce an extra burst of speed, gaining an extra 4D6cm of movement. Its weapons are reduced to half effectiveness and the ship may not turn while moving under this order.



Come to New Heading: The ship sacrifices opportunities to fire its weapons in order to turn more sharply, allowing the vessel to turn twice during its movement phase, instead of only once, but at a cost of halving its weapons' Firepower or Strength.



Burn Retros: The ship directs additional energy to its retro thrusters in order to kill some of its forward momentum and hold position. Again, this reduces the Firepower and Strength of the ship's weaponry but the vessel can turn more sharply, thereby using the retros to turn on the spot.



Lock On: The ship maintains a steady course and draws additional energy from its engines to fire its armament in multiple salvos. While a *Lock On* order prevents the ship from turning, its shooting is far more effective, because it may re-roll any To Hit dice that miss during the shooting phase, making this probably the most useful special order to issue once the enemy are in range.

Reload Ordnance: Ships start the game with their ordnance, such as torpedoes and attack craft, fully loaded and armed. However, once the ordnance has been fired or launched the vessel must reload before it can use its ordnance again. Reloading is done by using *Reload Ordnance* orders. Reloading ordnance does not inhibit a ship's manoeuvring or firing but is a vital order for ships which have to rely on their ordnance to attack.



Brace For Impact! This order is unusual in that it can only be used during the ordnance phase or during an opponent's turn (usually when a particularly deadly salvo is about to strike the ship). The captain of the vessel orders his crew to brace for impact; power is redirected to the shields, blast doors are slammed shut and the crew hang onto something secure. The ship gains a saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6 against any hits inflicted on it by the enemy, but its firing is

reduced to half effect and it may not use any other special orders in its next turn (the crew need time to re-open its blast doors, redirect power, etc).

Each of these special orders is covered in more detail in the appropriate sections of the rules and a summary of them is included on the playsheet for your convenience.

TAKING COMMAND CHECKS

In the midst of battle an admiral may order his ships to perform special orders or a captain may decide it is appropriate to direct more of his ship's power to weapons or engines. However, in order to do this the ship undertaking special orders must first pass a *Command check*.

To make a Command check, roll 2D6 and compare it to the ship's Leadership value. If the roll is equal to or under the ship's Leadership value it has passed the check and goes onto special orders. Then move the ship or squadron as appropriate before moving on to place your next special order. Place a special order dice next to the model with the appropriate symbol face uppermost as a reminder.

With all of the orders except *Brace For Impact* you must make the check in the movement phase before moving the ship.

If the roll is higher than the ship's Leadership value, it

"He who seizes the moment, he is the right man."

Fleet-Admiral Hawke

INTRODUCTION

fails the test and may not go onto special orders. Furthermore, once you have failed a Command check for one ship in your fleet you may not make *any* further Command checks to use special orders in the same turn.

It can be imagined that the delays and confusion in trying to get that particular ship to perform special orders means that the opportunity has passed for any further special orders to be issued.

Command Check Modifiers

Some circumstances will make it easier or harder for a vessel to use special orders. To represent this, there are two modifiers that can apply to Command checks, one positive and one negative.

Under Fire -1 If a ship has Blast markers in contact with its base, it is under fire and suffers a -1 modifier to its Leadership. Blast markers are described more fully in the Shooting section of the rules. For now it's simply worth knowing that they represent weapon impacts, debris clouds, radioactivity and other impediments to calm and orderly ship operation.

Enemy Contacts +1 Enemy ships on special orders create anomalous energy emissions which make it much easier for the ship to detect them and react quickly. For this reason the ship gains a +1 modifier to its Leadership value if

any enemy ships are on special orders.

For example, the Imperial cruiser Agrippa (Leadership 7) wants to use All Ahead Full orders to catch up with the Chaos cruiser Unclean. The Chaos cruiser used Lock On orders last turn so the Agrippa gets a +1 modifier to its Leadership value. Rolling 2D6 the Imperial player gets a 2 and 6 for a total of 8 and passes its Command check by equalling its modified Leadership value.

SPECIAL ORDERS SUMMARY



RELOAD ORDNANCE

The ship may reload any ordnance it is armed with in the shooting phase.

Speed: Half to full cruising speed.

Turns: Up to one.

Armament: Full effect.

Ordnance: Full effect.



ALL AHEAD FULL

The ship may move at an increased speed.

Speed: Cruising speed + 4D6cm (make one roll for the whole formation).

Turns: None.

Armament: Half effect.

Ordnance: Full effect.



BURN RETROS

The ship may move at up to half its cruising speed or remain stationary.

Speed: Zero to half cruising speed.

Turns: Up to one.

Armament: Half effect.

Ordnance: Full effect.



LOCK ON

To Hit rolls for lances and weapons batteries may be re-rolled.

Speed: Half to full cruising speed.

Turns: None.

Armament: Full effect.

Ordnance: Full effect.



COME TO NEW HEADING

The ship can make an extra turn.

Speed: Half to full cruising speed.

Turns: Up to two.

Armament: Half effect.

Ordnance: Full effect.



BRACE FOR IMPACT!

You may brace for impact at any time during either player's turn, replacing any special orders the ship already has. The ship gains a 4+ save against each damage point inflicted on it (hits on shields can not be saved). The ship may not be placed on any other special orders while this order is still in play. Leave the Brace For Impact Orders in place during the ship's next turn and remove the orders in the end phase.

Speed: Half to full cruising speed.

Turns: Up to one.

Armament: Half effect.

Ordnance: Half effect

THE TURN

A game of Battlefleet Gothic is unlike many other games such as chess or draughts where you only move one piece at a time. A tremendous amount of action takes place in a real battle: ships manoeuvre and fire at each other, fighters and bombers are launched in vast waves and torpedoes scream towards their targets.

In a real battle, this all happens at once amidst the chaos of combat. A Battlefleet Gothic game represents the ebb and flow of battle, but in order for us to decide its outcome players alternate taking turns moving and fighting with their ships. So in a battle, player A will move and fight with his ships first, then player B will move and fight and then player A will move and fight again, etc.

In his turn a player can move and fight with all of his ships. For convenience, moving and shooting are dealt with one after the other. This means that you move all your ships first and then all your ships, that are able to, fire. This helps everyone keep track of what's going on and makes it easier to know when each player's actions are finished.

In a turn the player performs his actions in the appropriate phases – the move, shoot and ordnance phases to be precise. Exactly what happens in each phase is described in The Turn Sequence later.

WHO GETS THE FIRST TURN

Which player gets the first turn of the game can be determined in a number of different ways. Normally both players roll a D6 and the player with the highest score can decide to move either first or second. Sometimes the kind of game you are fighting will decide it for you. For example, in an ambush the attacking side will always get the first turn.

Fighting all sorts of different battles is covered in more detail in the Scenarios section later.

ENDING THE BATTLE

A battle can end in a number of different ways. Most commonly in Battlefleet Gothic fighting continues until either one side surrenders, or has no ships remaining on the tabletop.

However, in certain kinds of battles, players might be able to win a 'sudden death' victory which ends the game immediately – eg, if they destroy the enemy flagship. Alternatively you might decide to end a battle at a preset time if you only have a limited amount of time to play in.

Different ways of ending the battle are discussed in more detail in the Scenarios section.

EXCEPTIONS

There are times when a player will perform certain actions when it is not their turn, such as *Bracing for Impact* for example. It may also be convenient to interrupt a player's turn because of some event occurring, such as an enemy ship being detected. The thing to remember is that the turn sequence will always continue after the interruption as normal.



TURN SEQUENCE

1. THE MOVEMENT PHASE

This is when a player moves his ships.

The player begins by removing any special order dice he placed last turn (except for ships on *Brace for Impact* orders. They are stuck with them for this turn).

Next, the player moves his ships and squadrons one at a time. In this phase he may also take Command checks to institute special orders before moving a ship or squadron. If any Command check is failed no further checks may be made in the same turn.

Note that ships must always move at least half their speed unless they wish to use the *Burn Retros* special orders in order to hold position. See the Movement rules for more details about how to move your ships.

2. THE SHOOTING PHASE

Players may fire at each other's vessels during this part of the turn.

The player can shoot with any of his ships that are within range of enemy vessels. See the Shooting rules for more details about how to resolve shooting.

3. THE ORDNANCE PHASE

Both players may move any Ordnance markers (such as torpedoes or fighter squadrons) which were launched in the shooting phase or are still on the tabletop, having been launched in a previous turn. See the Ordnance rules for more details.

4. THE END PHASE

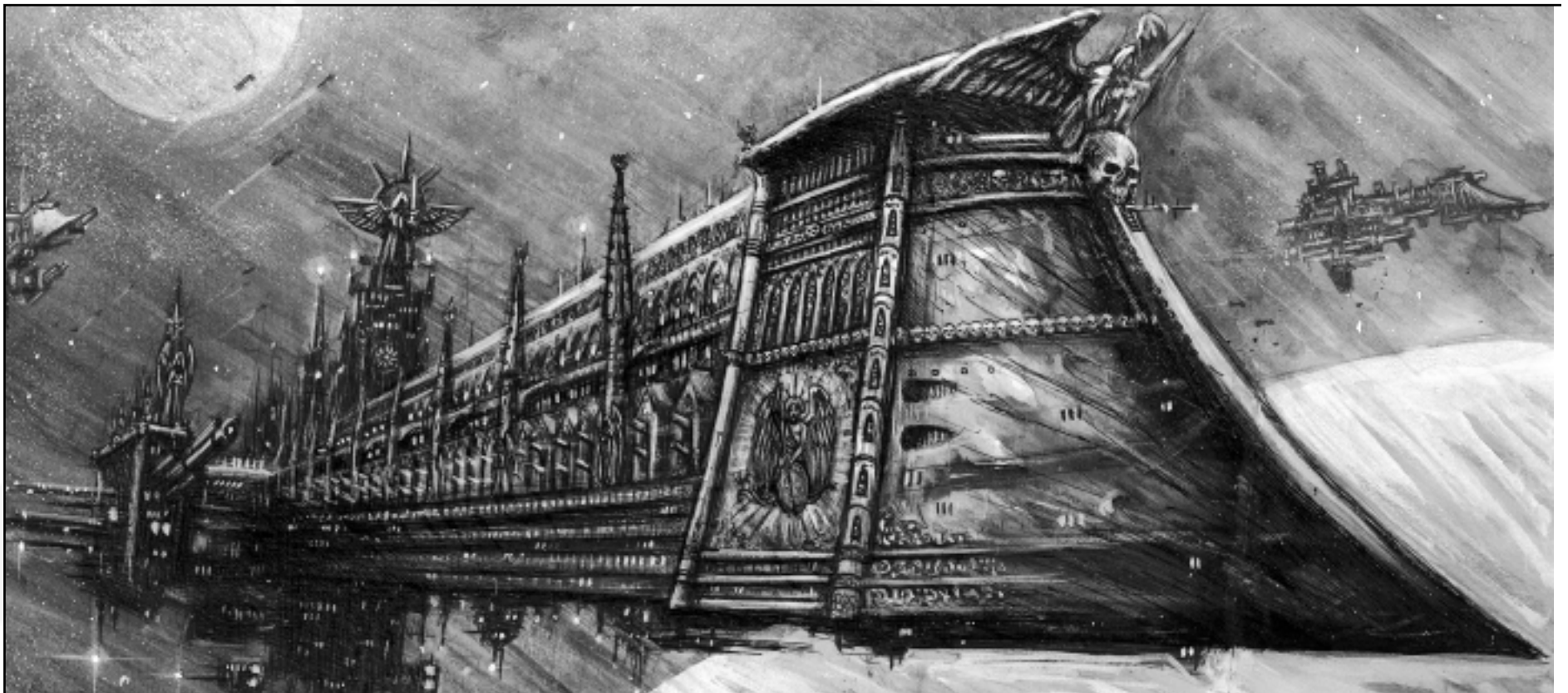
Both players may attempt to repair critical damage which has been inflicted on their ships: D6 Blast markers are also removed by the player whose turn it is. See the End Phase rules for more about repairs and removing Blast markers.



THE MOVEMENT PHASE



During the movement phase, vessels manoeuvre into position to begin battle. Moving your battlefleet into the right position to rain destruction upon your opponent is vital – some ships need to keep their distance while others need to come to grips at close quarters. The movement phase is filled with opportunities. By moving your ships you can surround a target and destroy it, smash through the heart of an opposing fleet, lurk behind planets and moons, flee from powerful enemies, even set traps to lure unwary foes to their destruction. A wise admiral can achieve all this and more in the movement phase.



BASIC MOVES

A player may move each ship up to its standard move distance each turn. Once one ship has completed its movement, the player selects another and moves that one and so on until he has moved all the ships he wishes to move. This can be summarised as:

1. Choose a ship to move.
2. Move the ship up to its maximum move distance.
3. Choose another ship to move.

Note that a player **has** to move his ships unless they use the *Burn Retros* special order to remain stationary.

MOVE DISTANCE

Ships are pushed through the firmament by the most powerful engines anywhere in the galaxy. The aft section of a warship is a mass of enormous drive tubes and vast engine compartments, filled with thundering machinery, that run for up to a third of the length of the ship. In space combat, the thrust available to a vessel can mean the difference between survival and destruction.

All ships can move at up to their normal speed. Speed varies from one ship to another, but by way of example, an Imperial Lunar class cruiser has a speed of 20cm.

A ship's normal move may be increased by using the *All Ahead Full* special order that follows. A vessel's move can also be decreased in some circumstances during a battle. Damage to the ship may inhibit the efficiency of its engines and reduce its top speed, and a ship which moves through Blast markers will be slowed slightly by the shockwaves and explosions.

Minimum Move Distance

Ships moving under engines retain enormous amounts of momentum. If a vessel slows down without the correct

preparations, it is so big that there is a very real chance that its structure will be damaged because the whole of its vast length isn't moving at the same speed. Because of this, ships must always move at least half of their speed unless they use the *Burn Retros* special order, detailed below. Ships who are unable to move half their speed (due to damage, blast markers etc.) must move the maximum possible distance instead.

Special Orders: *All Ahead Full*



A ship can move faster than its basic cruising speed by using the *All Ahead Full* special order. If the ship passes its Command check it adds 4D6cm onto its move distance and must move its full movement distance. In the case of squadrons, just make one roll and add the amount rolled onto the movement distance of all the ships in the squadron. Using *All Ahead Full* orders means that a ship cannot turn and its firing ability is less effective, as explained in the Shooting rules. *All Ahead Full* orders are most useful for closing in on a distant foe or escaping from a deadly situation.



Special Orders: *Burn Retros*

A ship can move slower than half its basic cruising speed by using the *Burn Retros* special order. If the ship passes its Command check it can move at up to half its cruising speed, or even remain stationary (hold station). A ship can turn when using this order but its firing is less effective. *Burn Retros* orders are handy for holding back, when moving at full speed would bring you within range of an enemy's guns, or would cause a ship to crash into asteroids.

TURNING

The bigger a ship, the slower it will turn. While light escort ships such as frigates are reasonably agile, the larger cruisers are ponderous beasts. The time lag between a cruiser applying thrust and turning is considerable. The truly enormous battleships take even longer to manoeuvre.

When ships move they have to travel in a straight line, directly ahead. However, ships may make one turn as part of their movement unless they are using special orders which prevent them from doing so.

A ship can turn by a maximum of either 45° or 90°, how sharp a turn it can make is included in the ship's characteristics. By way of example, the Imperial Lunar class cruiser is able to make turns of up to 45°.

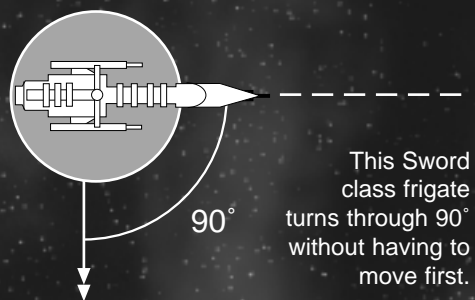
Large ships have to move a certain distance before they are allowed to make a turn. The distance they must travel depends on their type:

1. A battleship must move 15cm before it can execute a turn.
1. A cruiser must move 10cm before it can execute a turn.
1. An escort ship can execute a turn at any point in its move.

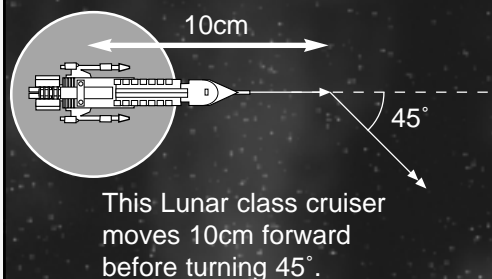
"Blessed be the coruscating plasma of the engine room,
Spiritus Machina protect us from thy burning doom.
Harness unto our will the power of light,
Let conduit and coil work alright."

Catechism of the Engin-near

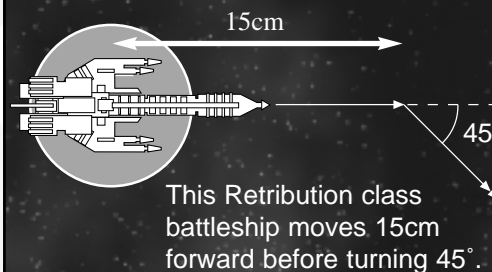
BASIC TURNING 1



BASIC TURNING 2



BASIC TURNING 3



"His great art was to be in the right place at the right time – others were not so cunning."

Captain Compel Bast
of Lord Admiral Ravensberg

Special Orders:

Come To New Heading

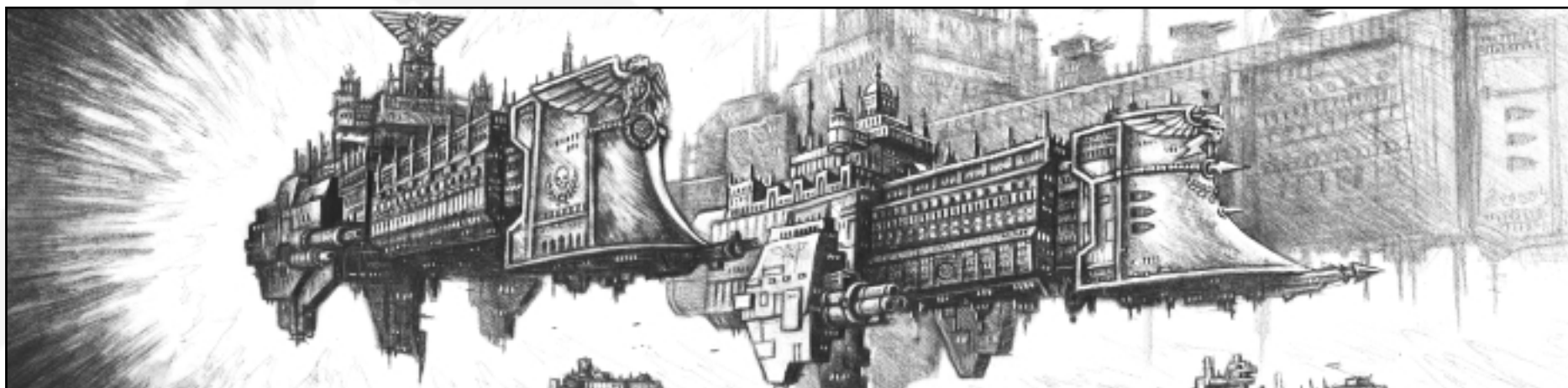
A ship can turn more sharply by using the *Come To New Heading* special order. If the ship passes its Command check, it may make an extra turn during its movement. Using *Come to New Heading* means that a ship is less effective in the shooting phase as explained in the Shooting rules. *Come to New Heading* orders are best used either for turning to get a more favourable attack angle on an enemy as it attempts to escape, or to outmanoeuvre a larger enemy ship. All the normal restrictions for turning (cruisers moving 10cm first, etc.) apply to the second turn.

Special Orders: All Ahead Full

As mentioned earlier, a ship using *All Ahead Full* orders may not turn at all.

Special Orders: Burn Retros

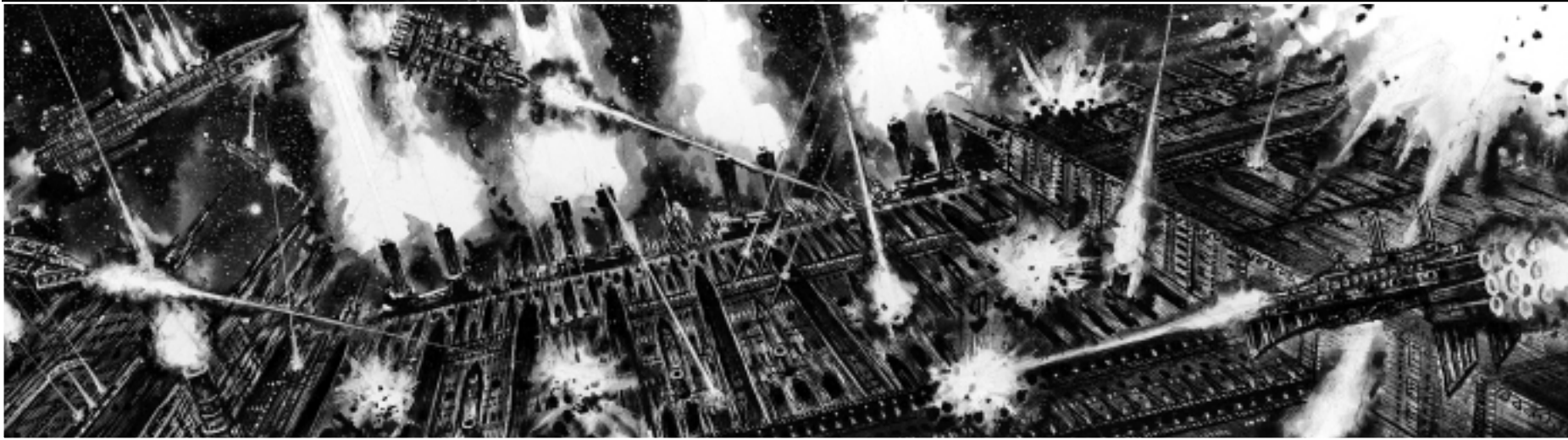
A ship that is using the *Burn Retros* special order can make a single turn without having to move forward first.



THE SHOOTING PHASE



In the shooting phase, your ships get to unleash their weaponry against the enemy. The attacks that ships make are divided into two sorts: direct firing and ordnance attacks. Direct fire attacks include weapons such as lasers, fusion beams and plasma launchers which when fired hit almost immediately, even across tens of thousands of kilometres. Ordnance attacks include torpedoes and fighters, which are launched during the shooting phase but are not resolved until they hit their target in a subsequent ordnance phase.



"The Incendrius shuddered as the fire from our gun-decks continued. Broadside after broadside was levelled into the grand cruiser's prow, smashing through her shields and making a ruin of her bow armour. The enemy tried to turn sharply to bring her own batteries to bear, but Captain Grendl was expecting this and we moved with them, still pouring a torrent of plasma into the twisted and wrecked prow. Flames were licking along the port side of the traitor's hull now, as ruptures in her armour sent pressurised air flooding into the ether, ignited by the plasma bolts that were continually raining down."

Extract from the log of Third Lieutenant Brass on the destruction of the Bringer of Despair by the Incendrius

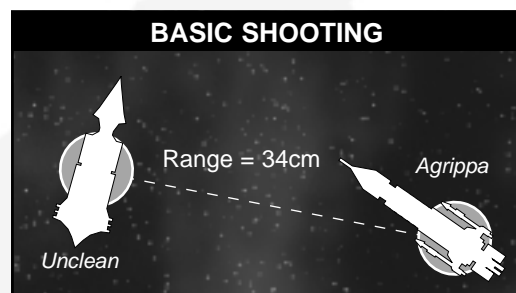
DIRECT FIRE

Direct firing uses a ship's weapons batteries, lances and nova cannon. A player can make direct fire attacks with each of his ships during his turn. In order to make direct fire attacks, the firing ship must have at least some weapons within range and fire arc of the enemy. Once one ship has done all its firing, the player selects another and fires that one and so on until the player has fired all of the ships he wants to. This can be summarised as:

1. Choose a ship to fire.
2. Check the ship has targets within range.
3. Check the ship has weapons within fire arc of the target.
4. Resolve firing.
5. Choose another ship to fire.

RANGE

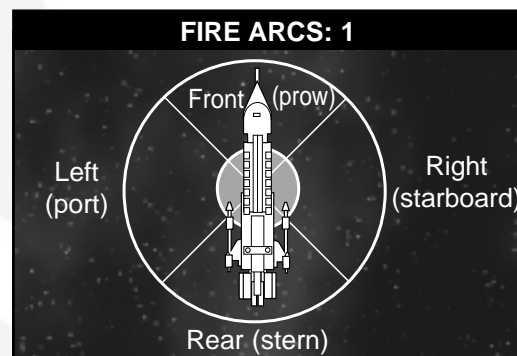
Measure the range from the firing ship to the target vessel. Then look up the range of the firing ship's weapons on its characteristics: any weapons which are out of range may not fire. Because ships vary immensely in size and shape, we use the stems of the models' bases as a pair of convenient centre points for checking range.



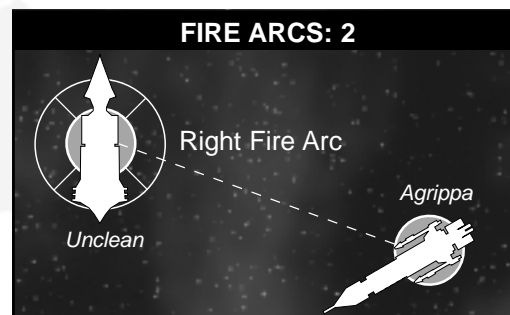
In the example above the Unclean is firing on the Agrippa. The Unclean is 34cm away so its weapons batteries (range 45cm) are within range.

FIRE ARCS

Weapons have a limited field of fire depending on where they are mounted on the vessel. The different fire arcs are: front, left, right and rear.



A weapons system must have a target ship within its fire arc in order to fire.



The Unclean has the Agrippa in its right fire arc, so it may fire at it with any of its weapons which can be brought to bear in that arc.

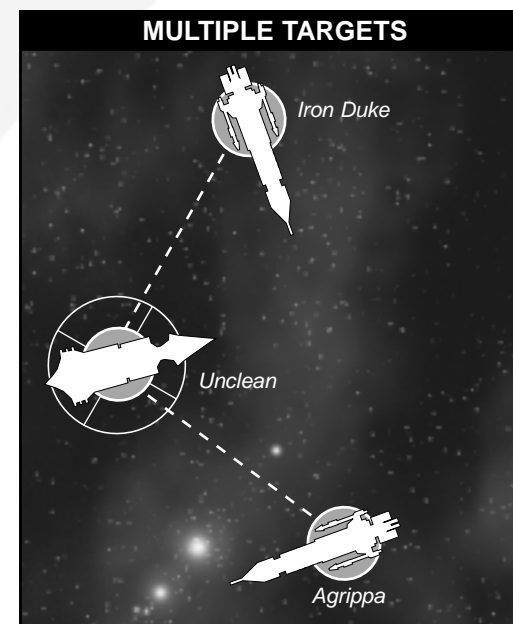
Some weapon systems can shoot into more than one fire arc. For example, many cruisers have weaponry in a dorsal mount (ie, along the top of the vessel) and dorsal mounts can fire left, front or right. Some weapons can even fire all round.

TARGET PRIORITY

Enemies at close range pose a much greater threat than those thousands of kilometres away, so a ship will normally target the nearest enemy ship or squadron. However, a ship can always fire at whatever targets you like if it takes and passes a Leadership test on 2D6 first.

Multiple Targets

Normally a ship will be in a position where only some of its weapon systems can be brought to bear against the closest enemy. Unengaged weapons may still be fired at other targets, providing that the closest enemy is shot at as a matter of priority.



In the example above the Unclean may fire its left arc weaponry against the Iron Duke and its right arc weaponry against the Agrippa.

"No battle was ever won that was poorly planned. No plan ever succeeded that was poorly conceived."

Admiral Ravensburg

DIRECT FIRING: LANCES

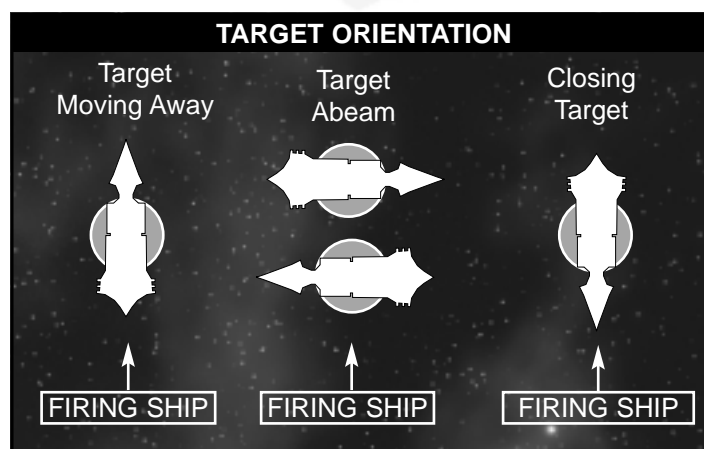
Lances are incredibly high-powered energy weapons that are capable of burning straight through an armoured hull or cutting an escort ship in two. On Imperial and Chaos ships, lances are usually mounted in huge turrets with quad or triple energy projectors that focus into a concentrated beam of destruction.

Lance Rules

If a lance weapon system is within range and fire arc of the target simply roll 1D6 per point of lance Strength. Any dice which score a 4, 5 or 6 hit the target regardless of the target's Armour value and cause 1 damage point.

For example, the Agrippa has lances that have a Strength of 2. If the vessel were to fire them, it would roll 2D6 and score one hit for each dice which rolled a 4 or more.

A target's orientation depends upon which fire arc the firing vessel is in, as shown in the diagram to the right. Match this with the target's type to find out which column of the Gunnery table to use.



DIRECT FIRING: WEAPONS BATTERIES

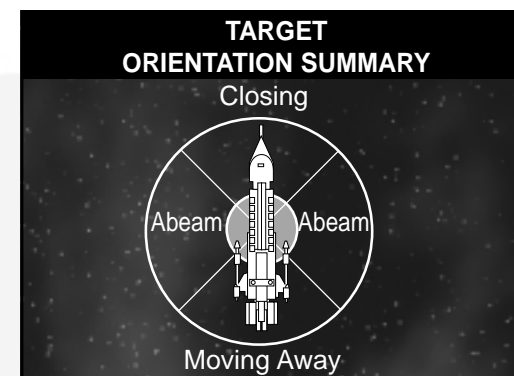
Weapons batteries form the main armament for most warships, ensuring that much of their hull is pock-marked by gun ports and weapon housings. Each battery consists of rank upon rank of weapons: plasma projectors, laser cannons, missile launchers, rail guns, fusion beamers and graviton pulsars. Weapons batteries fire by salvos, using a co-ordinated pattern of shots to catch the target in the middle of a maelstrom of destruction.

Weapons Battery Rules

If a ship's weapons battery is within range and fire arc of the target, look up the battery's firepower on the ship's data sheet. Then look up the target's type and orientation on the Gunnery table that follows.

If a ship is firing multiple weapons batteries at the same target, total up the firepower of all the weapons batteries the firing ship is shooting at the target before consulting the Gunnery table. First find your total firepower on the column on the left of the table. Next look across the top of the table to find the target type you are shooting at.

Which way the target is travelling is important for gunnery purposes as it is much harder to hit a



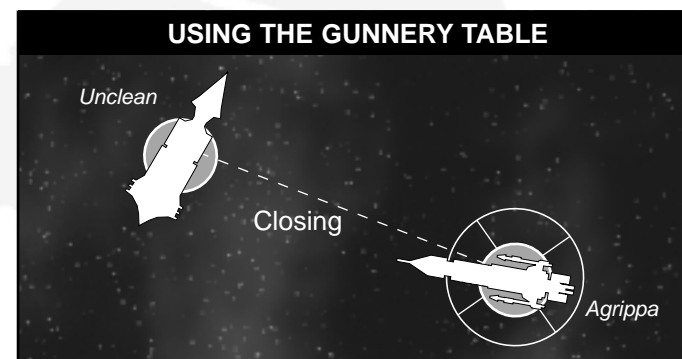
The target's orientation is worked out by tracing the line of fire to its base and using the bearing compass to see which aspect is facing the firer.

"Rake 'em across the prow from close range! They'll not forget that in a hurry."

Captain Grenfield's advice during the Battle of Merlin VI

target moving across your sights (ie, abeam) than one closing or moving away from you.

By cross referencing the total firepower of the attack with the target type and orientation you will find out how many dice to roll to hit. Each dice roll which equals or beats the target's Armour value scores a hit and inflicts 1 point of damage.



The Unclean opens fire with its starboard (right) weapons batteries. The weapons have a firepower of 10 and the Agrippa is a closing capital ship which on the Gunnery table means that the Unclean rolls 7D6. The Agrippa's front armour rating is 6 so the Unclean needs to roll 6s to hit.

Gunnery Modifiers

Sometimes conditions will affect how difficult a target is to hit. Ships at very long range will be hard to hit and at close range they will be easy to hit. Debris, radiation, etc, can obscure a target and are represented by Blast markers. These are described in more detail later, but for now it's worth knowing that they can make a target harder to hit.

Modifiers are applied in the form of column shifts. A good modifier (such as being at close range) means that you move across the Gunnery table one column to the left when you work out how many Hit dice to roll. A bad modifier (such as being at long range) means you move across one column to the right. The gunnery modifiers are summarised as follows:

Modifiers:

- < Target within 15cm – shift one column left
- > Target more than 30cm away – shift one column right
- > Target behind intervening Blast markers – shift one column right

For example, as shown earlier, the Unclean firing at the Agrippa rolls 7D6. If the Agrippa were within 15cm you would shift one column left on the Gunnery table and the Unclean would roll 9D6 instead. If the Agrippa was over 30cm away the column shift to the right would mean the Unclean rolled 5D6 instead.

Splitting Fire

A ship can elect to split the firepower of its weapon batteries or lances between several enemy vessels, but only after halving the effect of the weaponry as a result of special orders, crippling damage and so on.

GUNNERY TABLE					
FIREPOWER	CLOSING		CAPITAL SHIPS	ESCORTS	
	MOVING AWAY			CAPITAL SHIPS	ESCORTS
	ABEAM			CAPITAL SHIPS	ESCORTS
	SPECIAL *	DEFENCES			ORDNANCE
	1	1	1	1	0
	2	2	1	1	0
	3	3	2	2	1
	4	4	3	2	1
	5	5	4	3	2
	6	5	4	3	2
	7	6	5	4	2
	8	7	6	4	3
	9	8	6	5	3
	10	9	7	5	4
	11	10	8	6	4
	12	11	8	6	4
	13	12	9	7	5
	14	13	10	7	5
	15	14	11	8	5
	16	14	11	8	6
	17	15	12	9	6
	18	16	13	9	6
	19	17	13	10	7
	20	18	14	10	7

Notes: To save space, both cruisers and battleships are referred to as capital ships on the Gunnery table.

*Defences (for example ground based defences & satellites) and ordnance targets are not affected by orientation.

Special Orders: Lock On



A ship can increase the accuracy of its firing by using the *Lock On* special order. If it passes its Command check, the ship may re-roll any dice to hit for lances and weapons batteries during the shooting phase. Any dice which missed are simply picked up and rolled again. A ship using *Lock On* orders may not turn during its movement phase because it must maintain a steady course and direct additional power to its weapon systems. *Lock On* orders are really useful when an enemy vessel is within range and no course changes will be needed to bring weapons to bear.

The groans of the gun crew were drowned out by the bellow of Gun Captain Murman.

"Heave faster, yer lacklustre space rats! Put yer backs into it, Emperor damnit!"

The forty men pulled harder at the traversing chains, heaving the massive barrel of the macro-cannon into position amidst the clank-clank-clank of rusty gears.

"Avast heaving! Stand to for reloading!" ordered Murman and the men dropped the chains and hurried to stand by the gun's huge breech. At a signal from the Gun Captain, ten of the men sprang into action, pushing back the breech block. When it was open, the others bent their backs to the loading winch, lowering the shell, which weighed several tons, into the heart of the cannon. With a deafening clang the breech was closed again.



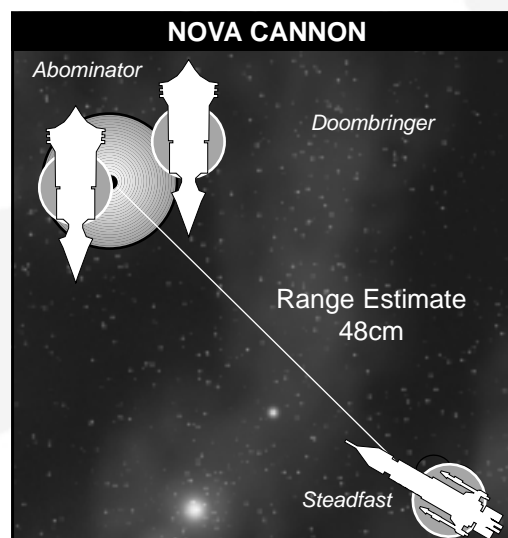
NOVA CANNON

A nova cannon is a huge weapon, normally mounted in the prow of a ship so that the recoil it generates can be compensated for by the vessel's engines. It fires a projectile at incredible velocity, using graviometric impellers to accelerate it to close to light speed. The projectile implodes at a preset distance after firing, unleashing a force more potent than a dozen plasma bombs.

Nova Cannon Rules

To fire a nova cannon you must nominate a target ship and guess the range to it. Note that the target priority rules do not apply for nova cannon. Then place the nova cannon template so that its outer edge is at the range guessed (Note: The template can only be placed up to the cannon's maximum range). If the central hole of the template is over the base of any ship, friend or foe, that ship suffers D6 hits regardless of its Armour value. If the outer portion of the template touches a ship's base it suffers one automatic hit. If no ships were hit by the nova cannon place a single Blast marker under the centre of the template. Blast markers are explained in more detail later in this section.

MINIMUM RANGE: Nova cannon, unlike most weapons, have a minimum range they can be fired. When estimating its range, you cannot guess less than 30cm, as this is the minimum distance the projectile must cover before it can detonate.



In the diagram above the Steadfast, a Dominator class cruiser, fires its nova cannon at the Abominator, estimating the range to be 48cm. The hole in the nova cannon template partially covers the Abominator's base, inflicting D6 hits on it. The nearby Doombringer is also caught in the blast and suffers one automatic hit.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have any ships armed with nova cannon you must fire *all* your nova cannon before conducting any other shooting. The reason being that unscrupulous individuals have been known to fire other weapons first to establish the range and then 'guess' the range once they have conducted all kinds of measurements and calculations (yaa boo hiss!). Therefore if you forget to fire nova cannon before shooting with any other weapons, you may not fire nova cannon at all that turn.

Special Orders: *All Ahead Full/ Burn Retros/Come to New Heading*

A ship using *All Ahead Full*, *Burn Retros* or *Come to New Heading* special orders sacrifices firing opportunities in order to squeeze more performance out of its engines. In the shooting phase, ships on these orders halve their weapons batteries' Firepower and lance Strength, rounding up. Nova cannon may not be fired at all.

"A hit, a very palpable hit!"

Attr. to Compel Bast during the Orar Defence

DAMAGE

The weapons carried by some ships are powerful enough to reduce whole cities to plains of radioactive glass. Ships are armoured and shielded in order to resist their savage caress, hulls are heavily reinforced so that they can survive the horrific pounding of gigawatts of energy. But within every ship is a crew all too vulnerable to the fires of battle and the deadly cold of the void. Ships are often crippled by crew casualties long before hulls crack or drives explode.

"Take, burn or destroy the enemy fleet!"

Fleet-Admiral Mourndark's orders at the second Battle of Walpurgis

TAKING HITS

When a ship is damaged, note the number of hits it has taken on your fleet roster.

Once a ship has lost half its damage points it is *crippled*. When a ship has lost all its hits, it is *out of action* and a roll needs to be made on the Catastrophic Damage table to see if it explodes in a spectacular fashion or simply drifts helplessly.

Crippled Ships

A ship which loses half its damage points is crippled. Crippled ships halve (rounding up) their weapon strength, Firepower, Turrets and Shields and reduce their move by 5cm. Ships, that have them, will not be able to fire their nova cannon if they become crippled.

For example, a standard Lunar class cruiser has 8 hits and is therefore crippled when it has suffered 4 points of damage.

Special Orders: *Brace For Impact!*

! *Brace For Impact* is a special special order that can be used whenever a horrific pounding is in the offing. Take a Leadership test for the ship. If it passes it is placed on *Brace For Impact* orders until the end of its next turn. A ship using *Brace For Impact* orders gains a saving throw against each hit it suffers (but not against hits on the shields). Roll a D6 for each hit: on a 4, 5 or 6 the hit is ignored. A ship which uses this special order may not use special orders at all in its next turn and its Firepower and armament Strength is halved, while nova cannon may not be fired at all. *Brace For Impact* only comes into effect against attacks whose Hit rolls are made after the special order has been declared. In other words, you cannot wait to see how accurate a salvo is before declaring *Brace For Impact*.



THE SHOOTING PHASE

CRITICAL HITS

The weapons used in space are so destructive that when a ship is hit there is a chance that a vital location will be critically damaged. Critical hits can temporarily knock out a ship's weapons and engines, start fires or even breach its hull.

Roll a D6 for each hit scored on a ship (but not against its shields). On a roll of 1-5 the hit causes no extra effects. On a roll of 6 the hit causes critical damage. Roll 2D6 on the table below to see what effect it has. Note that you do not roll for further critical hits for any damage caused by a critical hit.

CRITICAL HITS TABLE

2D6 Roll	Extra Damage	Result
2	+0	Dorsal Armament Damaged. The ship's dorsal armament is badly damaged by the hit – power lines are severed, traverse mechanisms crippled and many gunners are killed. The ship's dorsal armament may not fire until it has been repaired.
3	+0	Starboard Armament Damaged. The starboard armament is taken off line by the hit. The ship's starboard armament may not fire until it has been repaired.
4	+0	Port Armament Damaged. Heavy damage silences the port side weaponry. The ship's port armament may not fire until it has been repaired.
5	+0	Prow Armament Damaged. The ship's prow is ripped open. Its prow armament may not fire until it has been repaired.
6	+1	Engine Room Damaged. The engine room is rocked by explosions, forcing all hands to tend to the reactors. The ship may not make any turns until the damage is repaired.
7	+0	Fire! Oxygen lines are broken, leading to fires in many compartments. Roll to repair (extinguish) the fire in the end phase, if it is not put out it causes one point of extra damage and keeps burning.
8	+1	Thrusters Damaged. The ship's thruster assembly is disabled. Reduce the ship's speed by 10cm until the damage is repaired.
9	+0	Bridge Smashed. The armoured fortress around the ship's captain and his officers is smashed. The ship's Leadership is reduced by 3. This damage may not be repaired.
10	+0	Shields Collapse. The shield generators overload and burn out, leaving the ship virtually defenceless. The ship's shield Strength is reduced to zero. This damage may not be repaired.
11	+D3	Hull Breach. A huge gash is torn in the ship's hull, causing carnage among the crew.
12	+D6	Bulkhead Collapse. Internal pillars buckle and twist, whole compartments crumple with a scream of tortured metal. Just pray that some of the ship holds together!

Notes: If a critical hit is rolled which cannot be applied, for example a ship with no prow weapons gets a Prow Armament Damaged critical hit, apply the next highest critical hit instead. In this case the ship would suffer engine room damage. If a ship suffers multiple criticals to the same location they must all be repaired before the location functions again.

Critical Hits on Escorts

Escort ships which suffer a critical hit for any reason, such as during a boarding action, are automatically destroyed.

Note: Whenever ships are damaged, there's a good chance that it will be serious. Therefore a check for critical damage is made for every point of damage scored on a ship, no matter what its source is.

BLAST MARKERS

When ships are fired on, some of the results are shown by Blast markers. Blast markers represent all kinds of events – huge explosions, expanding shockwaves, intense radiation clouds, tumbling debris, unexploded warheads, plasma bursts, etc.

Placing Blast Markers

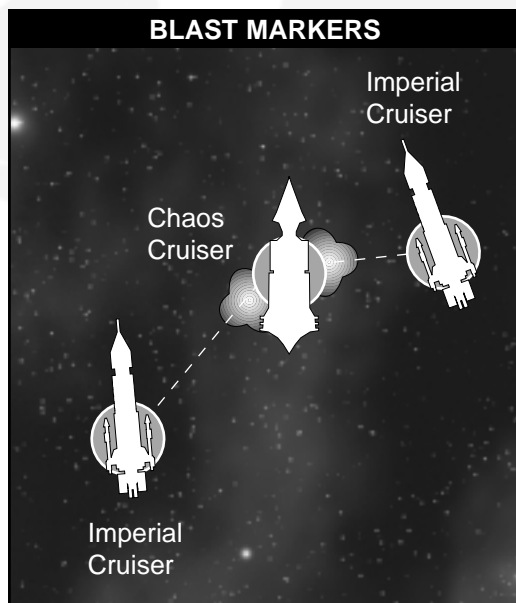
Blast markers are shown on the tabletop by placing counters where the event occurs. They remain in play until they are removed in a subsequent end phase. Most Blast markers are placed to show the hits taken on a vessel's shields as described later, but exploding ships and especially apocalyptic weapons can also cause Blast markers to be placed. Blast markers are placed in the following circumstances:

- For each hit absorbed by a ship's shields.
- For ships which are reduced to 0 damage as specified on the Catastrophic Damage table.
- For each missed nova cannon attack.

Blast markers that are caused by shield impacts are placed touching a ship's base, facing towards the direction the attack came from. Don't stack the blast markers up, spread them around the base.

Note that Blast markers do not move once they have been placed on the tabletop. They show an area of tumultuous, strife-torn space and temporarily become part of the battlefield once they are in play.

In the example below, two Imperial cruisers are firing on a Chaos cruiser. Each Imperial ship scores one hit, so a Blast marker is placed in contact with the edge of the Chaos cruiser's base facing each of the Imperial ships.



Blast Marker Effects

Movement: If a ship moves through any Blast markers, it reduces its speed that phase by 5cm regardless of the number of markers actually moved through. A ship with a Shield strength of 0 (i.e. ships suffering the Shields Collapse critical) which moves through any Blast markers also suffers a point of damage on a D6 roll of 6. An Ordnance marker such as a torpedo salvo or bomber squadron is removed on a D6 roll of 6 if it moves over a Blast marker.

Shooting: Blast markers interfere with gunnery, as mentioned earlier, disrupting firing and causing plenty of 'ghost' images on the firing ship's sensors. Hence if a ship's line of fire passes through any Blast markers (including those in

contact with a ship's base) it suffers a column shift to the right on the Gunnery table. Lances and nova cannon are unaffected. Note that Blast markers come into effect immediately and so can affect subsequent shooting in the same turn in which they are placed.

Shields: If a ship's base is in contact with any Blast markers when it is fired upon, its shield Strength is reduced by -1 per Blast marker.

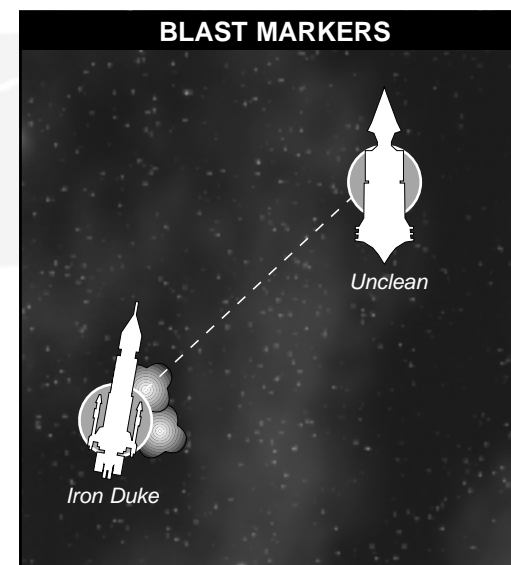
SHIELDS

Ships are protected by powerful energy shields, so that they can survive travelling through space. The shields form a wavering band of energy around the vessel, a teardrop of invisible force that can absorb or deflect the worst excesses of stellar radiation and meteor showers or a series of weapons hits. The amount of damage shields are able to absorb is limited and they will be overwhelmed by a sustained attack, forcing a temporary shutdown while the shield generators vent off the excess energy.

Each shield will block one point of damage from hitting the ship in a single shooting phase. A Blast marker is placed touching the ship's base for each hit blocked by the shields, to show how much energy has been absorbed.

Once the number of Blast markers in contact with a ship's base is equal to its number of shields, no further damage may be absorbed by the shields that turn. Any further hits will inflict damage on the ship itself. Once they have been overloaded the shields may not be raised again until the ship escapes the storm of energy blasts and shock waves represented by the Blast markers. The shields remain down until the ship moves away from the Blast markers in a subsequent movement phase.

Shields are only effective against lances, weapons batteries and nova cannon. Attacks made by ramming, bombers and torpedoes get inside a ship's shields, so they provide no protection.



In the example above the Iron Duke (which has two shields) is fired on by the Unclean and receives three hits. Two hits are absorbed by the Iron Duke's shields so two Blast markers are placed in contact with its base to show that it has already stopped two hits with its shields this turn. The third hit scores one point of damage on the ship itself. Any further hits against the Iron Duke this turn will score damage on the ship itself because its shields are down.

The Intolerance was surrounded by a seething sphere of plasma and missile detonations, held back by the bright coruscating arcs of its energy shields. With a blinding flash the shield generators collapsed under the onslaught, leaving the ship at the mercy of its enemies.

THE SHOOTING PHASE

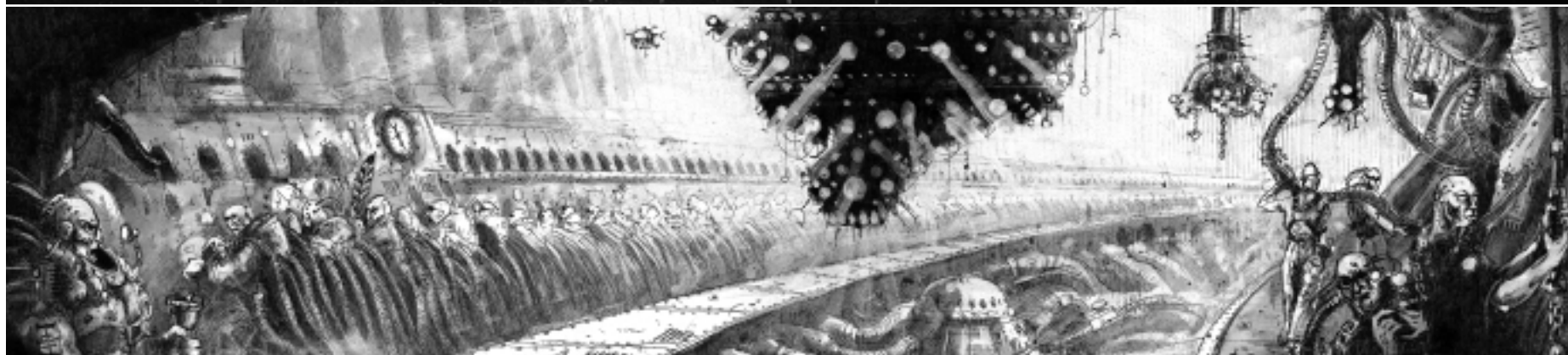
CATASTROPHIC DAMAGE

A ship with no hits left is effectively out of action. There may be some crew left alive, trapped in compartments which have not been breached yet, there may even be power available in some sections of the ship, but the ship can no longer fight. When escort ships are reduced to zero damage remove them from play and replace them with a Blast marker, to represent the expanding cloud of debris left by their passing. With a mighty capital ship, there is a chance that the vessel will be destroyed by catastrophic damage as its plasma drive overloads or its warpdrive triggers. Roll 2D6 on the Catastrophic Damage table to see what happens.

Notes: Blazing or drifting hulks will block lines of fire that pass over their base, due to the clouds of venting gasses and debris they produce. Likewise torpedoes which strike a hulk will detonate (see the Ordnance rules for more details on torpedoes). If a hulk suffers any hits, roll on the Catastrophic Damage table again. Blazing or drifting hulks have no Shields or Turrets value. Hulks can still be targeted by shooting (usually in the hopes that they will explode and cause vast harm to your enemies!) Use the destroyed ship's Armour value to roll for hits.

CATASTROPHIC DAMAGE TABLE

2D6 Roll	Extra Blast Markers	Result
2-6	1	Drifting Hulk. The ship is reduced to a shattered hulk drifting in space. The wreck moves 4D6cm forward in each of its subsequent movement phases. Place a Blast marker in contact with the wreck's base after each move.
7-8	1	Blazing Hulk. The ship is reduced to a burning wreck with uncontrolled fires blazing on every deck. In time the fires will either burn out or trigger a cataclysmic explosion. The wreck moves 4D6cm forward in each of its subsequent movement phases. Place a Blast marker in contact with the wreck's base and roll on the Catastrophic Damage table again after its move.
9-11	Special	Plasma Drive Overload. The ship's plasma coils overload and explode in a blazing inferno of white hot plasma. Remove the ship from play, leaving behind a number of Blast markers equal to half its starting number of hits. Every ship within 3D6cm of the imploding wreck is struck by lance shots with a Strength equal to half the ship's starting Damage capacity. Roll to hit as normal.
12	Special	Warp Drive Implosion. The ship's warp drive implodes, ripping a hole in real space that tears at nearby vessels with horrific force. Remove the ship from play, leaving behind a number of Blast markers equal to its starting number of hits. Every ship within 3D6cm of the imploding wreck is struck by lance shots with a Strength equal to the wreck's starting Damage capacity. Roll to hit as normal.



"Every man is expected to work his fingers to the bone to accomplish the task in hand. And if that proves insufficient, he shall work them to the marrow!"

First Standing Order of Captain (later Admiral) Krassus

THE ORDNANCE PHASE

The term *ordnance* is used to describe all kinds of weapons that are launched from ships and then travel independently to their target. This includes everything from missiles the size of skyscrapers to swarms of small attack craft such as fighters and bombers.

All ordnance attacks are represented by markers that are moved across the tabletop during each ordnance phase. If an Ordnance marker comes into contact with a ship or another Ordnance marker it will make an attack.

LAUNCHING ORDNANCE

Ships armed with torpedoes and/or launch bays can use ordnance. Ordnance is launched during the shooting phase (the marker is put on the ship's base to show it has fired its ordnance) but the ordnance moves and attacks during the ordnance phase. Once a ship has launched its ordnance it may not launch any more until it has reloaded.

Special Orders: *Reload Ordnance*



Ordnance needs to be loaded and armed in order to be launched. Ships are considered to start the game with torpedoes in tubes and attack craft fuelled and ready to go. However, once the ship has launched its ordnance it must use the *Reload Ordnance* special order before it can launch ordnance again. If the ship passes its Command check, its ordnance is successfully reloaded and it may launch ordnance in the shooting phase, or keep the ordnance ready for launch in a later turn. Use the fleet roster to keep track of which vessels have ordnance loaded.

Running Out of Ordnance

If a double is rolled for the Leadership test when a ship is trying to reload ordnance it is considered to have run out of torpedoes, suffered an accident/fire in its launch bays or some similar misfortune. The ship may not attempt to reload ordnance again during the game. The result of the test still stands, so if a ship passed its Command check but rolled a double in doing so its ordnance would be reloaded *this time*, but the ship couldn't roll to reload ordnance again during the game. Likewise if a ship failed its Command check and rolled a double, it would fail to reload and would not be able to try again during the game.

MOVING ORDNANCE

In the ordnance phase players move and attack with any ordnance they have launched, including ordnance launched on previous turns. Sometimes both players will have to move ordnance so it's important to know who moves first. In this case the player whose turn it is moves all their ordnance first.

All ordnance has a speed value that dictates how far it moves during each ordnance phase. Ordnance attacks are represented by markers which are moved on the tabletop.

Ordnance and Blast markers

Ordnance weapons are not shielded like larger ships, so they may be destroyed if they pass through Blast markers. If an Ordnance marker passes through Blast markers during its movement, roll a D6. The Ordnance marker is removed from play on a roll of 6. Only one roll is made regardless of the number of Blast markers passed through.

SHOOTING AT ORDNANCE

Ordnance may be fired at in the shooting phase with direct fire weapons. Weapon batteries firing at ordnance use the Ordnance column on the Gunnery table. This is because ordnance targets are relatively small and fast moving. Target aspects are not taken into account, but column shifts for range and Blast markers do apply. Lances and weapons batteries both need 6s to hit ordnance because they are such difficult targets. If an Ordnance marker is hit it is removed from play. Any Ordnance markers caught in a nova cannon detonation are also removed from play.

ORDNANCE ATTACKS

If an Ordnance marker comes into contact with a ship's base or another Ordnance marker it will immediately attack it with the effects detailed overleaf. All Ordnance attacks ignore the target's shields.

TYPES OF ORDNANCE

TORPEDOES

The term 'torpedo' has always been used to describe any long-range missile carried by a spaceship. A typical anti-ship torpedo is over 200 feet long and powered by a plasma reactor, which also acts as a sizeable portion of its warhead, turning it into a devastating plasma bomb. The area of a ship given over to the torpedo tubes is a massive space criss-crossed by lifts, hoists and gantry cranes for moving the huge missiles from the armoured magazine silos where they are stored to the launch tubes.

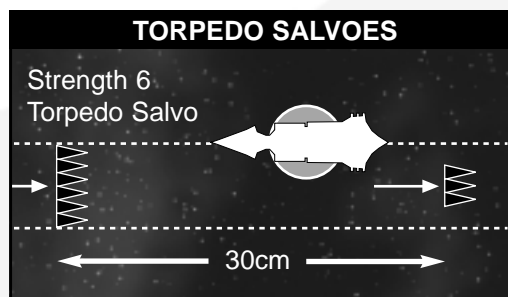
Once a torpedo is launched, the plasma drive propels the torpedo forward at high speed, whilst beginning an energy build-up which will culminate in its detonation. Torpedoes have a limited ability to detect a target and will alter course to intercept if they pass within a few thousand kilometres of a vessel.

Torpedo Rules

Torpedoes may be launched by a ship with torpedo tubes. These are normally fitted to the prow of a ship. In *Battlefleet Gothic*, torpedo salvos have a Strength value and a Speed value, which are shown on the ship's characteristics. The higher the Strength, the more torpedoes there are in a salvo and the larger the marker placed to represent the salvo. The higher the speed, the faster the torpedoes travel.

Standard torpedoes move in a straight line once they have been launched, travelling a distance equal to their speed each ordnance phase until they have detonated or leave the playing area. Unlike ships, torpedoes may not vary their speed and must make their full move in each ordnance phase.

If the Torpedo marker contacts a ship's base (friend or foe) it attacks. Roll a D6 for every point of Strength in the torpedo salvo. Each dice which equals or beats the ship's Armour value scores one point of damage. Torpedoes will pass through shields before they impact, so ignore any shields when applying damage. The torpedo salvo continues moving after the attack but its Strength is reduced by 1 for every hit it inflicted. Replace the marker with a smaller one as necessary.



In the diagram above, a Strength 6 torpedo salvo moves in the ordnance phase and hits a ship. 6D6 are rolled to attack and three dice score hits on the target. The salvo is reduced to Strength 3 and continues moving up to its full move of 30cm. If any other ships were in its path they would also be attacked.

Premature detonation

A salvo of torpedoes can be triggered prematurely by the following circumstances:

- On a D6 roll of 6 if it moves through any Blast markers.
- If the salvo is fired on by direct fire weapons and any hits are scored.
- If it hits another Torpedo marker.

If a Torpedo marker is prematurely detonated it is removed from play.

BOARDING TORPEDOES

Boarding torpedoes are designed to punch through the outer hull of an enemy vessel and plunge a squad of heavily armed troops inside to sabotage the target ship's systems.

These torpedoes are manned, so they can turn up to 45° at the start of the ordnance phase.

Boarding torpedoes attack if they come into contact with an enemy ship's base. Conduct a Hit-and-run raid against the ship immediately. Hit-and-run attacks are discussed in the Advanced Rules section.

ATTACK CRAFT

Attack craft are launched from a ship's launch bays and may include any mix of fighters, bombers or assault boats. In combat, they are launched to assist their mother ship or make long range strikes against the enemy.

Attack craft vary in size from sleek one-man fighters to lumbering heavy bombers. Attack craft make difficult targets for warships: their small size and high speed enables them to evade the worst fire. However, all attack craft have an extremely limited endurance and can only operate away from their mothership for a short time before they must return to rearm and refuel.

"While hunting on Archandor I once saw a huge male Veldet being attacked by a swarm of soldier-hornets. The Veldet trumpeted and rampaged and uprooted trees and those brightly coloured little insects darted in and out, in and out, biting off a mouthful of flesh each time. In less than a quarter watch there were just bones left a-bleaching. So don't try to tell me that those little attack craft can't hurt us."

Attack Craft Rules

Attack craft are launched from a ship's launch bays and may include fighters, bombers or assault boats. Launch bays are rated by the number of squadrons they can launch at once, for example a Dictator class cruiser with four bays can launch four squadrons. Each squadron is represented by a single marker.

At the time of launch, the player may select which attack craft to use from amongst those available to his ship. The launch could include fighters and bombers, or be made exclusively of one type. Each type is represented by a different marker

Unlike torpedoes, attack craft can turn freely and move in any direction, up to the distance indicated by their speed on the ship's profile. Any attack craft that come into contact with Ordnance markers or ships may attack as explained in their relevant sections that follow.

Ordnance Defences: Turrets

Most fighting ships mount numerous weapon systems and turrets for shooting down torpedoes and attack craft during their final attack run. A ship's main armament is simply too huge and slow to track ordnance at such close ranges. However turrets will fire immediately when Ordnance touches the ship's base

Vs Torpedo salvos. Roll a D6 for each turret: each dice that scores a 4, 5 or 6 reduces the salvo's strength by 1.

Vs Attack craft squadrons Roll a D6 for each turret: each dice that scores a 4, 5 or 6 destroys one squadron.

A ship's turrets can fire against every torpedo salvo that attacks it in an ordnance phase. Alternatively the turrets may fire at every attack craft wave that attacks it in an ordnance phase. Note that turrets can be used to defend against torpedoes or attack craft but not both in the same phase. This makes it possible to overwhelm a target with combined attacks.

FIGHTERS

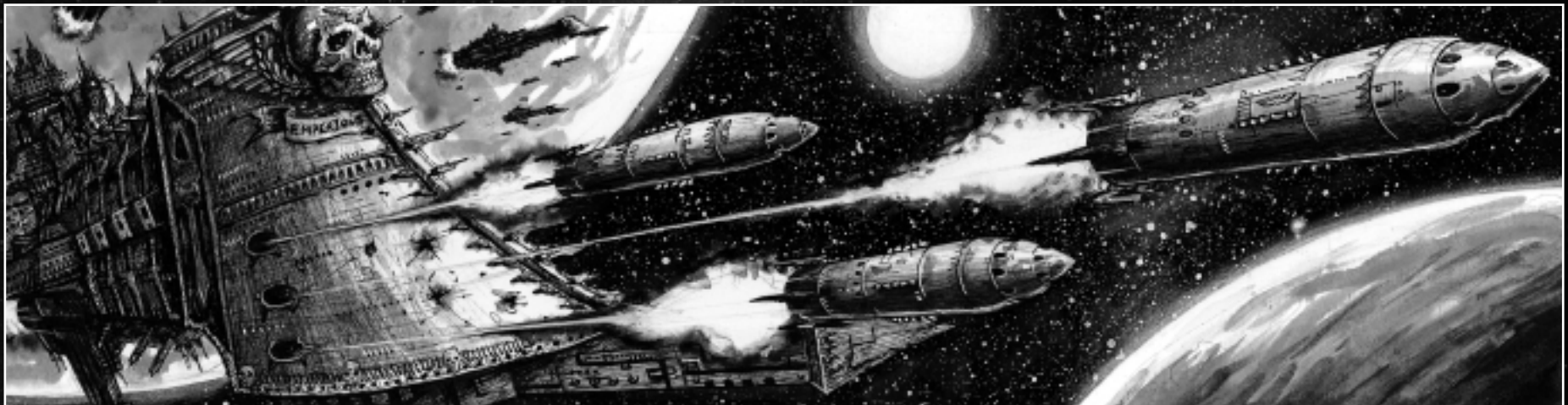
Fighters are small, fast and extremely agile. They are only armed with weapons suitable for destroying ordnance, including other attack craft. In combat, the fighter's job is to intercept enemy ordnance and protect the vulnerable bombers and assault craft on their way to and from their target.

Fighter Rules

Fighter attacks have the following effects when they come into contact:

Vs Ordnance Markers. The defenders are scattered or destroyed in the fighting. The victorious fighters return to their mother ship for rearming and refuelling. Remove both the defending and attacking markers from play.

Vs Ships. The fighter squadron's puny weapons make no impression on the ship at all, but they steer clear of the ship's turret defences. Leave the Squadron marker in play.



"A fleet of Imperial ships at war are the best negotiators..."

Lord Admiral Ravensburg.

BOMBERS

Bombers are slower, heavier craft with destructive anti-ship weapons. Though vulnerable to enemy fighters, bombers can be a serious threat to ships.

Bomber Rules

Bomber attacks have the following effects when they move into contact:

Vs Fighters. The fighters quickly eliminate the lumbering bombers before returning to their mother ship for rearming and refuelling. Remove the defending and attacking markers from play.

Vs Other Ordnance Markers. The bombers succeed in getting out of the way but nothing more. Leave both markers in play.

Vs Ships. The bombers make an attack run on the ship. Make D6 rolls to hit against the ship's lowest Armour value for each attacking bomber squadron. The number of attacks the squadron makes reduces by one for each turret on the ship. Remove the Squadron markers once the attack has been made.

For example, a wave of two bomber squadrons attack a Murder class cruiser that has two turrets. The cruiser gets two dice rolls to shoot at the incoming bombers with, and any that survive will make D6-2 attacks and then be removed from play.

ASSAULT BOATS

Assault boats are designed to clamp on to a target vessel and breach its outer hull, allowing squads of elite warriors to storm on board. Once aboard the boarders plant demolition charges, massacre the crew, poison the air and generally cause as much damage as possible before retreating.

Assault Boat Rules

Assault boat attacks have the following effects when they move into contact;

Vs Fighters. The fighters overwhelm the assault boats and then return to their mother ship for rearming and refuelling. Remove both the defending and attacking markers from play.

Vs Other Ordnance Markers. The assault boats simply manoeuvre around the enemy ordnance. Leave both markers in play.

Vs Ships. The assault boats make an attack run on the ship. Conduct a hit-and-run raid against the ship for each assault boat squadron. Hit-and-run raids are detailed in the Advanced Rules. After the attack the assault boats return to their ship to be reloaded with troops and refuelled. Remove the Squadron marker from play when the attack is made in the end phase.

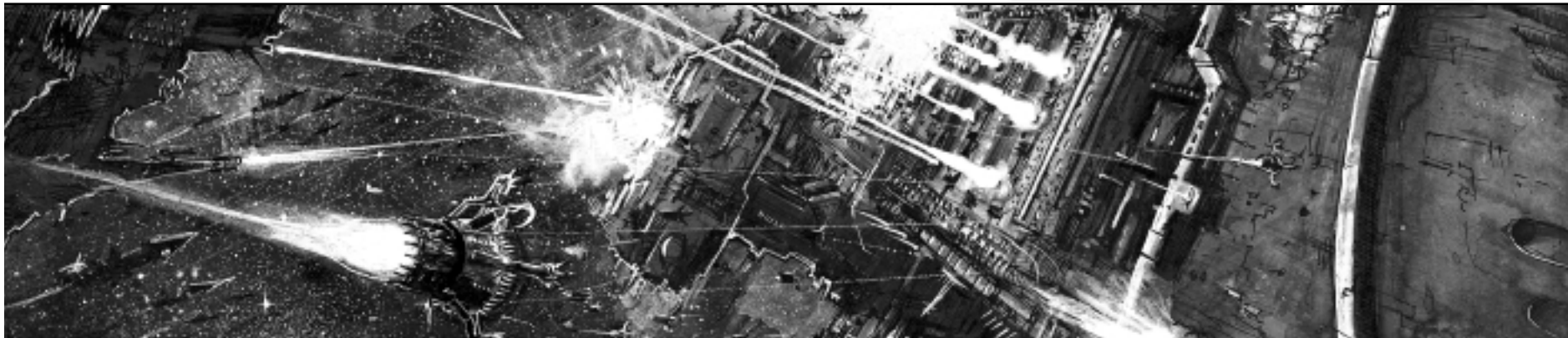
LAUNCHING WAVES OF ATTACK CRAFT

When a ship launches its attack craft squadrons it can despatch them as individual squadrons or combine them into waves of squadrons. To show a wave place the Attack Craft markers so they're touching and keep them together as they move. If a wave contains attack craft moving at different speeds, they move at the speed of the slowest.

If enemy fighters/turrets attack a wave they must remove any fighter squadrons before moving onto the bigger ships. You can use this rule to put your wave together so that it contains fighters who will defend the vulnerable bombers or assault boats, sacrificing themselves to save the bigger vessels.

Waves of attack craft can split up during their move if you wish. However, once squadrons have split up they may not recombine into waves. A wave may only be formed when the craft are launched from their mother ship.

The greatest benefit of attacking in a wave is that a defending ship's turrets only fire once at the whole wave, so there is a better chance of the ships in the wave surviving the defences than individual squadrons have. On the downside, if a wave of attack craft is hit by long-range gunnery or lances, the whole wave is destroyed. Likewise, if the wave rolls a 6 while moving through Blast markers, the entire wave is removed.



THE END PHASE

During the end phase, players sort out any events which have been set into action during the turn, such as repairing any critical damage. Some of the Blast markers are removed from the table, as the energy and debris they represent is naturally dissipated. The end phase is also a good opportunity to tidy up the table top, count victory points, check up on scenario victory conditions and break out the biscuits. The end phase works in the following order:

1. Attempt to repair critical damage.
2. Remove D6 Blast markers from the tabletop.

DAMAGE CONTROL

Both players can attempt to repair critical damage during the end phase. Repair crews will be working continuously of course, welding up hull breaches, re-routing power conduits, putting out fires and generally trying to keep the ship functioning. To represent this, capital ships roll 1D6 per Damage point remaining in the end phase. Each roll of a 6 enables the ship to repair one critically damaged system or put out one fire. If the ship has any Blast markers in contact, the player only rolls half as many dice as usual (rounding up).

BLAST MARKER REMOVAL

With time, the debris and shock waves represented by Blast markers will dissipate sufficiently to be of no further impediment to ships or their weapons. To represent this, the player whose turn it is rolls a D6 and removes that many Blast markers. Blast markers in contact with ships' bases may not be removed, but otherwise the player is free to choose which ones will go.

You have now read all the most important rules that you need to play Battlefleet Gothic. At this point we suggest that you try playing Scenario One: Cruiser Clash (on page 68) to see how they work in action.



"A ship's a fool to fight a space station"

Attr. Lord Admiral Ravensburg