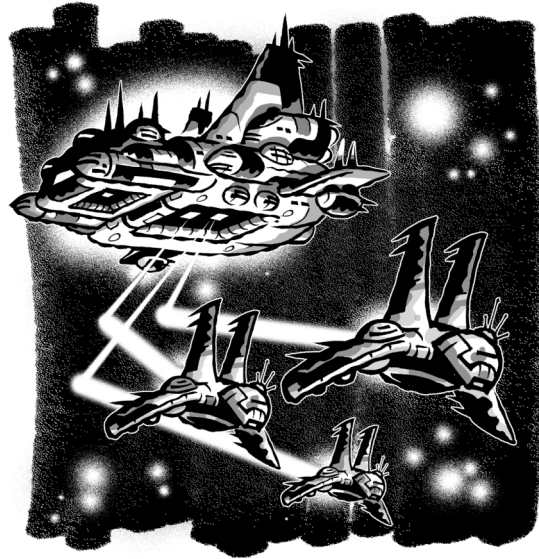


# Launch Fighters!

A space battle board game designed for 2 – 6 players age 12 and up.  
Playing time 1 hour. Version 1.1

## Overview

A game of **Launch Fighters!** places you in command of a fleet of futuristic spaceships and fighters in an exciting battle against your opponents. Design and build your own fleet, maneuver your forces into position and then open fire – victory can be yours! The game is flexible enough to represent any genre of space battle from your favorite movie, TV show, book or your own imagination. **Launch Fighters!** is easy to learn but detailed enough to entice you to make new fleets and battle again and again.



## What You Need To Play

**Launch Fighters!** is an electronically published paper board game. It is a “bare bones” approach to gaming focusing on design, fun and value for you - not an expensive box. The game was developed and rigorously tested to give you a quality game that is fun and re-playable. Our website [www.consortiumgames.com](http://www.consortiumgames.com) provides updates, a forum for community contribution and other resources to enhance the fun.

Print these files on regular paper:

- The *Step Chart*
- Optional: *Launch Fighters Rulebook* - printed or view on your laptop as PDF
- Optional: Any *Starship Blue Book* ship record sheets you need for your battle

Gather these computer files on a disk and visit your local copy / print shop capable of printing PDF files:

- *Fleet Counters* - printed **color** on **cardstock** and cut out
- Optional: as many *Terrain* as you wish (asteroids, planetoids and nebulae) - printed **color** on **cardstock** and cut out

You will need the following things around the home to play.

- A pencil and some scratch paper for each player
- At least half a dozen six-sided dice
- A table

Finally, you will need a map to play on. The ideal map is a 1" hex gaming map at least 24" wide. This is the kind of map used with common collectible miniatures games. If you don't have such a map, look in the Terrain folder and print either *Hex - 8.5 x 11.pdf* at home or the 24" map file *Hex - 24 x 24.pdf* in black and white at the copy shop on their large printer. For further map options visit: <http://incompetech.com/beta/plainGraphPaper/> A *Square Map Rules Addendum* is included for players who can only play on a square map.

### **How the Game is Played**

Players build a fleet, maneuver their fleet on the map and attempt to use their fleet's strength against their opponent's weakness. Players roll dice and battle their opponents using cannons, missiles, and fighters until a victor is declared.

## **Your Fleet**

The two types of units in your fleet are ships and fighter squadrons. A ship counter represents one ship. A fighter counter represents one cohesive squadron. Some rules apply to ships and some rules apply to fighter squadrons ("fighter" for short). Any reference to a "unit" means either ships or fighters.

### **How They Relate**

Ships are larger units and carry fighters within them. Ships are the "host" or "base" where fighters takeoff and land. Fighter squadrons begin the game in a ship and are then launched onto and recovered from the map by ships as the game progresses.

Three things all units have in common are the ability to attack, defend and move.

#### **Attack**

There are three forms of attack in this game which generically represent space weapons popularized by science-fiction. These are:

- Non-guided weapons (lasers, phasers, blasters, railguns etc.)
- Guided weapons (torpedoes, missiles, guided bombs, etc.)
- Manned weapons (fighters with a pilot inside)

#### **Defense**

Like attack, defense is broadly represented in **Launch Fighters!**

In one galaxy, spaceships have armor plating. In another they have "shields" or "deflectors". Regardless of the method of defense, the goal is the same – to resist attacks.

#### **Move**

Ships and fighters both move across the board - although some move faster than others. Tactics in the game frequently involve maneuvering into a position where your fleet can outmatch an opponent before he can do the same to you.

## Stats

The ability of each unit to attack, defend and move is reflected by its “stats”. There are 5 stats for ships. Each stat has a “level”. Stats vary from ship to ship. A higher level indicates an advantage. For instance a ship with a stat level of 3 would have an advantage over one with stat level 2.

The 5 ship stats are:

- Cannons
- Launchers (for launching missiles)
- Bays (for launching fighters)
- Defense
- Move

One ship may have more of a stat than another ship. Some ships may have a stat of zero in a particular capability. In addition to these stats, a ship may also have missile ordinance and fighter squadrons inside it to be used by the launchers and bays, respectively.

## Example

This is a record sheet for a Light Cruiser named Excelsior as found in the *Starship Blue Book*. As you will notice it has 3 cannons, 5 launchers, zero bays and 6 defense with a move of 3. Twenty-eight missiles are included but no fighters.

| Ship Record |    | Name        |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | Excelsior |  | Cost | 80 |
|-------------|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--|------|----|
| Stats       |    | 1           | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5           | 6           | 7           | 8           | 9           | 10          |           |  |      |    |
| Cannons     | 3  | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |           |  |      |    |
| Launchers   | 5  | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |             |             |             |             |             |           |  |      |    |
| Bays        | 0  |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |           |  |      |    |
| Defense     | 6  | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |             |             |             |             |           |  |      |    |
| Move        | 3  | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |           |  |      |    |
| Munitions   |    | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |           |  |      |    |
| Missiles    | 28 | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | 10        |  |      |    |
|             |    | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | 20        |  |      |    |
|             |    | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> | <div></div> |             |             | 30        |  |      |    |
| Fighters    | 0  |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 40        |  |      |    |

The stats of all ships on the map are public knowledge. At any time any player can ask another player what the stat of any ship is.

The three stats for fighters do not vary from fighter to fighter. They are:

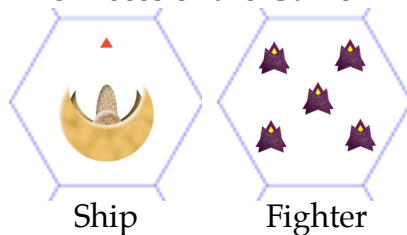
- Guns (level 1)
- Defense (special – more on this later)
- Move (5)

## Setup

### The Map

Put the map out on a table and get the pencils, scratch paper and counters.

### The Pieces of the Game



Notice two distinct kinds of counters. Ships are larger and have only one icon per counter with an arrow near one edge. This arrow should always point towards a flat side of the space. Fighters have several icons per counter (a squadron) and no arrow.

There are six fleets in *Fleet Counters*. Units in each fleet have a similar color, shape and design. This is purely aesthetic to provide you with some variety as you assemble your fleet of ships. Each ship also has a letter on its counter so ships are distinguishable from one another.

### Points

The approximate worth of a ship or fighter squadron is measured with an abstract value simply called “points”. Your space battle could be taking place in any galaxy you imagine so points can represent whatever you want: Imperial Credits, construction time, thalorium ore, etc. Generally speaking, a unit valued with more points will be more effective in battle than one with fewer points.

### Strategy

As you select ships for your fleet style, choose a balanced group of ships that can support one another. In general, a fleet comprised entirely of ships with one attack type (all cannons but no missiles or fighters) will not fare very well. It can be advantageous for one ship to have a specialty but your fleet as a whole should have balance. The strategy of the game is complex and has as much to do with the ships you choose as the way you use those ships. You will discover more about this later on.

### Building a Fleet

It is highly recommended that the first time you play **Launch Fighters!** players select ships from the *Starship Blue Book* – an almanac of ships and fighters that are pre-designed and ready to fly though deep space.

For advanced players, **Launch Fighters!** includes a robust design system for players who wish to personally oversee the design of every ship in their fleet. This will be covered later in the rules.

It is recommended for **beginning games** that each player's fleet is built with **100 points**. This means the combined values of all ships and fighters in that fleet totals 100 points. The standard fleet size for a fleet in an **experienced game** is **200 points**. Higher fleet points are possible - the sky is the limit!

Whatever the fleet point total, players should take a few minutes assembling their fleet. Choose or design ships that total as close to the point limit as possible. Each player selects a fleet color and finds one counter for each ship in their fleet and one counter for each fighter in their fleet.

Before the battle begins, either write down the stats of each ship or print out a record sheet from the *Starship Blue Book* for each ship. Make a note of which ship record sheet belongs to which ship counter on the map.

### **Placement on the Map**

To begin the game each player rolls two dice, adds any modifiers and then finds the sum, for instance:  $6 + 2 = 8$ . Break any ties. The player with the lowest roll places one of his ships, his "flagship", in a space at the center of the map, or as close to the center as can reasonably be determined.

The player with the next lowest roll then places his flagship exactly 10 spaces in a straight line in any direction away from an opponent's flagship. Continue until all players have one ship on the board and each ship is exactly 10 spaces away from another ship and no closer than 10 spaces from any other ship.

Now each player places the rest of his ships in his fleet adjacent to his flagship. If there is no space available place adjacent to another ship in the fleet. All fighter squadrons start the game on their host ship's record sheet – not on the map.

## **The Battle**

**Launch Fighters!** is played in "turns". To help make the turn go smoothly, the game has a convenient *Step Chart* that illustrates what happens during each turn.

Each turn has four phases:

- A. Initiative
- B. Move
- C. Attack
- D. Recovery

### **A) Initiative**

Each turn begins with each player rolling two dice. If there are any modifiers (more on this later) add those modifiers to the roll. Ties are broken. Determine a "sequence" for this turn based on who rolled lowest on up to who rolled highest.

Write your initiative roll for this turn down on some scratch paper. Erase last turn's roll so you don't get confused.

**Example:** Andy, Eli and Aaron roll 8, 3 and 3 respectively. Eli and Aaron roll off and Eli wins. Players then write down their initiative number on paper. Andy writes down 8. Eli indicates a roll of 3+ (plus) and Aaron a 3- (minus) or some such notation to keep the two of them sorted out. The order this turn from lowest to highest is: Aaron, Eli then Andy. From highest to lowest it is Andy, Eli then Aaron.

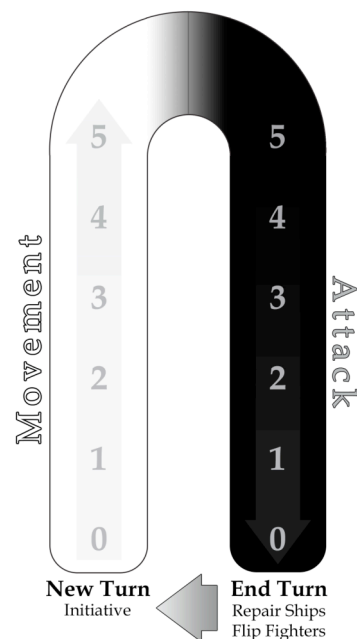
## B) Movement

During the movement phase, slower ships move before any faster ships. This reflects the ability of a faster ship to outmaneuver its opponents and achieve a favorable firing position.

Use the *Step Chart* during play to divide the Movement phase into "steps". Any ships with move stat equal to the current movement step (ie. step 2 is for 2 move ships) are "in the step" and can move during that step.

Start the movement phase by placing a token or coin on step 0.

It is unlikely that any ships will start the game with move 0, but if there are, those ships are now active. If there are no ships in a step, advance the token to the next step above.



If there are multiple units in a movement step, the player with the lowest initiative must move one unit first. Within a given step, each player moves only one unit at a time, in order of initiative from lowest to highest. Continue with players moving one unit at a time until all units in the step have had a chance to move. Advance the token up to the next step and repeat. The movement phase is complete when all units have had a chance to move.

**Example:** Three players have ships in play, listed in order of each player's initiative.

Andy: Three ships all with 2 move (therefore in step 2) and highest initiative.

Eli: One ship with 3 move and middle initiative.

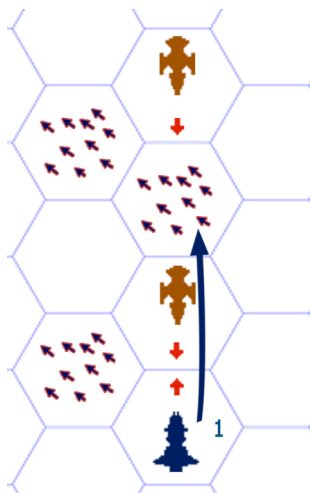
Aaron: Two ships with 3 move and lowest initiative.

Although he has the highest initiative, Andy's ships are slowest. When the token is moved to step 2, Andy moves all three of his ships. This happens before Eli and Aaron move any of their ships. Players then advance the token to step 3 on the *Step Chart*. Eli and Aaron's ships move in step 3 because they have 3 move. Since two players have ships in the same step, initiative sequence is used to determine movement order. With the lowest initiative, Aaron must move one ship first, then Eli moves his one ship, and then the Aaron moves his other ship.

### How to Move

During its move phase each ship may move up to its move stat in spaces. It can move in any direction, no matter which way it is facing, and not necessarily in a straight line. **Example:** a ship with 3 move could travel 0, 1, 2 or 3 spaces.

A ship may move through any space, even if it contains an opponent, but may not end movement in a space containing another ship. Once movement is complete, choose a facing by pointing the arrow towards a flat side of the space. In most cases you will want your ships to face your opponents. A ship with move stat at level zero may change facing but cannot change spaces.



A ship ending a move in a space with a fighter "pushes" the squadron into an adjacent empty space. The owner of the fighter squadron determines which space. If there are no empty adjacent spaces the fighter must "return to base" (more on this later).

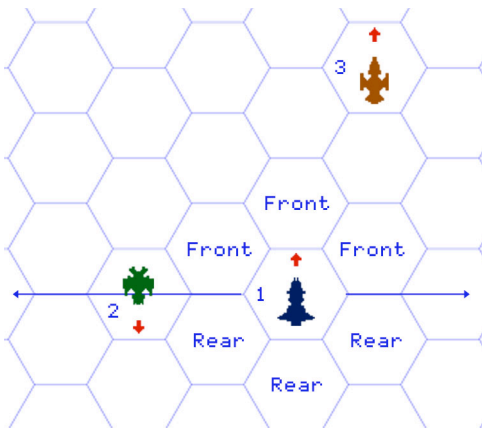
### Example: A Bold Move

Ship #1 has a move stat of 2. It moves two spaces directly ahead through the enemy ship's space and stops in a space with an enemy fighter squadron. The fighter squadron is pushed away to any adjacent open space of the fighter owner's choice.

Fighters move in the same way as ships but they cannot end movement in a hex occupied by any unit and since they have no arrow on their counter they have no facing. Though a counter represents a squadron of a number of fighters, for simplicity's sake squadrons may not split their numbers or join together with other squadrons. All fighter squadrons have a move stat of 5.

### Flanking

Maneuvering into a good attack position is important in winning any battle. The arrow on a ship counter indicates "front". Ships have a "front arc" and a "rear arc" (see the diagram below). Firing out of your ship's front arc and simultaneously into the rear arc of your target will give you a "flanking bonus". Fighters have no facing and have neither vulnerability to nor advantage from flanking.



**Example A:** Ship #1 is firing out of its front arc into the rear arc of Ship 3. Ship 1 will receive a flanking bonus to attack.

**Example B:** Notice ships #1 and #2 are “on the side line”. Attacks between these ships would be in neither the front nor rear arc. There is no bonus.

**Example C:** Ship #2 and #3 receive no bonus on each other because neither ship has the other in its front arc.

## C) Attack

### Sequence

More maneuverable units have an advantage and attack first. So during the attack phase, begin moving the token down the other side of the *Step Chart* from 5 down to 0.

Just as in the movement phase, in step 4, all units with move 4 are active, for example. If multiple units are in the same step, players take turns, in initiative sequence, attacking with one unit at a time. However, this attack initiative is from **highest to lowest**. It’s worth noting that since all fighters move 5, all fighters will attack in the same step. Initiative will determine which player activates one squadron first.

When each combat step is completed, move the token down to the next step until all ships have had a chance to attack.

### How to Attack with a Weapons System

During the attack phase, each unit is active just once. The player selects one action for each of his unit’s weapons systems (e.g. cannons, launchers, bays, or guns) in any order. Each weapons system completes an independent action by choosing a target, spending ordinance and resolving shots before the unit’s next system takes an action. Follow these in order when you make an attack:

- 1) Choose a Weapon System
- 2) Choose Target
- 3) Gather Your Pool of Attack Dice
- 4) Reduce the Pool
- 5) Add to the Pool
- 6) Roll a Barrage
- 7) Apply Damage
- 8) Repeat Step 5 through 7 Until Your Pool of Attack Dice is gone





**Barrages of cannons and missiles are exchanged in deep space.**

### 1) Choose a Weapons System

Cannons and launchers and bays are the three weapons systems ships could have. If you have more than one, choose which one your ship is using first. Fighters only have guns.

### 2) Targets and Range

- a) Launchers or cannons may target:
  - A ship up to 5 spaces away
  - An adjacent fighter squadron

Measure the spaces for range as you would during movement.

You may fire your ship's launchers at one target and cannons at another, or both systems at the same target, but you activate each system separately. No single weapon system may split its attack on two targets.

- b) Fighter squadrons may attack any adjacent target with their guns.

### c) **Launching Fighters! With Bays**

If you have chosen bays as a weapons system, you may launch fighter squadrons equal to the number of bays on the ship. Immediately place these launched fighter squadrons in any space adjacent to your ship. If there are no adjacent spaces, you may not launch any more fighters. Launched fighters are active immediately. Activating bays ends at this point, no dice are gathered or rolled.

### 3) Gather Your Pool of Attack Dice

After you have chosen your target gather your "pool of attack dice". Look at your ship's record sheet and find the stat for the weapons system being activated.

- a) Cannons and yield attack dice equal to their stat level. Cannons level 3 means you get 3 attack dice in your pool, for example.
- b) For the guns of each fighter squadron gather 1 attack die.
- c) If you are activating launchers you will have to use your missile ordinance. Any ship with launchers also has missiles that are expended as they fire. One missile is expended is per attack die gathered into a pool.  
**Example:** A ship with level 4 launchers can fire up to 4 missiles per turn. Firing 4 missiles would yield 4 dice in the pool of attack dice. Mark off

used ordinance on your record sheet. If your ship has no ordinance left you may not place dice in your pool. Cannons and guns, for the sake of simplicity, do not have ordinance.

#### **4) Reductions to the Pool of Attack Dice**

##### **Fast Targets and Cannons**

If your target has a higher move level than your cannon level, halve the number of attack dice in the pool, rounding up. Cannons are unguided and have a tough time hitting a quick target. If cannons are firing flak at fighters and the ship has a cannons stat less than 5 (because all fighters move 5), halve the number of dice in the pool, rounding up.

##### **Intercept**

Incoming missiles may be intercepted and destroyed by fighters before impact. Up to 3 active fighter squadrons may intercept if they are both:

- a) Adjacent to the ship defending ship
- b) Not in the defending ship's arc opposite the incoming missiles

Roll one die for each intercepting squadron. Each die that turns up a 4, 5 or 6 indicates a successful intercept; remove one die from the pool. A single squadron may intercept many separate attacks each turn but may only attempt intercept on each pool once.

**Example:** Fighters could intercept missiles fired into the front arc of a defending ship if those fighters were adjacent to the defending ship not in its rear arc. Incoming missiles fired at the side of a ship are in no particular arc (see example B on page 8) and could be intercepted by any 3 fighters so long as those fighters were adjacent to the defending ship.

#### **5) Additions to the Pool of Attack Dice**

##### **Flanking**

For cannons or missiles, double the number of attack dice in the pool against a target that qualifies for the previously illustrated flanking bonus. This bonus occurs **after** the pool has been reduced by fast target or intercept and after the missile ordinance has been expended so it requires no additional ordinance. Missiles fired are simply more effective against a flanked target. Because they lack facing altogether, fighters neither benefit from nor are vulnerable to flanking.

#### **6) Barrages**

You will now roll a series of 'barrages' using dice from your pool of attack dice. Depending on the weapon system you are using and this situation, at this point you may have only one die in your pool or you may have many. For each "barrage", you may throw one or more die from your pool. For instance, if you had 3 dice you could roll all of them at once in a single barrage, or throw three barrages with one die, or roll a barrage of two dice and then one die. An attack with this weapon system concludes when you decide to stop rolling barrages or when all the dice in the pool have been rolled.

The goal when rolling barrages is to beat the target's defense stat with the sum of the dice rolled.

### **Ship Defense**

Find the target's ships current defense stat on your opponent's record sheet.

### **Fighter Defense**

Fighter defense is more unpredictable than ship defense. The defender rolls one die each time a squadron is attacked. That number is the fighter's effective defense for this attack, from 1 to 6. A squadron may be attacked more than once in a turn and the fighter rolls again for defense each time.

### **Fighter Formations**

Your fighter squadrons may team up and make an attack against a ship in a "formation" with your other squadrons also adjacent to the target ship. Formations only work against ships. All the fighters in the formation activate together and roll their dice together in one barrage. All squadrons in the formation have now attacked and none may initiate an attack again this turn.

### **Flak**

If a ship has chosen to attack fighters with a weapons system, the attack is made as "flak". This means barrages can be rolled against **any** adjacent enemy fighter squadron as long as there are still dice left in the pool of attack dice. The same squadron can be attacked multiple times.

### **Dogfight**

When one fighter attacks another fighter it is a "dogfight". Dogfights are unique because the defender can damage the attacker. In this situation each player rolls one die to determine the victor. Ties are unbroken – the dogfight is a draw and there is no result.

### **Review Chart: How Weapons Systems Compare**

|                      | Flanking Bonus | Fast Target | Can Be Intercepted | Vs. Fighters | Vs. Ships |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Cannons              | Double Pool    | Halve Pool  | No                 | Flak         | Normal    |
| Missiles (Launchers) | Double Pool    | Normal      | Yes                | Flak         | Normal    |
| Guns (Fighters)      | Normal         | Normal      | No                 | Dogfight     | Formation |

## 7) Damage and Hits

Regardless of how many dice were just thrown in the barrage (whether one or three or ten) these are the possible results of the barrage:

- Automatic Miss: If all the dice thrown in the barrage turn up “1”, the barrage is an automatic miss, regardless of the target’s defense.
- Miss: If the sum is equal to or less the target’s defense the barrage is a miss.
- Hit: If the sum is higher than the target’s defense stat the barrage is a hit.
- Direct Hit: If a barrage roll beats twice (double) the defense, you score a “direct hit”. **For instance**, with a defense of 3, the attacker’s dice in a barrage must be 7 or more to score a direct hit.

### Hits on Ships

With each hit the stats of the defending ship are reduced. Sometimes the defender chooses which stat is reduced and sometimes the attacker chooses. The reduction is applied immediately on the target’s record sheet. The newly reduced stats will be used during resolution of the next barrage roll. A stat cannot be reduced below zero.

### Hits on Fighters

When a fighter squadron is hit, the **attacker** has two choices.

1. The squadron counter is flipped upside down on the map. This indicates “inactive” (see below).
2. The squadron hit can be forced to “return to base” (see below).

A direct hit on a squadron will eliminate it. A hit on a squadron that is already inactive (flipped upside down) will eliminate it.

### Active and Inactive Fighters

Fighter counters that are right side up are “active” and may move, attack, defend, intercept or be launched (if inside a ship). Fighter counters that are upside down are “inactive” and can only defend and cannot be launched (if inside a ship).

### Return to Base

This means the squadron must immediately land on a friendly ship up to 5 spaces away that has a bay available. A ship may only recover as many fighters returning to base in a turn as it has bays. Example: a ship with 2 bays can recover 2 fighters per turn. Upon returning to base, the fighter is removed from the board immediately and placed upside down on the host ship’s record sheet. This squadron cannot be launched until the following turn. If a fighter is forced to return to base and cannot it is eliminated. Any fighter can voluntarily return to base instead of attacking on its attack phase activation.

### Advance

When a fighter squadron dogfights another and either eliminates the loser or forces the loser to return to base, the victorious fighter squadron may advance into the newly vacated space. As an alternative, a fighter squadron on the same

team as the victor that is adjacent to both the victor and the vacated space may advance into the vacated space. In effect, the victorious squadron may clear a path for another squadron to advance. Both of these actions allow fighters to advance one space during the attack phase, which is a special option available only to fighter squadrons.

## Hit Results

### Attacking a ship

| Weapon System       | Hit                     | Direct Hit               |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cannons             | Defender chooses 1 stat | Attacker chooses 1 stat  |
| Guns (Fighter)      | Defender chooses 1 stat | Attacker chooses 1 stat  |
| Missiles (Launcher) | Attacker chooses 1 stat | Attacker chooses 2 stats |

A direct hit with missiles is the only hit in which 2 ship stats are reduced. The attacker can reduce 2 different stats 1 level or the same stat 2 levels.

### Attacking a fighter squadron

| Weapon System       | Hit                    | Direct Hit          |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Cannons             | Flip or Return to Base | Squadron eliminated |
| Guns (Fighter)      | Flip or Return to Base | Squadron eliminated |
| Missiles (Launcher) | Flip or Return to Base | Squadron eliminated |

## Consequences of Hits

If a ship's bays are reduced while any fighters are hosted inside the ship, roll one die for each hit on a bay. On a 1, 2 or 3 the fighters are unharmed. On 4, 5 or 6 one fighter inside is destroyed.

As ships are damaged, their systems will become less effective. This may change battle conditions, so pay attention to your stats and those of your opponents. All reductions take immediate effect. **For instance**, if your attack reduces a target's move, that ship may now attack in a lower step later in the turn. If all of its stats reach zero, a ship is destroyed and removed from the board immediately.

## 8) Repeat

After each barrage is over, select how many dice to roll for the next barrage. When all the attack dice in a pool have been rolled, or when you decide to stop rolling, start over with the next weapons system on your ship.

If your ship has used all the weapons systems it has, then move on to the next ship in the attack step.

If all ships in the step have attacked, move the token to the next step.

## Attack Hints

In a battle with many units on the map, after your unit attacks you may want to mark it with a dime or something similar to avoid confusion as you continue the turn and other units attack.

Part of the strategy of the game is deciding how many dice you want to roll and when to roll them. It may be to your advantage to roll more dice together to ensure a hit or in hopes of scoring direct hits.

Each weapons system has the following strengths and weaknesses:

### Cannons

Strength: Cannons have unlimited ammunition

Weakness: Fast targets halve the pool of cannon attack dice

### Missiles

Strength: Effective against ships with high defense and move

Weakness: Limited ammunition and can be intercepted

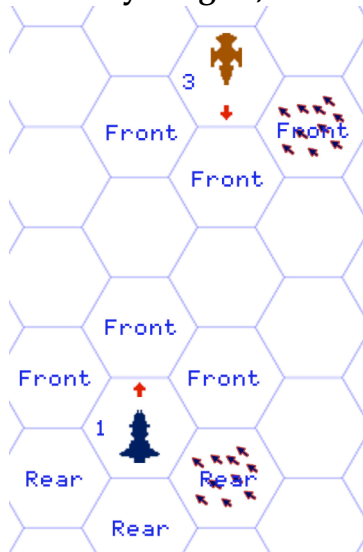
### Fighters

Strength: Useful for defense as well as offense

Weakness: Must be launched and recovered

## Attack Examples

### So Many Targets, So Little Time



An attacking ship (#1) has stats: cannons 2 and launchers 4. It has 7 missiles as ordinance. It is battling an enemy ship and two enemy fighter squadrons. Upon activation the player chooses to activate cannons first and fire flak at the adjacent enemy fighter squadron in its rear arc.

Since the cannons stat is 2, the pool of attack dice starts at 2. But the 2 cannons is less than the fighter's move (5) so reduce the pool in half from 2 dice to 1.

The attacking player rolls the one die in his pool and gets a 4. The fighter in its rear arc rolls one die for defense and gets a 2. With 4 vs. 2, the barrage scored a hit but not a direct hit, which would have required a 5.

The attacking player can choose to flip the fighter counter over making it "inactive" or force the fighter to "return to base". The attacker chooses return to base. The adjacent fighter is removed from the map and put upside down on the record sheet of ship #3.

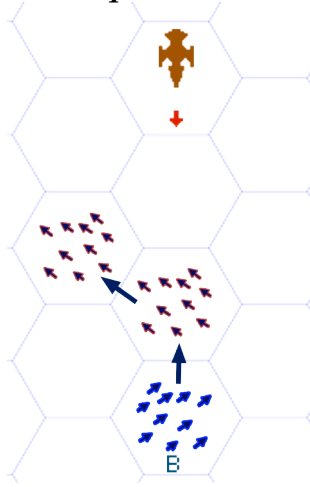
Then the attacker activates ship #1's launchers and fires 4 missiles at into the front arc of the enemy ship. The attacker crosses 4 missiles off as ordinance on ship #1's record sheet and gathers 4 dice into a pool. The enemy ship has one

adjacent fighter in its front arc that will attempt to intercept the incoming missiles. The fighter rolls one die and gets a 5, intercepting 1 missile and removing 1 die from the pool of 4 attack dice, leaving 3 dice in the pool.

The target ship of this missile attack has a defense of 5. The 3 dice left in the pool thrown together will almost certainly beat a 5 defense, so the attacker decides to take a chance and roll 2 dice from his pool of 3 attack dice, leaving 1 in the pool. The 2 dice roll a 10. It's almost enough for a direct hit, but not quite!

Since the hit was made with missiles, one stat of ship #3 is reduced at the attacker's choice. The attacker chooses defense to be reduced so the defending player marks down the defense level from 5 to 4 on ship #3's record sheet. Now with the last die in the pool the attacker rolls a barrage attempting to beat ship #3's new defense of 4. A roll of 4 fails to beat the defense of 4 – it is a miss.

### Beta Squadron



At the bottom of the diagram Beta Squadron (marked "B") is alone against two enemy squadrons and their host ship. With no host ship nearby, if Beta is hit and forced to "return to base" it will be eliminated because return to base requires an available landing bay within 5 spaces.

Nevertheless Beta bravely uses its guns to attack the squadron in front of it resulting in a "dogfight". Each fighter rolls one die.

Beta Squadron rolls a 5 and the defender rolls a 2. That roll is more than double the defense – a direct hit! The enemy squadron is eliminated. Beta chooses to advance into the newly vacated space.

On its subsequent activation the other enemy squadron decides to exact revenge on Beta since the two are now adjacent. The attacker rolls a 4 and Beta squadron defends with a 6 – a hit (greater but not more than double) and victory again for Beta squadron! Beta forces the enemy squadron to return to base and chooses to advance into the vacated space.

Beta has prevailed against the odds. The risk paid off – this time.

## D) Recovery

After all units have attacked and the token has moved to the end of *Step Chart* the recovery phase begins.

Three things happen during the recovery phase:

- 1) Any fighters that are upside-down (incapacitated) recover unharmed and return to capable status. Flip the counters back over.

- 2) Any ships with “repair” add-ons may attempt to repair. This will be covered in the Advanced Rules.
- 3) Any unit capable of moving and adjacent to the edge of the board and/or designated area must “retreat”. Remove that unit from the board; it may not return.

## Victory

The game continues until one of these conditions is met at the start of a turn:

- There is only one fleet left on the map that contains a unit capable of moving or rolling a barrage.
- No fleets are in range of one another and a stalemate is evident.
- Players mutually agree the game is over.
- Special conditions for the scenario are met.

At this point, players should grab some paper and tally up “victory points”.

- Each player scores victory points equal to point value of enemy units eliminated by his fleet. Fighters and ships count separately. Eliminated fighters are worth 5 points. An eliminated ship is worth its original point value minus the value of any original surviving fighters.
- The player who rolled the final barrage gets credit for an eliminated unit.

Determine which units remaining are capable of both: a) moving and b) rolling a barrage or recovering fighters.

- Each player scores victory points equal to the value of any of his capable units remaining on the map.
- Each player scores ½ victory points for any of his incapable units that remain on the map.
- Each player scores ½ victory points for any of his ships that retreated before the end of the game.
- Each player scores points for any special scenario conditions.

The player with the most victory points wins.

Any special scenario is possible and encouraged. We will be publishing official scenarios on our website to expand the game shortly and you are free to make your own.

Here are some ideas:

- A central area of the map must be controlled – perhaps a wormhole
- A smaller force must hold its own against a larger force until reinforcements arrive
- A smaller force caught behind enemy lines and being pursued must escape by crossing the map and retreating from the other side
- A defensive force must protect a vulnerable ship from attackers



- A turn limit is enforced, with the largest number of destroyed enemy ships during those turns determining the winning fleet, regardless of loss
- A raiding force must destroy as many satellites as possible with minimum losses and escape from the side of the map they entered

## Advanced Rules

### Ship Construction

As the game becomes more familiar, players may want to build their own ships. These rules illustrate how. The included *Construction Calculator* spreadsheet as well as printable *Ship Record Sheets* like the ones you see in the *Starship Blue Book* will aid you. Look for more resources at [www.consortiumgames.com](http://www.consortiumgames.com) too!

Ships, at least in the historical human sense, generally have an individual name, a number, a class, and a type. For example, the USS Enterprise of World War II was the USS Enterprise (CV6), a Yorktown-class aircraft carrier. Ship types (destroyer, cruiser, etc) are offered as a means of perspective for humans and may be used or changed at your discretion. In the future or a different galaxy humans may use a similar naming convention when making ships. Alien races may have completely different names for various ship classes and types so invent your own (the Chu'pak Stareater or the Centauri Pirates Armored Yacht) or do away with the concept altogether. Enjoy as little or as much of this flavor as you wish when you make ships for your own futuristic space fleet.

Points are spent to build a ship. The five main stats come first. The point cost of each stat equals its level plus all levels prior. For instance, a stat level 3 costs 1 point for level 1, plus 2 points for level 2 and 3 more for level 3. This is a total of 6 points spent for stat of level 3 ( $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ ). A stat of 7 costs 28 ( $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 = 28$ ). This is called the “progressive cost”.

Move uses this progressive cost, but also multiplies as a ship costs more points. This represents the increasing cost of propelling a ship with increasing mass. For a ship worth up to 20 points, move cost is normal. From 21 to 40 points move cost is doubled – twice the normal cost of move. 60 to 80 it's tripled, 81 to 100 quadrupled, etc.

| Points       | Cost Multiplier | Ship Type (example)          |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 1-20         | 1x              | Corvette                     |
| 21-40        | 2x              | Frigate                      |
| 41-60        | 3x              | Destroyer                    |
| 61-80        | 4x              | Light Cruiser                |
| 81-100       | 5x              | Cruiser or Light Carrier     |
| 101-120      | 6x              | Heavy Cruiser                |
| 121-140      | 7x              | Battlecruiser or Carrier     |
| 141-160      | 8x              | Battleship                   |
| 161-180      | 9x              | Dreadnaught or Fleet Carrier |
| 181-200      | 10x             | Superdreadnaught             |
| Continues... | upward          | Something very large...      |

**Cannons:** For the purposes of this game require no ordinance.

**Launchers:** A single point buys 2 missiles as ordinance. This is a “flat cost” - not progressive. If a ship buys launchers it must also buy at least 1 point of missiles.

**Bays:** Fighter squadrons cost 5 points each, flat cost. Each bay allows your ship to launch and recover one of these squadrons per turn.

**As an example,** let's make a ship with 40 points. We then spend 10 points to buy cannons level 4 ( $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10$ ). We use 21 points to have defense of 6 ( $6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 21$ ) and the rest we use to buy a move of 2 ( $2 + 1 = 3$ ). Because of the ship's total cost of 40, move cost is doubled to 3 from 6. The ship's total cost is so far 37. We have 3 points left so let's buy 1 launcher and 4 missiles.

Our new ship has: 4 cannons [10 points], 1 launcher [1 point], 6 defense [21 points] and 2 move [6 points – doubled in the 21-40 point ship cost range] with 4 missiles [2 points]. We'll call it the Otox Gol 79b – an Ihari Empire warbarge!

## Add-ons

This section covers the following add-ons for ships and is optional. Levels of add-ons are purchased with points using the progressive cost. Add-ons generally may not be reduced by hits but are lost if a ship is destroyed.

### Sensors

Sensors scan the enemy. Each player gets a bonus to his initiative roll equal to highest sensors level in his fleet. For instance if you had two ships with sensors in your fleet, one with 3 sensors and one with 1 sensor you'd get a +3 to every initiative roll. If the ship providing the +3 sensors bonus is destroyed the bonus is reduced to +1.

### Warp Drive

Used for scenarios or role-playing, “warp drive” (faster-than-light or FTL drive) may have as much or as little effect on game play as you wish. Scenarios may require that some ships have warp drive. There are many types of FTL travel imagined in science fiction. A good way to “engage” warp drive is to declare on a ship's move phase that in addition to moving it is activating warp drive. At the end of the entire turn, if that ship still has move stat of 1 or more, warp drive is engaged and the ship retreats from the board. Increased levels of warp drive could represent greater range, recharge, accuracy or speed.

Optional Rule: A ship may not move and/or fire in the turn it engages warp.

Optional Rule: Warp drive is a flat cost per ship, for example 5 points.

Optional Rule: Fighters can have warp drive for 1 extra point per squadron.

### Repair

Damage control systems allow a ship limited repair while in battle. Each level of Repair is a one-time use (cross it off). Roll one die per ship. If it turns up 4, 5 or 6

then raise one stat one level, but not above its original level. Players use repair at the very end of each turn in the recovery phase, in initiative sequence, lowest first. Each player rolls for all their ships before going to the next player, regardless of move of any ship. Only one repair may be used per ship per turn. **For instance**, a ship with 3 repair can roll once on different three turns.

### **Boosters**

Special systems that allow for fast movement in a pinch, each level of boosters allows an extra one-time, 1 space move during a ship's movement phase. Cross off the booster after use. Only one booster may be used per ship per turn. If your ship's move is zero you can't use a booster, you've got nothing to boost! Boosters **do not** change a ship's move stat nor step, just provide 1 bonus space.

### **Cargo Holds**

For realism or scenarios you can have some cargo holds on your ship. Cargo holds indicate the ability to carry passengers or supplies. A cargo hold costs a flat fee of 1 point. Passenger holds (for live cargo with necessary facilities) cost 2 points each.

Optional Rule: Holds may be hit in combat and reduced like a stat.

## **Terrain**

### **Moons and Planetoids**

Subtract 1 from the sum of any barrage rolled against a non-adjacent target if the target is adjacent to a moon or planet. An adjusted roll may not be reduced to zero. Unless special landing rules are in effect, units may not enter a moon or planetoid space.

### **Asteroids**

Upon entering each asteroid space one die must be rolled for the unit entering. On a roll of 4, 5 or 6 that unit takes a hit and may not continue movement this turn. The owner must choose one stat and reduce it by 1 immediately. Fighters hit by asteroids must be flipped indicating "inactive".

Subtract 1 from any barrage (per roll not per die) or dogfight rolled against a target in an asteroid space. The adjusted roll may not be reduced to zero.

### **Nebulae**

A nebula does not affect movement. However, units in a nebula space may only attack or be attacked by adjacent units.

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[www.launchfightersgame.com](http://www.launchfightersgame.com)

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