

Roaring Rockets

Tactical Space Combat

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If there are more than a few space ships in a fight, the best way to do it is to get out the hexagon battle-mat. These are the rules for doing it.

One-on-one fights are best done with the quicker abstract method in the basic rules.

The English language uses the same word for turning (rotation) as it does for alternating game turns. Keep the context of the word "turn" in mind when reading rules.

About the space combat system

- Use a hexagon battle-mat at least 12 hexes by 12 hexes. Bigger is better.
- You can use space-ship miniatures, side-view cardboard standups, or top-view cardboard pieces that lay flat. Some top-view pieces come with the game. Number the ships so you can tell them apart.
- Start opposing space ships about 8-10 hexes apart, unless they are already in shooting range when the fight starts.
- Space is really big, and so are the hexagons. There is no limit to the number of space ships that can be in a hex.
- Tactical space combat uses 12-point (30 degree) turns: The nose of the ship can face a hex side or corner.

Turn order

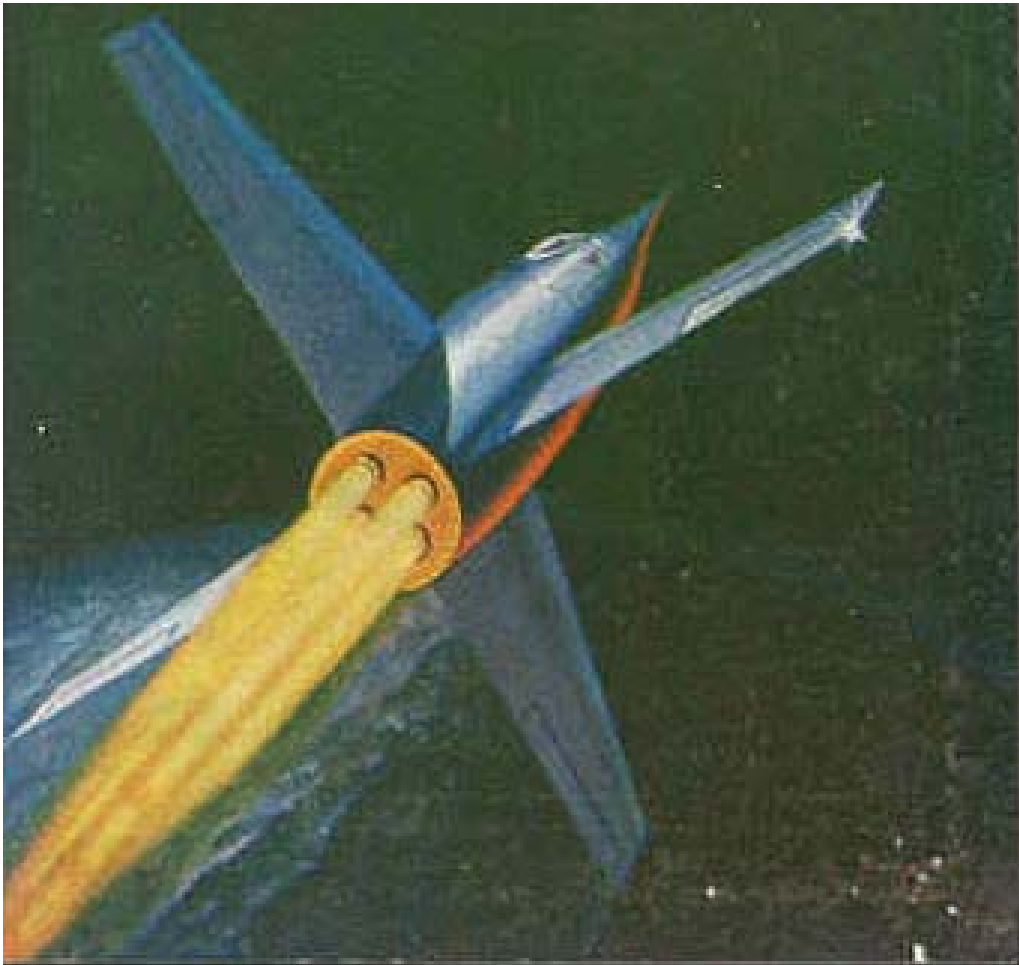
1. Roll for movement initiative (all players at once)
2. Move all space ships in initiative order (low to high)
3. Shoot in dex order (high to low)

Initiative

- Compute the initiative potential for each ship **before the game**.
- Initiative potential = 6 + pilot skill ÷ ship size
- Each player rolls one initiative die for his space-ships **every turn**. The die applies to **all** his space ships. Keep the die in front of the player so everyone can see the roll.
- Subtract the die from the initiative potential of all ships to get their initiative order. As always, low die rolls and high values are good.
- Lowest initiative order moves first (low is bad). The highest possible initiative order is 10 and the lowest is 0.
- When initiative orders are tied: Side 1 moves first on odd turns, side 2 on even turns.
- For large games: Do not roll a die. Just move everything in initiative order.
- A legendary admiral gives a -1 bonus to the initiative die. They are rare.

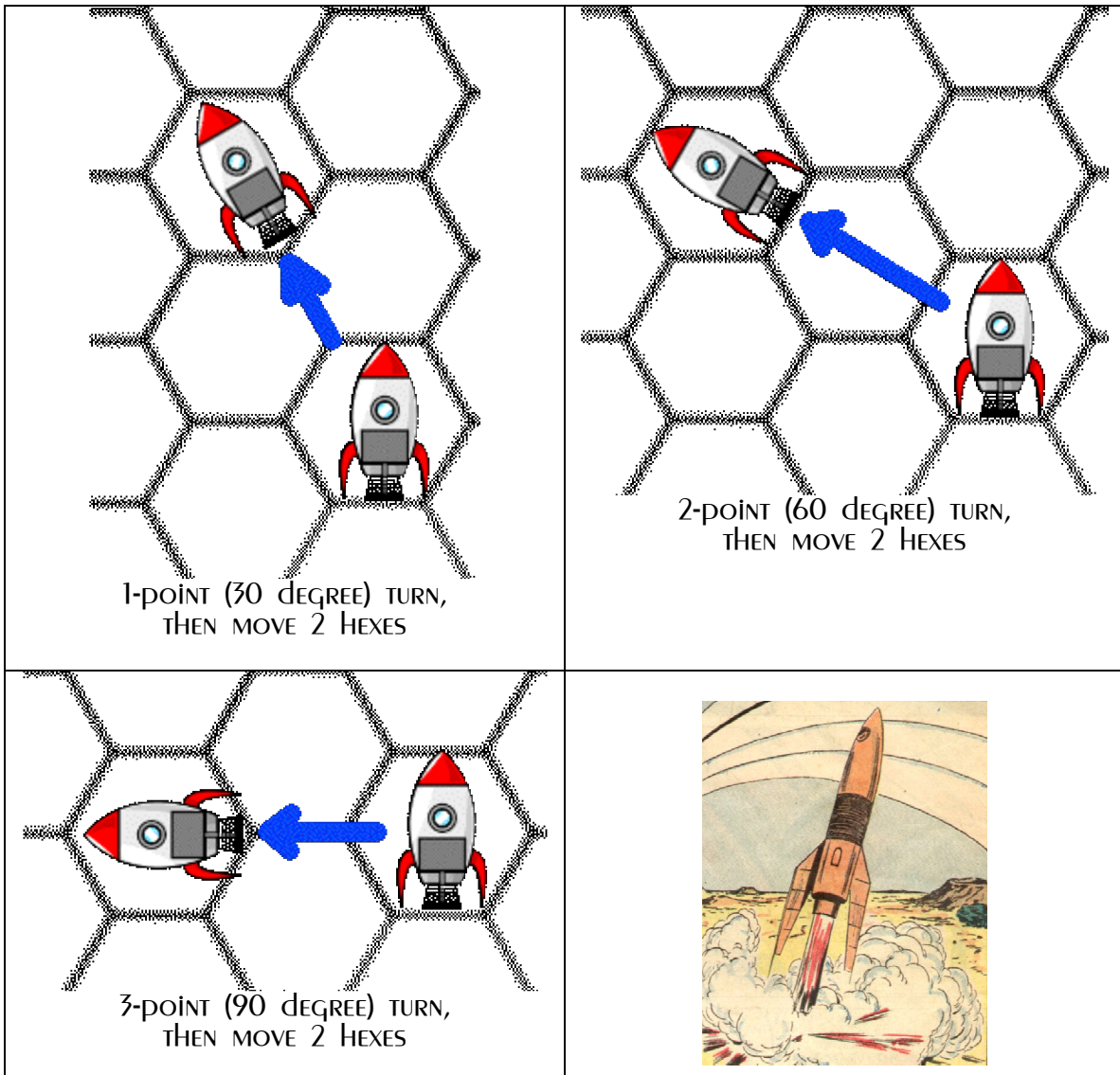
Movement

- **Slow** space ships move 1 hex per turn.
- **Normal** speed ships move 1 or 2 hexes per turn. If speed is not specified, it is normal.
- **Fast** ships move 1, 2, or 3 hexes per turn.
- Most ships can speed up or slow down by 1 hex/turn every turn. Sluggish & very sluggish ships may only do this on odd game-turns.
- If the ship ends its move on a line, slide it into the hex on its right.
- The overdrive takes 3 turns to turn on or off, and the ship cannot turn or use weapons when doing so. It takes an extra turn for each overdrive hit. Once engaged, the ship goes speed 10 the first turn, 20 the next, and so forth until it escapes off the edge of the battle-mat.



Turning

- TURN (ROTATE) THE ship BEFORE moving it.
- **VERY sluggish** space ships CAN make 1-point (30 degree) turns, BUT ONLY ON odd GAME-TURNS.
- **Sluggish** ships CAN make 1-point (30 degree) turns.
- **NORMAL** maneuverability ships CAN make up to 2-point (60 degree) turns. If maneuverability is NOT specified, it is NORMAL.
- **MANEUVERABLE** ships CAN make up to 3-point (90 degree) turns.
- **VERY MANEUVERABLE** ships CAN turn up to 2 points (60 degrees) before they move AND make ANOTHER SUCH turn AFTER ANY move. NO TURNING allowed WHEN ON A line, so slide to the right to get off the line.



Shooting

USE THE VEHICLE COMBAT CHEAT SHEET TO SEE IF YOU HIT AND WHERE.

RE-ROLL NON-EXISTENT HIT LOCATIONS WHEN USING THESE RULES.

WEAPONS GET A BONUS OR PENALTY TO SHOOTING FOR RANGE, JUST LIKE THE SKILL BONUS.

LARGE GAMES: FIRE WEAPONS IN BATCHES; USE ONE DIE ROLL TO SEE IF MULTIPLE WEAPONS HIT.

SHORT RANGE WEAPONS (like GUNS & TORPEDOES)

Range:	<u>0-1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Bonus:	1	-1	-4

A PSIO CONFUSER HAS A RANGE OF 0-2 AND ALWAYS HITS

MEDIUM RANGE WEAPONS (like RAYS)

Range:	<u>0-1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Bonus:	1	0	0	-1	-4

LONG RANGE WEAPONS (MISSILE LAUNCHERS)

Range:	<u>0-1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Bonus:	-3	-1	0	0	0	0

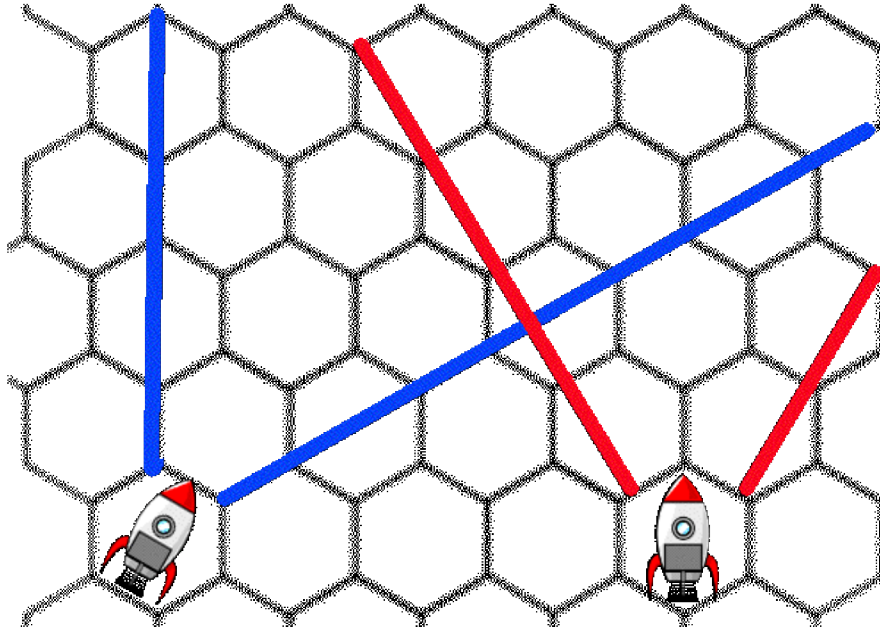
MISSILES RUN OUT OF FUEL AFTER 6 HEXES, AND THEN CAN NO LONGER STEER OR HIT.

WHEN DEX IS TIED: SIDE 1 SHOOT'S FIRST ON ODD TURNS, SIDE 2 ON EVEN TURNS.

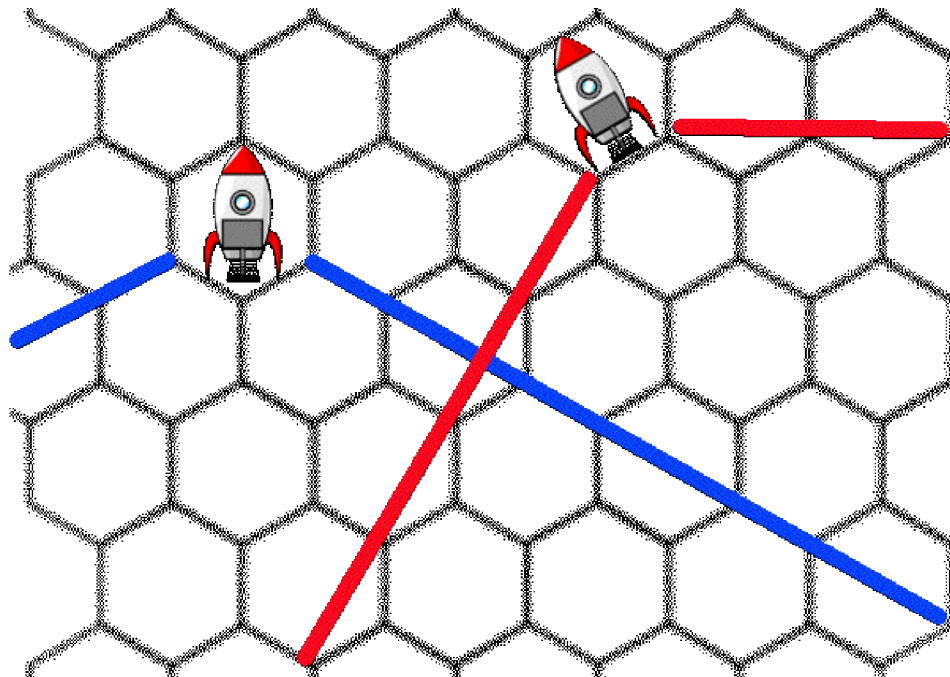
IF A WEAPON IS HIT: SIDE 1 CHOOSES WHICH ONE ON ODD TURNS, SIDE 2 ON EVEN TURNS.

A DESTROYED OR NON-EXISTENT SYSTEM IS HIT: REROLL HIT LOCATION, OR THE GAME MASTER PICKS A LOCATION.

RULE FOR SHIPS WITH NO PLAYER CHARACTERS OR KEY NPCs ON THEM: IF A SHIP'S ENGINES, POWER PLANT, CREW, OR WEAPONS ARE COMPLETELY DESTROYED, THE GAME MASTER SHOULD REMOVE IT FROM THE BOARD.



NOSE-MOUNTED GUNS ARE BOLTED TO THE SHIP. THE PILOT AIMS THEM BY AIMING THE SHIP WITH HIS PILOT SKILL. GIVE THEM A 60-DEGREE FIELD OF FIRE ON THE BATTLE MAT.



TAIL-GUNS ARE SWIVEL MOUNTED AND FIRED BY A GUNNER WITH HIS SHOOTING SKILL.
GIVE THEM A 120-DEGREE FIELD OF FIRE ON THE BATTLE-MAT.

Space monsters

- MOST SPACE MONSTERS CANNOT SHOOT, BUT CAN ATTACK A SHIP IN THE SAME HEX. THEY CAN SPEED UP OR SLOW DOWN AS MUCH AS THEY WANT IN A TURN, AND HAVE +3 INITIATIVE ROLL BONUS.
- VOID SHARKS ARE VERY MANEUVERABLE, HAVE A SPEED OF 5 HEXES/TURN, AND CAN GO AT OVERDRIVE SPEEDS WITHOUT PREPARATION. YOU CANNOT ESCAPE BY RUNNING AWAY.



Example battle for practicing this

HUMANS (INT4 / STR4 / dex4 / skill 2):

ONE WARDEN class missile frigate, size 3, 2 ECMs, 3 missile launchers in turrets (10 missiles each), Initiative potential 5. Pounds the enemy ships with missiles from a distance, vulnerable up close.

TWO KAZE class fast maneuverable torpedo boats, size 2, ECM, ray gun turret, 6 nose torpedoes, Initiative potential 6. Has one devastating short-range torpedo attack, and also pecks away with the ray gun.

SALAMANDERS (INT3 / STR4 / dex3 / skill 1):

TWO POISONfang class fast destroyers, Size 4, nose-mounted size 2 autocannon, ray gun turret, Initiative potential 3. Absorbs a lot of damage. The cannon does a lot of damage if you can use it. Pecks away with the ray gun.

TWO Mudpuppy class slow sluggish escort battle carrier, Size 6, two fighters, two ray gun turrets. If it takes a cargo hit, it will explode like in the movies (it holds lots of munitions), Initiative potential 1. Only the Salamanders would field a ridiculous ship like this: It is a carrier, a battle ship, and lands troops. It does not do any of these things well.

THE mudpuppies have a total of four Terpicua type fast & very maneuverable fighters, nose ion gun, Initiative potential 6. Ion guns burn out if you roll a 12 when shooting them. These are effective fighters, but any hit takes them out of the game.

GIVE THE HUMAN fleet to the least experienced player and advise him not to charge with the missile frigate. The Salamander fleet is much bigger, but requires more skill to coordinate the ships and achieve victory. This will take about 20 minutes (30 if nobody has done this before).

More task forces

HUMAN #2 (Hit & Run): CYRANO prowler with 4 F-2 Lightning fighters

INSECTOID: BROOD tender with 3 Chinche gunboats and 6 Bumblebee bakabombs

KRAKEN #1 (gunboats): ANATHEMA attack boat, SPECTER gunboat

KRAKEN #2 (obfuscated): DEFENDER escort, SPECTER gunboat

KRAKEN #3 (cruiser): REAPER cruiser

MOLLIZOON: ASTROHUNGER frigate, GALAXY escort

ORC: CROSSBOW destroyer, BATTERING RAM gunboat

PSIO: TYPE 33 disruptor, TYPE 27 frigate

SHEIK #1 (frigates): TWO PROTECTOR frigates

SHEIK #2 (cruiser): HELPER cruiser

TIGERMAN: TWO TERROR WARCATS

WANDERER: GALAXY escort, NEBULA cutter

