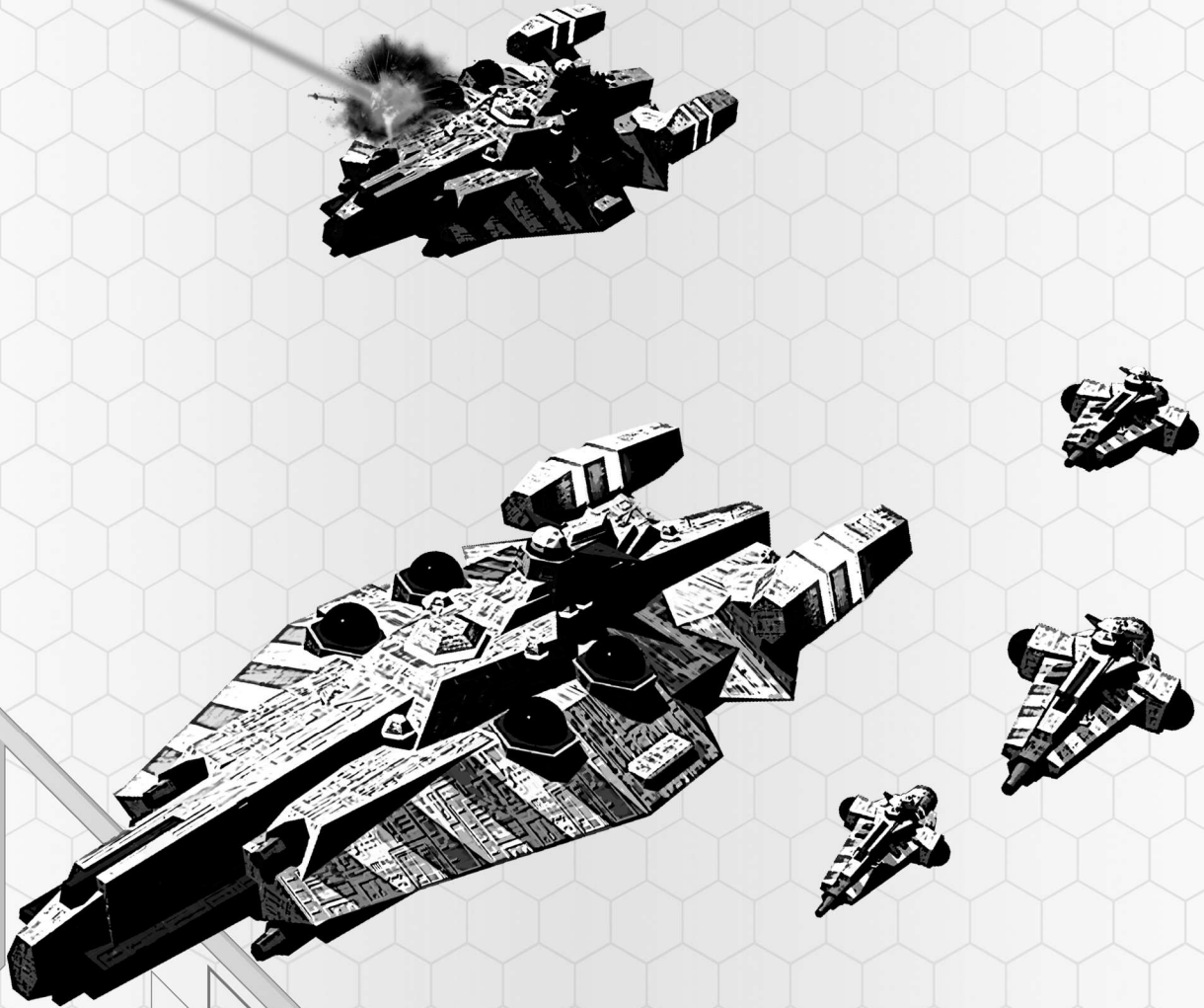


# SCARMADA

THE UNIVERSAL GAME OF STARSHIP COMBAT



GAME DESIGN  
DANIEL KAST

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>	S3 Alone in the Dark.....	44
A1 Game Components .....	3	S4 Base Busters .....	44
A2 The Starship Status Display.....	5	S5 Breakout .....	44
A3 Credits & Copyright .....	6	S6 Bring 'Em Home.....	45
<b>B PLAYING THE GAME.....</b>	<b>7</b>	S7 The Chase.....	45
B1 Setting Up.....	7	S8 Claim Jumpers.....	46
B2 Sequence of Play.....	7	S9 Davids and Goliath.....	46
B3 Victory.....	8	S10 Fleet Action .....	46
<b>C MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>10</b>	S11 Hit & Run.....	46
C1 Movement Orders.....	10	S12 Into the Trap.....	47
C2 Engines & Thrust.....	11	S13 The Last Stand.....	47
C3 Moving the Starship .....	12	S14 On Patrol.....	48
C4 Special Actions .....	13	S15 Roll Tide .....	48
C5 Cinematic Movement.....	15	S16 Shakedown Cruise.....	48
C6 Reactionless Movement.....	15	S17 Storms in Space.....	49
C7 Vector Movement.....	16	S18 Sudden Death .....	49
<b>D COMBAT .....</b>	<b>17</b>	S19 Tin Can Dustup .....	49
D1 Declaring Targets .....	17	S20 To the Rescue.....	49
D2 The Attack Roll .....	19	S21 Training Exercise .....	50
D3 The Damage Roll.....	20	S22 Turncoat.....	50
D4 Applying Damage.....	21	S23 V.I.T. (Very Important Target).....	51
D5 Weapon Traits.....	22	S24 What is That Thing?.....	51
D6 Seeker Weapons.....	24	<b>T CAMPAIGNS.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>E STARSHIP SYSTEMS.....</b>	<b>26</b>	T1 Objectives Campaign .....	52
E1 Equipment.....	26	T2 Rotating Campaign .....	53
E2 Munitions.....	29	T3 Tournament System .....	54
E3 Traits.....	32	<b>X STARSHIP CONSTRUCTION.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>F FIGHTER OPERATIONS .....</b>	<b>34</b>	X1 The Design.....	55
F1 Carriers .....	34	X2 The Combat Rating .....	56
F2 Fighter Activation.....	34	X3 Technology Levels.....	57
F3 Attacking Fighters.....	35	X4 Action Points.....	57
F4 Fighter Variants .....	36	X5 Standard Weapons.....	58
F5 Long Range Fighters.....	36	X6 Starship Systems Table .....	60
<b>G ACTION POINTS.....</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Y WEAPON DESIGN.....</b>	<b>62</b>
G1 Generating Action Points .....	37	Y1 Range Bands.....	62
G2 Using Action Points .....	37	Y2 Weapon Strength.....	62
<b>H TERRAIN.....</b>	<b>39</b>	Y3 Traits.....	62
H1 Asteroid.....	39	Y4 Base Space Requirement.....	63
H2 Black Hole .....	40	Y5 Action Points.....	63
H3 Comet .....	40	<b>Z PLAYER RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>64</b>
H4 Nebula.....	41	Z1 A Brief History of Starmada.....	65
H5 Planet .....	41	Z2 Glossary .....	66
H6 Three-Dimensional Play .....	42	Z3 Rules Update 2024.....	68
<b>S SCENARIOS.....</b>	<b>43</b>	Z4 Digital Game Assembly.....	70
S1 Meeting Engagement.....	43	Z5 Sample Starship Status Displays.....	71
S2 Alien Artifact.....	43	Z6 Worksheets.....	93
		Z6 Rules Index.....	96



## A INTRODUCTION

**Starmada™** is a tabletop game of starship combat. At its most basic level, players take command of space fleets in a general attempt to reduce each other to just so much space junk. At its most advanced, the game can breathe life into any science fiction background players might imagine.

Novices shouldn't fret; the core rules have been designed with ease of play in mind, accessible even to beginners. On the other hand, seasoned veterans should find the concise nature of the rules quite refreshing. **Starmada** allows players to concentrate on the finer points of squashing their opponent rather than arguing over rules interpretations, without sacrificing any of the flavor or excitement of more complex games.

Simple, but not simplistic, is the guiding principle.

Take some time now to look over the rules, then find an opponent, cue up your favorite sci-fi soundtrack, and lead your **Starmada** to victory!

### A1 GAME COMPONENTS

In addition to the items listed below, players will need pens or pencils and some six-sided dice.

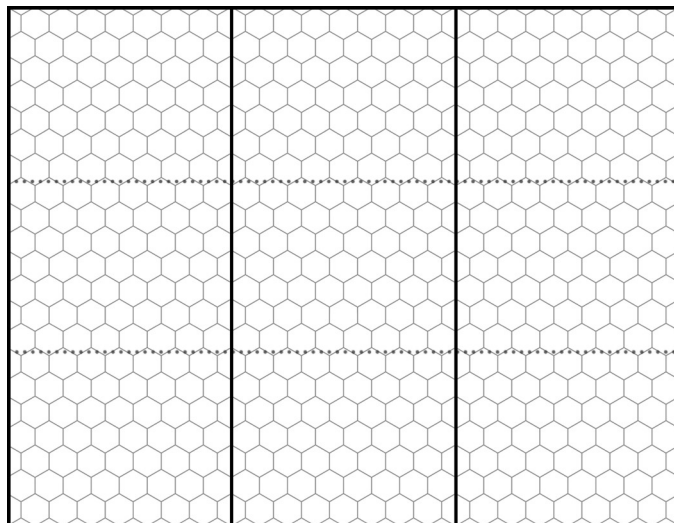
Digital versions of the game board, counters, markers, and other useful forms and charts can be obtained from our web site:

[mj12.games/starmada/components.zip](http://mj12.games/starmada/components.zip)

#### A1.1 Game Board

The game is played on a board representing the void of space, overlaid with a hexagonal grid to regulate movement and distances. The game board consists of three 25.5"×11" panels aligned lengthwise, as shown below. The full playing area is 24 hexes across and 21 hexes wide.

One edge of each map panel features a hex with sides labeled 1 through 6. Use this when determining a random direction, such as when activating a Stutterdrive (p.28). The opposite edge of each map panel features a hex with sides labeled A through F. Use this with the Vector movement option (p.16).



Several manufacturers produce fabric or vinyl mats suitable for use with **Starmada**. One excellent (and economical) option is the 3'×3' Star Mat with 1½" hexes from Monday Knight Productions:

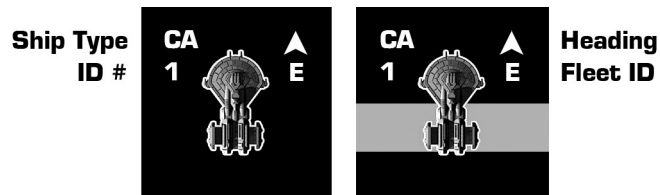
[mondayknight.com/OnlineStore.html](http://mondayknight.com/OnlineStore.html)

Alternatively, the game can be played on an open tabletop (i.e., without hexes); players will need to supply a tape measure. One hex equals 5cm (2") on the tabletop, which requires a playing surface 90cm wide and 120cm across (approximately 3'×4'). When measuring distances on the tabletop, always round up to the next "hex": e.g., if two starships are 12cm apart, they are at a range of 3 hexes ( $12\text{cm} \div 5\text{cm/hex} = 2.4$  hexes, rounded up).

Instructions for assembling the digital game board can be found on p.70.

## A1.2 Starship Counters

Combat elements (i.e., starships and fighter flights) are represented on the game board by 1" (25mm) square die-cut counters. Counters are double-sided: one side has a solid black background, while the reverse has a light grey stripe running through it. At the start of the game, each counter is placed on the game board so the side without the grey stripe is facing up.



The artwork on the counters is taken from the excellent designs of Todd Pote, who has an ever-growing collection of 3d-printable fleets available for purchase via his [Cults 3D](http://Cults3D.com) page:

[cults3d.com/en/users/GoOgleplex/creations](http://cults3d.com/en/users/GoOgleplex/creations)

In addition to an illustration of the starship in the center, each counter has the following information printed on it:

- A starship's type is reflective of its relative strength and/or the role it plays within a fleet. Abbreviations include:

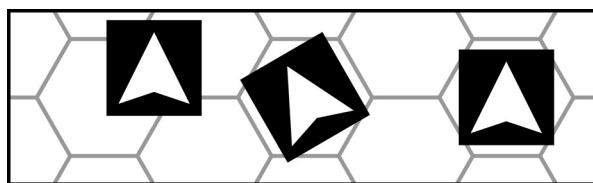
DN=Dreadnought	BB=Battleship
BC=Battlecruiser	CA=Heavy Cruiser
CL=Light Cruiser	DD=Destroyer
FF=Frigate	CV=Carrier
VF=Fighter Flight	

- The starship ID# serves to link each counter to a specific ship status display (SSD, p.5).
- The small arrow at top right indicates the starship's heading, or current direction of travel (p.10).
- The fleet ID helps differentiate friend from foe on the game board: e.g., all starships with an "E" fleet ID are on the same side.

Instructions for assembling the digital counters are provided on p.70.

Instead of counters, players may elect to use metal, plastic, or resin miniatures. Collecting and painting miniatures is a rewarding hobby in its own right, and adds a whole new dimension to gameplay. Several different manufacturers produce metal or plastic miniatures; alternatively, there are many sources from which to obtain files for 3D printing.

When placed on the game board, each counter (or miniature) must fully occupy a single hex, and its directional arrow must clearly point towards one of the six sides of its hex.



*In the example above, only the counter on the right has been placed correctly. The counter on the left occupies two hexes simultaneously, while the counter in the middle is pointing towards a hex corner, not a hex side.*

## A1.3 Starship Status Displays

Starship status displays (SSDs) are used to track the capabilities of each ship in the game. Each fits on a half sheet of letter-sized (8.5"×11") paper.

To get you playing right away, 22 sample starships are provided starting on p.71. Additional SSDs can be found in setting books (see below), or you can create your own (p.55).

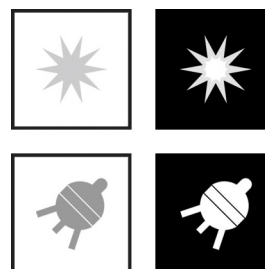
## A1.4 Markers

Some rules require the use of markers; these differ from counters in that they do not represent combat elements, such as starships or fighter flights. Instead, they are used for various administrative purposes.

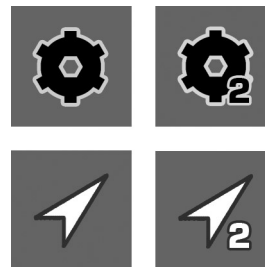
The reverse of a Cloak marker (p.13) is used to represent a Decoy (p.29).



Flare and Probe markers (pp.29,31) are double-sided. The white background shows when the marker is "face down"; the colored background shows when it is "face up."

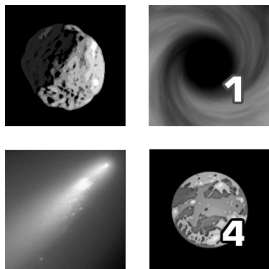


Mine (p.30) and Seeker (p.24) markers are double-sided. One side represents a single Mine or Seeker; the reverse represents between two and four items.



Three sets of Mine/Seeker markers are included: red, blue, and grey. Each side uses a separate color.

Asteroid markers (p.39) have other types of terrain on the reverse, including Black Holes (p.40), Comets (p.40), and Planets (p.41).



The markers provided with the game have not been die-cut: assembly instructions are provided on p.70.

## A1.5 Setting Book

A setting book describes the factions, starship designs, weapons, and other information specific to a particular “setting,” or universe in which games may be set. A setting book is not required; however, it can provide new players with an entry point prior to designing their own ships and/or universes.

## A2 THE STARSHIP STATUS DISPLAY

This section explains the information provided on each starship status display (SSD).

### A2.1 Class Information

Most starships are not unique designs but conform to a blueprint shared with one or more “sisters.” This is referred to as the ship’s class. The very top of the SSD lists the class followed by the ship’s type: e.g., dreadnought, light cruiser, etc.

Beneath the starship’s class is a space to write the ID# of the counter representing the ship on the game board. Players may also wish to write a unique name in this space (e.g., “CA #1 – *Enterprise*.”)

Following the starship’s type is its combat rating: a quantification of its overall effectiveness. Two forces with similar combat rating totals should be evenly balanced and provide an entertaining matchup.

*The SSD at right is for a Sycamore-class heavy cruiser. This design has a combat rating of 111.*

Some starships have three values printed at the far right of the top line. These summarize the starship’s Seeker attack and defense capabilities (p.25).

### A2.2 Starship Defenses

Each SSD contains a top-down illustration of the starship surrounded by four defensive facings (p.19). Most ships will have Screens (p.27) and/or Shields (p.31) in one or more of these arcs.

*Sycamore has two Screens in each of the four defensive facings. She has no Shields.*

**SYCAMORE-class Heavy Cruiser • 111**

ID: \_\_\_\_\_

1,3,5 HULL  
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1-2 ENGINE  
5 5 4 4 3 2 2 1

3-4 WEAPONS  
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

5-6 SYSTEMS  
11 10 9 7 6 5 3 2

1 2 3 4  
5 6 7 8

**FT-5b Fusion Torpedo ▲ (1)**  
1-5 1x3+/1  
6-10 1x4+/1  
11-15 1x5+/1  
*Catastrophic*

**SH-4b Shock Cannon ▲ (2)**  
1-4 1x4+/3  
5-8 1x4+/2  
9-12 1x4+/1

**LC-2a Laser Cannon ▲ (2)**  
1-2 1x2+/1  
3-4 1x3+/1  
5-6 1x4+/1  
*Accurate*

Anti-Fighter Batteries  Hyperdrive  Marines

### A2.3 Damage Tracks

To the right of the starship’s defenses is a set of four tracks used to record damage suffered by the ship (p.20). The length of each damage track is equal to the ship’s hull size.

*Sycamore is hull size 8: thus, each of her damage tracks is eight boxes long.*

Starships with hull tracks longer than 24 boxes are “oversized,” indicated by “[x2]” printed above each damage track: e.g., “Hull [x2].” The effect of this is described on p.21.

### A2.4 Movement Orders

The next section of the SSD consists of eight boxes used to record the starship’s movement orders in each game turn (p.10).

### A2.5 Weapons

A starship may possess up to five groups of weapons, or batteries. For each battery, the SSD lists the weapons’ name and loss limit (p.20), along with their rate of fire (ROF), accuracy (ACC), and damage (DMG) at each of up to five range bands (p.19). Any traits possessed by the weapons are shown to the right of these values (p.22).

Below the weapon name are one or more firing arc diagrams, indicating the directions in which the weapons may be brought to bear (p.17).

*Sycamore* has a battery of four SH-4b Shock Cannons: two firing into the [ABC] arc, and two into the [ABD] arc.

The SH-4b has three range bands: 1-4, 5-8, and 9-12 hexes. It has ROF 1 and ACC 4+ in each band. The weapon's DMG is 3 in the first range band, 2 in the second, and 1 in the third.

### A2.6 Starship Systems

The bottom section of the SSD shows any systems possessed by the starship (p.26), divided into three categories: equipment, munitions, and traits. Equipment is listed first, with checkboxes to indicate when each system has been damaged (p.20). Munitions follow equipment: the diamonds are crossed off as the items are used. Traits are listed below munitions.

*Sycamore* possesses two items of equipment, in addition to her Screens: Anti-Fighter Batteries and Hyperdrive. She carries three squads of Marines. *Sycamore* has no traits.

If the starship carries fighters (p.34) a set of flight records is printed on its SSD to the right of the ship's systems. As each flight is launched, write its counter ID# in the given space. The six boxes are crossed off as the flight takes damage.

FIGHTER FLIGHTS						
VF-2	<del>XX</del>	4	3	2	1	
ID:	6	5	4	3	2	1
ID:	6	5	4	3	2	1
ID:	6	5	4	3	2	1

In the above example, a starship carrying four fighter flights has launched one, represented by counter VF-2. The flight has lost two fighters, leaving four remaining.

## A3 CREDITS & COPYRIGHT

### Game Design

Daniel Kast

### The Admiralty (2007 Edition)

Jim Callahan, Matt Curtis, Peter Drake, Jamie Dugan, K. David Ladage, Brendan Mayhugh, Rich Oden, Todd Pote, John Voysey, Noel Weer

### Playtesting (All Editions)

John Acar, Daniel Baker, Kyle Barton, Devin Callahan, Richard Colwell, Symon Cook, Stephen Cooper, Andrew Damon, John Davidson, Klaus Deckenbach, Brian Dyck, Ben Frayser, Steven Gabriel, Eric Garvue, Mark Giebler, Steven Gilchrist, Kevin Gray, Dean Gundberg, Chris Gunning, Keeton Harrington, Sam Hart, Garrick Herbst, Garrett Hunter, Darren Kehrer, Kyle Koskinen, Don Kuehn, Tyrel Lohr, Brad McElhaney, Jeff Miller, Robb Minneman, Thomas Nicar, Jason Noble, Bob Norman, Darren O'Connell, Deric Page, Eric Parker, Jonathan Pike, Juha Pohjalainen, James Pridemore, Sam Pullen, Joshua Rasey, Jerry Robinson, Demian Rose, Peter Schutze, Matthew Siedl, Mark Siefert, Brad Sweet, Ken Taborek, Brian Trotter, Bas Van Der Meer, Jay Waschak, Martin Wilför, Chad Wilson, Timothy Wolfe

### Special Thanks

Thomas Bartkowiak, Ken Burnside, Scott Franklin, Brian Jurczyk, W. Gregory Klett, Brendan Mayhugh, Chris Mazurek, John Richert, Ken Rodeghero, Derek Rompot, Kevin Smith, Timothy Swenson

### Starmada: The Universal Game of Starship Combat

Stock No. MJG-0160 • ISBN 978-1-304-59182-1 • Version 1.0 – March 2024  
 Copyright ©2017-2024 Majestic Twelve Games. All rights reserved.  
 "Starmada," "Majestic Twelve Games," and related indicia are trademarks of:

Majestic Twelve Games  
 278 Laramie Court  
 Castle Rock, CO 80104

[www.mj12games.com](http://www.mj12games.com)

Sample SSD images (p.71) modified from artwork by MillionthVector (<http://millionthvector.blogspot.com/p/free-sprites.html>) and licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)



## **B PLAYING THE GAME**

This section provides an overview of gameplay; details can be found in the following sections. After a few games, players should be able to dispense with the rulebook entirely. Every effort has been made to keep the process as intuitive as possible.

Questions? Please reach out by joining one (or all) of our online communities:

[mj12.games/discord](https://mj12.games/discord) • [mj12.games/forum](https://mj12.games/forum)  
[mj12.games/facebook](https://mj12.games/facebook)

### **B1 SETTING UP**

The first step in playing a game is to find an opponent. Arrange the game board on a flat, level surface within easy reach of both sides and make sure all necessary game components are available.

#### **B1.1 Choose a Scenario**

The scenario (p.43) sets the context of the game by defining the forces doing battle, the objectives on either side, and any special conditions or rules in effect. The chosen scenario specifies both a fleet limit and victory point target, further explained below.

In each scenario, one side is designated Red and the other Blue. Typically, Red is the “attacker” and Blue the “defender,” although there may be exceptions. New players should start with a Meeting Engagement, as it is a straightforward set-’em-up-and-shoot-things scenario.

#### **B1.2 Assemble the Fleet**

The specific mix of starships making up each force is left to the players. However, the total combat rating of all ships selected cannot exceed the fleet limit of the chosen scenario.

For example, a fleet limit of 600 allows players to select one starship with a combat rating of 300 and two ships with combat ratings of 150 each, six ships with combat ratings of 100 each, a single ship with a combat rating of 600, or any other combination adding up to 600 or less.

Next, obtain an SSD for each chosen starship. Players are given permission to make copies of published sheets for personal use: alternatively, the necessary information can be written onto copies of the blank SSD sheet (p.93).

#### **B1.3 Deploy the Fleet**

Finally, gather the necessary counters and place them on the game board according to the chosen scenario. Remember to place them so the side without the grey stripe is facing up.

It is not feasible to provide counters for every possible starship type and/or class. Instead, players should choose counters that reasonably match the ships under their control. For example, two heavy cruisers and a single strike cruiser could be represented by three “CA” counters, with one of them standing in for the strike cruiser. All counters representing a side’s ships should have the same fleet ID.

### **B2 SEQUENCE OF PLAY**

The game is played in a series of game turns, each of which is made up of five distinct parts, or phases. The order in which these phases are conducted is referred to as the sequence of play. When all five phases have been completed, one game turn is over, and the next begins with the Orders Phase.

Each phase requires players to perform specific tasks, thus bringing some semblance of order to the chaos of battle. These tasks must be completed during the indicated phase and may not be performed in another. For example, if a player forgets to make attacks with a starship during the Combat Phase, the opportunity is lost and cannot be recovered during the End Phase.

#### **B2.1 Orders Phase**

During the Orders Phase sides simultaneously record movement orders for their starships as described in rule C1 (p.10). The thrust requirement of each ship’s movement orders is compared to its engine rating to ensure those orders are valid (rule C2, p.11).

## **B2.2 Movement Phase**

During the Movement Phase sides simultaneously move their starships across the game board, as described in rule C3 (p.12).

## **B2.3 Fighter Phase**

During the Fighter Phase sides alternate activating individual fighter flights, as described in rule F2 (p.34). If no fighter flights are present, this phase can be skipped.

## **B2.4 Combat Phase**

During the Combat Phase sides alternate making attacks with their starships, as described in rule D (p.17).

## **B2.5 End Phase**

The End Phase serves primarily to mark the end of the game turn. Damage inflicted during the preceding Combat Phase takes effect at this time. Both sides then determine whether conditions for victory have been met (see below). Flip all counters so the side without the grey stripe is facing up.

## **B3 VICTORY**

If during the End Phase either side has scored enough victory points (VPs) to meet or exceed the VP target of the chosen scenario, that side wins. If both sides have scored enough VPs, the side with the higher total is the winner.

VPs are typically scored by destroying enemy starships: each ship destroyed awards the opposing side VPs equal to its combat rating. Some scenarios provide for additional means of scoring VPs.

## **► Partial Victory Points (Optional)**

The standard game takes an “all or nothing” approach to awarding VPs. A starship only grants VPs to the opponent once it has been destroyed; even a single hull point remaining denies any benefit to the enemy. With this rule, players score VPs for damaged targets.

- When a starship crosses off its first hull box, the opposing side receives 10% normal VPs: e.g., a ship with a combat rating of 150 awards 15 VPs when its first hull box is damaged.
- Once a starship crosses off at least one-third of its hull boxes (rounded up), the opposing side receives 20% normal VPs. For example, a ship of with 10 boxes on its hull track awards 20% VPs once four hull boxes have been damaged ( $10 \div 3 = 3.33$ , rounded up).
- Once a starship loses at least two-thirds of its hull boxes (rounded up), the opposing side receives 20% normal VPs. For example, a ship with 13 boxes on its hull track awards 20% VPs once nine hull boxes have been damaged ( $13 \times 2 = 26 \div 3 = 8.67$ , rounded up).
- Once a starship is destroyed, the opposing side receives the remaining 50% VPs.

These awards are cumulative: e.g., a starship with a combat rating of 220 awards a total of 110 VPs once it has crossed off two-thirds of its hull boxes ( $10\% + 20\% + 20\% = 50\% \times 220$ ).

A starship that jumps into hyperspace (p.13) awards 50% of its total VPs, regardless of actual damage suffered.



# COMPLETE SEQUENCE OF PLAY

## 1 ORDERS PHASE

---

- a. If using random movement initiative (p.10) assemble and shuffle activation deck; conduct steps 1(b) through 2(c) for one starship at a time.
- b. Record movement orders (p.10); determine thrust requirements (p.11); expend Boosters (p.29) and Fuel (p.29).
- c. Reveal movement orders and confirm orders are valid (p.12).

## 2 MOVEMENT PHASE

---

- a. Remove cloaked starships from game board; return uncloaked and cloaked & detected starships to game board (p.13).
- b. Make hyperjump rolls; remove starships entering hyperspace from game board (p.13).
- c. Move starships on game board according to written movement orders (p.12); float game board (p.12); resolve stacking (p.12).
  - i. Resolve Mine (p.30) and asteroid field (p.39) attacks.
  - ii. Apply effects of Emergency Thrust (p.13).
  - iii. Deploy Decoys (p.29).
  - iv. Conduct defensive fire (p.25), including Point Defense Systems (p.27).
- d. Resolve Seeker attacks (p.24).

## 3 FIGHTER PHASE

---

- a. If using random fighter activation, assemble and shuffle activation deck (p.35).
- b. Alternate activating one fighter flight (p.34) or Shuttlecraft (p.31) at a time; if one side has more than twice as many flights, that side activates multiple flights at a time (p.34), unless using random fighter activation (p.35).
  - i. Move selected flight on game board (p.35); roll for hyperjump by Long Range Fighters (p.36).
  - ii. Declare attack by selected flight (p.35); or recover flight (p.34).
  - iii. Use Point Defense System to intercept (p.27); resolve declared attack (p.35); apply damage effects (p.21).

## 4 COMBAT PHASE

---

- a. If using random combat initiative (p.17) assemble and shuffle activation deck.
- b. Alternate making attacks with one starship at a time; if one side has more than twice as many ships, that side attacks with multiple ships at a time, unless using random combat initiative (p.17).
  - i. Declare all targets, confirming range, firing arc, and line of sight restrictions (p.17).
  - ii. For each declared target, resolve attack roll (p.19).
  - iii. For each hit scored, roll to penetrate target's Screens (p.27).
  - iv. For each point of damage inflicted, apply target's Shields (p.31) or make damage roll (p.20).
- c. Resolve starship systems used at the same time as weapons fire:
  - i. Fire Point Defense Systems offensively (p.27).
  - ii. Trigger Shockwave (p.33).
  - iii. Launch Flares (p.29); resolve Marine boarding attempts (p.29); fire Probes (p.31).
- d. If using sequential combat (p.21), apply effects of weapons damage (p.21).

## 5 END PHASE

---

- a. Apply effects of weapons damage (p.21).
- b. Apply gravitational pull due to black holes (p.40).
- c. Evaluate victory conditions (p.8).
- d. Activate Stutterdrive (p.28).
- e. Perform damage control (p.21); apply Shield Regenerators (p.28); roll for hull regeneration (p.33); regain Action Points (p.37).
- f. Deploy Mines (p.30); launch Shuttlecraft (p.31) and fighters (p.34).
- g. Remove face-up Flare & Probe markers, flip face-down Flare & Probe markers to face up (pp.29, 31).



## C MOVEMENT

Starship movement in **Starmada** is governed by the first of Newton's Laws: an object in motion will remain in motion unless acted upon by an external force. In game turns, the object is a starship, and the force is the thrust produced by its engines.

The procedure for completing a starship's movement consists of three steps:

- 1) Movement orders are written during the Orders Phase.
- 2) The thrust requirement of the written orders is determined and compared to the starship's current engine rating. If the requirement exceeds the engine rating, the orders are invalid.
- 3) The starship's counter is moved on the game board during the Movement Phase.

Three alternate movement systems are included: Cinematic (p.15), Reactionless (p.15), and Vector (p.16). These modify the standard rules to simulate different environments and/or settings.

### ► Random Movement Initiative (Optional)

Instead of conducting simultaneous movement as described above, players may elect to use cards to determine the order in which starships are moved.

Using an ordinary deck of playing cards, pull out cards equal to the number of starships on the board. One side is designated Black and the other Red; the distribution of cards should mirror the number of ships on either side.

*Side A is designated "Red" and has four starships, while Side B is "Black" and has three ships. Therefore, seven cards are set aside: four red and three black.*

Shuffle these cards and set them face down next to the game board. The cards are then flipped over, one at a time. The color of the flipped card determines which side will act; that side then chooses one of its starships to move. Once that ship has completed its movement, another card is flipped over, and so on, until all ships have moved.

## C1 MOVEMENT ORDERS

During the Orders Phase, players secretly record movement orders for each starship under their control. Orders consist of forward movement and/or pivots; these are written in the appropriate box of the SSD, using the following notation:

- A number indicates forward movement: e.g., "3" means the starship is to move forward three hexes.
- "P" indicates a one-hexside (60°) pivot to port (counter-clockwise).
- "S" indicates a one-hexside (60°) pivot to starboard (clockwise).
- "U" indicates a three-hexside (180°) pivot (a "U-turn").

Forward movement is conducted in the direction of the starship's heading, as shown by the arrow at the top right of its counter.

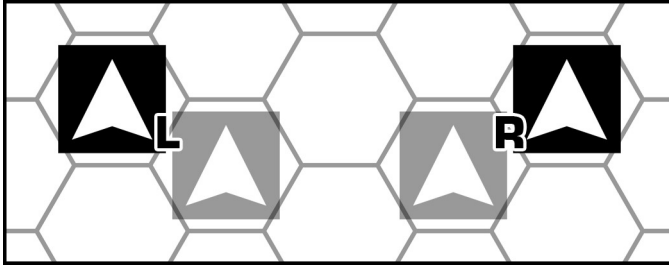
Movement orders may include up to three one-hexside pivots or a single U-turn; all one-hexside pivots must be in the same direction. Thus, "4P2" and "1S2S" are examples of valid movement orders; "2P1S" and "2U1P" are not.

### C1.1 Speed

At the end of its movement orders, a starship's speed is written in parentheses: the speed is the sum of all forward movement included in those orders. For example, "4P2" results in a speed of 6 (4+2); the final movement orders are written "4P2(6)." Speed is the primary factor in determining the thrust requirement (p.11).

## C1.2 Sideslips

A starship may plot sideslips in its movement orders, using “L” and “R” to indicate a one-hex slip to the left or right, respectively. When performing a sideslip, the ship is moved forward and to the left or right, without changing its heading, as illustrated below. Each sideslip adds +1 to the ship’s speed.



*A starship intends to move forward two hexes, sideslip one hex to the left, and move forward another two hexes. Its movement orders are recorded as “2L2(5).”*

Starships may only slip in one direction per Movement Phase; this must be in the direction corresponding to any pivots conducted (port/left; starboard/right). For example, “1L2R(5)” is invalid, as the orders contain slips in both directions, while “R3P(4)” is also invalid, as the sideslip (R) is in the opposite direction from the one-hexside pivot (P).

## C2 ENGINES & THRUST

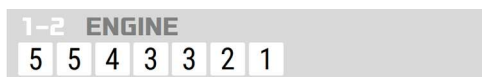
After a starship’s movement orders are written, the thrust requirement is determined and compared to the ship’s current engine rating.

If the thrust required for the starship’s recorded movement orders exceeds its current engine rating, the orders are invalid and cannot be completed. Any ship discovered to have invalid orders moves forward hexes equal to its speed in the previous game turn.

### C2.1 Engine Rating

A starship’s movement is limited by the power of its engines, as quantified by its engine rating. A ship’s engine rating is represented by the value in the first uncrossed box on its engine track.

*The starship below begins the game with an engine rating of 5; after the ship takes two engine hits (p.20) its engine rating drops to 4.*



Once a starship’s engine boxes have all been crossed off, each attack die rolled against it is modified by +1 (p.19).

### C2.2 Thrust Requirement

Each set of movement orders has an associated thrust requirement, or the minimum engine rating needed to complete the orders. The thrust requirement depends upon the number of pivots to be performed:

- If the starship is performing no pivots, the thrust requirement is the difference between the ship’s speed in the previous game turn and its current speed. When determining the difference, always subtract the smaller value from the larger. If both values are the same, the thrust requirement is zero. This is the only way to apply zero thrust; thus, a starship without a current engine rating will continue to move at the same speed, and in the same heading, indefinitely.
- If the starship is performing a single one-hexside pivot, the thrust requirement is the ship’s speed in the previous game turn or its current speed, whichever is greater.
- If the starship is performing two or three one-hexside pivots, or a single U-turn, the thrust requirement is the sum of the ship’s speed in the previous game turn and its current speed.

*Ex.1: A starship with a previous speed of 7 plots movement orders of “2(2).” The orders contain no pivots, so the thrust requirement is the difference between the previous and current speeds:  $7-2 = 5$ .*

*Ex.2: A starship with a previous speed of 5 plots movement orders of “2P2(4).” The orders contain a single one-hexside pivot, so the thrust requirement is the greater of the previous and current speeds:  $\max\{5,4\} = 5$ .*

*Ex.3: A starship with a previous speed of 3 plots movement orders of “1U1(2).” The orders contain a U-turn, so the thrust requirement is the sum of the previous and current speeds:  $3+2 = 5$ .*

Unless otherwise specified by the scenario, during the first game turn assume each starship’s previous speed was equal to its engine rating.

### C2.3 Sideslips & Thrust

Each sideslip included in a starship’s movement orders adds +1 to the thrust requirement.

*A starship with a previous speed of 4 has movement orders of “P2L2(5).” The thrust requirement is 6 ( $\max\{4,5\}+1 = 6$ ).*

### ► Delayed Pivots (Optional)

Sideslips can be used to reduce the thrust requirement in the next game turn. If a ship's movement orders contain a single one-hexside pivot, the thrust requirement is reduced by -1 for each slip conducted in the previous Movement Phase, provided those slips were in the same direction as the plotted turn (port/left; starboard/right). The thrust requirement of movement orders containing two or three pivots, or a single U-turn, is unaffected by sideslips in the previous turn.

*Continuing the above example, in the next Orders Phase the starship writes orders of "3P1(4)." Normally, this would result in a thrust requirement of 5 (max{5,4}); however, because the ship conducted a single sideslip to the left in the previous Movement Phase, the thrust requirement is reduced by -1, for a final requirement of 4.*

The effect of this rule is to spread the thrust requirement of a one-hexside pivot across multiple game turns. For example, a starship with an engine rating of 3 and a previous speed of 6 could not normally pivot without first slowing down. However, it may pivot while maintaining its speed by first plotting movement orders of "1RR2R(6)" (thrust requirement:  $6-6+3 = 3$ ) and then "3S3(6)" (thrust requirement:  $\max\{6,6\}-3 = 3$ ).

Delayed pivots cannot be used with the Cinematic or Reactionless movement options (p.15).

## C3 MOVING THE STARSHIP

Once movement orders have been recorded and confirmed as valid, proceed to the Movement Phase, during which starship counters are moved on the game board according to their orders.

*A starship has movement orders of "2P1(3)." Its counter is moved two hexes forward, pivoted one hexside (60°) to port (counter-clockwise), and moved another one hex forward.*

### C3.1 Stacking

Starships may move through hexes occupied by other ships without incident: space is big enough for them to pass. Further, two or more ships from the same side may end their movement in the same hex. However, if ships from opposing sides end their movement in the same hex, the situation must be resolved.

Roll a die for each starship and add its current engine rating (re-roll any ties between opposing ships). The ship with the lowest total remains in place; then, in ascending order, each ship either remains in place (if on the same side as the first ship) or shifts to an adjacent hex, maintaining its current heading.

*A cruiser ends its movement in the same hex as two opposing destroyers. A die is rolled for each starship, adding its current speed. The cruiser (engine rating 4) rolls a 3, for a total of 7; the destroyers (engine ratings 5 and 6, respectively) roll a 4 and a 2, for respective totals of 9 and 8. As the cruiser's total is lowest, it remains in place. The two destroyers shift to adjacent hexes; they can both shift into the same hex, or they can split between separate hexes.*

Opposing starships may not shift into the same hex, nor may a ship shift into a hex containing an object with which it cannot coexist: e.g., an asteroid (p.39). In the rare event there are no available hexes adjacent to the contested hex, the ship shifts two hexes, maintaining its current heading.

### C3.2 Leaving the Game Board

If a starship's movement orders cause it to leave the game board, it is immediately removed from play and the ship may not return. Unless scenario rules state otherwise, ships leaving the board are considered destroyed, and the opposing side receives the normal VPs.

### ► Floating Game Board (Optional)

As an optional rule, a "floating" game board can be implemented. Whenever a starship's movement would take it off the game board, all objects (including Terrain, p.39) are first "floated" a certain number of hexes in an appropriate direction to free up space for the ship to complete its movement. All objects must maintain the same positions relative to one other.

If the board cannot be floated in such a way to allow all elements to remain on the board, it cannot float: i.e., another element may not be floated off of one edge of the board to allow a ship to complete its movement along the opposite edge.

Apply common sense when deciding whether to use this option, as it may invalidate certain scenario objectives.

## C4 SPECIAL ACTIONS

The special actions described below are mutually exclusive: e.g., a starship may not perform emergency thrust and run silent in the same Movement Phase, nor may a ship enter hyperspace while cloaked.

### C4.1 Emergency Thrust

A starship may apply emergency thrust by writing an exclamation point (!) at the start of its movement orders: e.g., "!: 3S1(4)." The effect is to double the ship's current engine rating. For example, a ship with an engine rating of 5 could write orders with a thrust requirement of up to 10 by performing emergency thrust.

However, this benefit comes at a cost; at the conclusion of its movement, any starship performing emergency thrust crosses off one-third of its remaining engine boxes (rounded up).

*A starship with five boxes remaining on its engine track applies emergency thrust. Two boxes are crossed off ( $5 \div 3 = 1.67$ , rounded up).*

Boosters (p.29) are not doubled when applying emergency thrust.

### C4.2 Cloak

The most advanced defensive equipment ever devised is the Cloaking Device. While cloaked, a starship is effectively invisible to opposing sensors.

To cloak, a starship must have an operational Cloaking Device (p.26). Use of a Cloaking Device is indicated by a question mark (?) at the start of the starship's movement orders: e.g., "?: 1R2(4)." Once all movement orders have been recorded, place a cloak marker in the ship's hex, oriented so the arrow is pointed in the direction of the ship's heading, and remove the ship's counter from the game board. So long as the ship remains cloaked (and undetected; see p.26) its location will remain unknown to the opposing side.

A cloaked starship may not be attacked unless detected. Any Seeker weapons (p.24) targeting a ship that cloaks are immediately removed from the board.

While cloaked, a starship may not attack, nor may it expend munitions other than Fuel and/or Shields (p.31). A cloaked ship may not launch or recover fighter flights (p.34).

To uncloak a starship, the controlling player simply does not write "?" at the start of the ship's movement orders. During the Movement Phase, place the ship's counter in the hex containing its cloak marker, and move it according to all orders recorded while it was cloaked, before then carrying out the ship's current movement orders. Remove the cloak marker from the game board.

*In the Orders Phase of the first game turn, a starship records movement orders of "?: 2P1(3)."  
At the start of the Movement Phase, a cloak marker is placed in the ship's hex and its counter is removed from the game board.*

*In the Orders Phase of the second game turn, the starship records movement orders of "?: 4(4)."  
The ship remains cloaked for the turn.*

*In the Orders Phase of the third game turn, the starship records movement orders of "2R1(4)."  
The ship is no longer cloaked, so at the start of the Movement Phase, the ship's counter is returned to the hex containing its cloak marker and moved according to the orders recorded while it was cloaked, before finally carrying out the current set of movement orders. The cloak marker is then removed from the game board.*

### C4.3 Hyperjump

Many science fiction settings include faster-than-light (FTL) travel. For this to be possible, the concept of hyperspace has often been postulated. The exact nature of hyperspace (and even its name) will vary with the setting; regardless, its role is to give ships an escape route from battle.

To enter hyperspace, a starship must have an operational Hyperdrive (p.27). Hyperdrive activation is recorded by writing a pound sign (#) at the start of the starship's movement orders: e.g., "#: 4(4)." When the ship is moved, roll a die and record the result on the ship's SSD. In the subsequent Movement Phase, roll another die and add the result to the previous number, and so on. Once the total reaches 10, the ship enters hyperspace. While activating its Hyperdrive, a ship may neither pivot nor sideslip.

If a starship stops recording hyperjump orders, the running total drops to zero. A ship entering hyperspace is considered destroyed for scenario purposes; however, the opposing side receives only 50% normal VPs, rounded up.

#### C4.4 Roll

As there is no “up” in space, it is not necessary for starships to retain the same orientation relative to one another. It is possible for a ship to “roll” itself so it is inverted in relation to the rest of the battlefield.

Performing a roll is indicated by writing an “at” sign (@) before the starship’s movement orders: e.g., “@: 5S2.” A roll increases the ship’s thrust requirement by +3. Each one-hexside turn included in the ship’s movement orders reduces this requirement by -1; three one-hexside turns (or a single u-turn) allow the ship to roll for “free.”

*A starship with a previous speed of 2 plots the following movement orders: “@: 1P2P.” The thrust requirement is 6 ((2+3) = 5+3 = 8-2).*

Rolling does not affect a starship’s speed. Once rolled, a ship remains inverted until it performs another roll. The effect of a roll is to reverse the starship’s firing arcs (p.17): A becomes B; C becomes D; E becomes F; H becomes I; J becomes K; and vice versa. Port and starboard defensive facings (p.19) are likewise reversed.

#### C4.5 Run Silent

To run silent, a player writes a dollar sign (\$) at the start of the starship’s movement orders: e.g., “\$: 3(3).” Because this action requires the ship to reduce its engine signature, running silent doubles the ship’s thrust requirement.

*A starship with a previous speed of 3 records movement orders of “\$: 1P1(2).” The thrust requirement is 6 (max{3,2} = 3×2).*

In the Combat Phase, a -1 penalty is applied to any attack dice rolled against a target running silent (p.19). However, the starship running silent has the same penalty applied to its own attack dice. If both attacker and target are running silent, the attack penalty is -2.

#### C4.6 Tether

Two or more friendly starships may tether themselves in order to combine their propulsive power. (It is assumed all ships have the necessary tractor beams, tow cables, or what-have-you to perform this function.) The tethered ships must have ended the previous Movement Phase in the same hex, with the same speed and heading.

A tether is recorded by writing an ampersand (&) at the start of the starship’s movement orders: e.g., “&: 1P2(3).” Tethered ships must record identical orders.

The combined engine rating of tethered starships is determined by multiplying the hull size of each tethered ship by its individual engine rating and adding the products together. Then, divide by the sum of the tethered ships’ hull sizes, rounding down.

*A starship of hull size 5 with an engine rating of 7 is tethered to a ship of hull size 8 with an engine rating of 2. The combined engine rating is 3 ((5×7) + (8×2) = 51÷(5+8) = 3.9, rounded down).*

## Z3 RULES UPDATE 2024

This section summarizes the substantive changes to the **Starmada** game as presented in v2.0 of the *Unity Rulebook* and the *2020 Rules Annex*. Existing starship designs are fully compatible with these revisions, with minimal adjustments.

### 1.0 THE STARSHIP DISPLAY SHEET

Multiply the combat ratings of Unity starships by 60%, rounding up to the next integer: e.g., a combat rating of 152 becomes 92 ( $152 \times 60\% = 91.2$ , rounded up).

The Customized Range Bands option (from the *2020 Rules Annex*) is now standard. Unity weapons not using this option retain their three standard range bands (short, medium, and long).

Starships no longer have an inherent shield rating, as this function has been taken over by Screens, while Unity screens are now referred to as "Shields." Unity starships continue to use their existing shield ratings (see below).

Damage tracks now have the same number of boxes as the starship's hull size. The weapons track now applies only to weapons; equipment is included on the systems track (renamed from the "shield track"). Unity starships continue to use their existing damage tracks, with modifications to the damage roll (see below).

### 3.0 MOVEMENT

Turns (i.e. changes to a starship's heading) are now called "pivots." Starships no longer conduct pivots as described in the *Unity Rulebook*.

### 4.0 COMBAT

**The Attack Roll:** Unity weapons not using Customized Range Bands continue to apply modifiers for short and long range, as modified by weapon traits.

**The Impact Roll:** Unity shield ratings operate as before. Unity weapons with  $IMP > 1$  possess the appropriate Impact trait (p.23); conversely, the IMP value of all non-Unity weapons is 1, unless they have the Impact trait.

**The Damage Roll:** The damage resolution chart has changed (p.20). System hits are treated as "shield hits" on Unity starships.

On Unity starships, cross off one engine, weapons, or shield box for every second such hit. If only one hit is scored, circle the value in the next box; this indicates the box only requires one more hit to be crossed off.

## 5.0 FIGHTERS

A fighter flight may move up to 10 hexes. Each one-hexside ( $60^\circ$ ) pivot and/or sideslip counts as one hex moved. Fighters have a  $180^\circ$  firing arc, instead of  $360^\circ$ .

Unless otherwise indicated by the scenario, fighter flights begin the game aboard their carriers.

### APPENDIX B: STARSHIP SYSTEMS

Defensive facings are now the default. Unity starships without directional shielding have the same shield rating in each arc.

**Aegis Fire Control** is now called "Area Defense." Its function is unchanged.

Starships may only have a single instance of **Countermeasures**. Unity starships with two or more treat the extras as redundancies.

Starships may only have a single instance of **Fire Control** (now called "Enhanced Fire Control"). Unity starships with two or more treat the extras as redundancies.

A starship with an **Ionized Hull** is now "Armored." Its function is unchanged.

**Long Range Sensors** (now called "Long Range Scanners") allow the starship to reduce the effective range to its targets by 25%: i.e., for every four hexes of actual range reduce the effective range by one.

Divide the number of **Mines** and **Point Defense Systems** carried by Unity starships by three (rounded up). Mines may be deployed up to six hexes away from the deploying starship. Minefields score hits automatically, rather than rolling to-hit. The stats for PDS have changed (p.27).

**Probes** may no longer be used as weapons.

**Screens** are now "Shields," although their function is unchanged. Unity starships without Directional Screens have Omni-Shields (p.31).

**Shuttlecraft** move up to six hexes, instead of four. Instead of receiving a "saving throw," they require two hits to destroy.

**Tight Turn** and **Wide Turn** have been replaced by the "Pivot Class A" and "Pivot Class F" traits, respectively (p.33).

The rules for **Shockwave** and **Stealth** have changed, while **Damage Control Parties** and **Overthrusters** are not included in the current rulebook. Unity starships continue to use the prior rules.

## APPENDIX C: WEAPON OPTIONS

The names and/or effects of several weapon traits have been modified:

- **Catastrophic:** For each hit scored on the target, roll one die: the result is the amount of damage inflicted. Unity starships divide the result in half, rounded up.
- **Defensive:** Defensive weapons may intercept Seeker weapons (p.25). However, they no longer interrupt fighter attacks.
- **Disruptive:** Whenever a damage die comes up 2, 4, or 6, roll an additional damage die.
- **Kinetic:** Now called "Crushing."
- **Lancing:** Now called "Piercing."
- **Modulating:** Now called "Phasing 3." Ignore three levels of the target's Screens (or reduce the shield rating of a Unity starship by -3).
- **Non-Piercing:** Now called "Non-Phasing." Subtract -1 from all Screen penetration rolls (or Unity impact rolls).
- **Piercing (1/2):** Now called "Phasing (1/2)." Ignore one or two levels of the target's Screens (or reduce the shield rating of a Unity starship by -1 or -2).
- **Pinpoint:** The controlling player may reroll any damage dice once. The result of the reroll must be accepted. A rerolled damage die cannot cause a hull hit.
- **Repeating:** Now called "Repeating 5." Whenever an unmodified to-hit die comes up 5 or 6, roll an additional to-hit die.
- **Semi-Lancing:** Now called "Semi-Piercing."

The **Deadly**, **Evaporating**, and all **Range-Based** traits have been removed from the game (although see Limited Ammunition, p.18). Unity starships continue to use the prior rules.

**Seeker Weapon** attacks have been modified (p.24). Unity seekers receive a single range band equal to twice their Unity MA: e.g., a seeker with MA 8 has a range band of

1-16 hexes. If the weapons have the **Evaporating** trait, the total ROF of the Seeker volley is cut by 50% (rounded up) at greater than half range.

**Dual-Mode Weapons** and **Multi-Weapon Mounts** have been removed from the game (although see Weapon Modes, p.24). Unity starships continue to use the prior rules.

## APPENDIX D: MOVEMENT OPTIONS

When a starship performs the **Emergency Thrust** special action, cross one-third of the remaining boxes on its engine track, rounded up.

**Evasive Action** has been supplanted by the "Run Silent" special action (p.14).

**Freeform Turns** have been implemented as part of the Cinematic movement system (p.15).

**Graded Turns** have been implemented as part of the Reactionless movement system (p.15).

**Towing** has been replaced by the "Tether" special action (p.14).

The **Etheric Drag** option has been removed from the game.

## APPENDIX E: COMBAT OPTIONS

The **Damage Control** chart has changed (p.21).

**Directed Damage**, **Explosions**, **Shield Reinforcement**, **System Half-Hits**, and **Target Acquisition** are not included in the current rulebook.

## APPENDIX F: FIGHTER OPTIONS

A starship may **Launch** fighter flights in a single End Phase equal to one-half its Carrier rating, rounded up. If equipped with Launch Tubes, the ship may launch all fighter flights at once. **Recovery** is unchanged.

**Light Fighters** move up to 12 hexes, rather than 10. Additional fighters are lost on a roll of 1, instead of 1-2. Flights begin with six individual fighters, not seven.

**Combat Space Patrol**, **Dogfights**, and **Fighter Screens** are not included in the current rulebook.