

CINEMATIC FLEET COMBAT SYSTEM

LIGHTNING STRIKE

DEMO GAME



DREAM POD 9

JOVIAN
CHRONICLES

JOVIAN CHRONICLES REFERENCE CHART

The Game Turn

Initiative Phase

- Roll Initiative

First Ship Phase*

Main Phase

- Players alternate taking Actions with independent Units. For each Unit:
- Place or remove Overthrust counters before Movement or Actions.
- Move and/or take Action(s)

Second Ship Phase*

End Phase

- Actions and Command Points go back to zero.

*Spaceships are not used in the demo game, since their rules are too detailed to fit within this small space. The Phases in *italics* are provided for completeness' sake and can otherwise be ignored.

Attack Roll Summary

The Attacker's roll equals the roll of two dice modified by:

- + Attack's Accuracy (see Datacard)
- 3 If Attacker has Overthrust counter
- + Close Combat Optimized bonus (if applicable)

If the Attacker's roll is higher than the Defenders, the attack is a hit. If the target's roll ties the attacker's roll or is higher, the attack misses.

Defense Roll Summary

The Defender's roll equals the roll of two dice modified by:

- + Avoidance**
- + Rating Missile Defense**
- +3 If Defender has Evasion counter

*This is the Avoidance value for the arc from which the attack is originating. Thus, if the attacker is in the target's Front arc, the defender's Front Avoidance value is added to (or subtracted from) the target's die roll.

**If Missile Defense is listed, the Unit is equipped with a decoy launcher that confuses attacks with the "Missile" characteristic ("Mis").

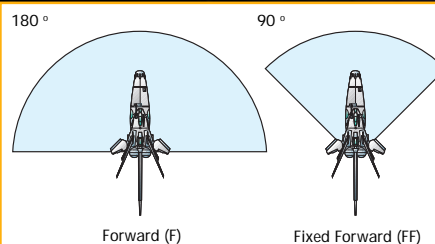
Damage Procedure

Total Damage = Margin of Success x Damage Multiplier

If Total Damage > Stun Threshold, target is Stunned (Unit gains Stunned counter)

If Total Damage > Crippled Threshold, target is Crippled (Unit permanently gains Crippled counter)

If Total Damage > Overkill Threshold, target is destroyed



Forward (F)

Fixed Forward (FF)

Crippled



Stunned

Overthrust



Evasive

ECM



Targeted ECM

Aiming



DP9-300, \$0.95 us/can SRP

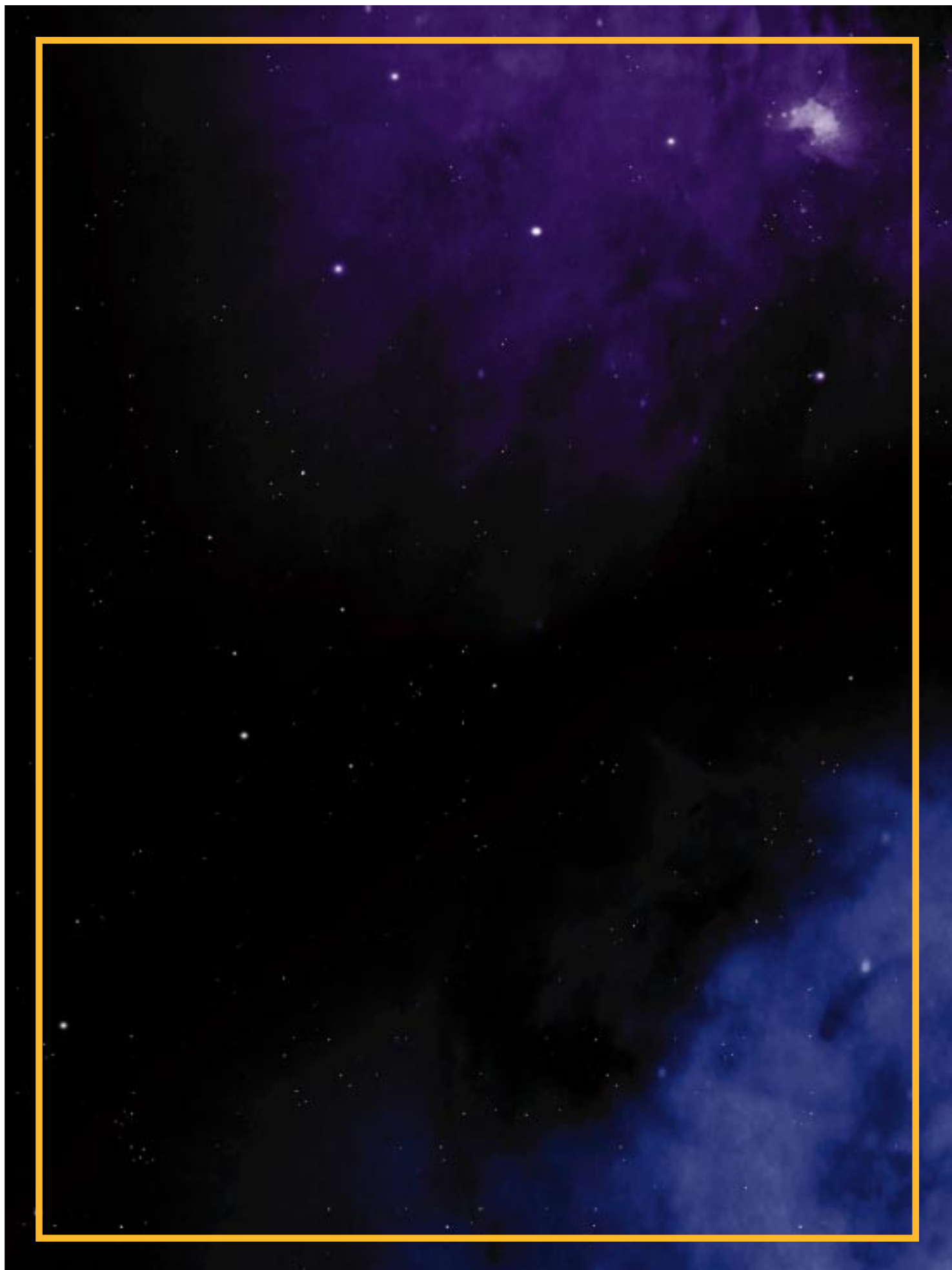


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To the Stars!

Lightning Strike is meant to be played as a tabletop miniatures game; for this demo, counters will do just as well. All that is needed to play is a large flat surface like a table, although scenery can be added: for example, asteroids may be represented by pieces of foam or by small rocks. Cotton can be used for dust or other particulate clouds.

"Unit" here refers to a combat unit, usually a vehicle. The characteristics of four common space combat vehicles are provided; each Player can control one or several. All vehicles have a cost listed as Threat Value; each side should have the same amount of points to spend to ensure that the battle is fair. Each Player should have a Lightning Strike datacard for each Unit counter in play (make copies as needed).

Make copies of the rules and datacards, then cut out the ruler, counters and the reference screen using sharp scissors. It's a good idea to print a separate copy of the rules and the screen to have them handy during the game. A few six-sided dice will also be required.

The game is played in turns, each representing about 30 seconds of combat time. Each centimeter on the tabletop represents approximately 500 meters of space. The scales of the counters and miniatures are not "accurate;" if they were actually in scale, they would be microscopic! The Player is seeing the same view an admiral would see on his battle display: the actual Unit only occupies the centerpoint of the miniature or marker, and its position and range to other Units is measured from its center.

Players should take turns setting up on opposite sides of the playing field, each starting within twenty centimeters of his edge of the field. Units may start the game with Special Movement counters (Overthrust or Evasion — see further for explanations on those).

Game System Basics

Lightning Strike uses ordinary six-sided dice. When two or more dice are rolled simultaneously, their results are not added together. Instead, the highest value rolled is considered to be the outcome of the die roll. If more than one '6' is rolled, each extra '6' adds one (1) point to the total. If every die rolled turns up '1,' the die roll is a fumble and an automatic failure. Unless otherwise mentioned, all die rolls are counted this way. Modifiers can be added to the total of the die roll. If negative modifiers lower the total below zero, the final result is always zero.

In the introductory game, all crewmen are standard pilots: they have a Skill level of 2. This means that whenever a Skill test must be made, two dice are rolled. If a Player's die roll is greater than his opponent's (or a given numeric Threshold), the test succeeds. The degree of success is defined by the Margin of Success (MoS), a value equal to the difference between the two rolls. If a Player's die roll is less than his opponent's, the test fails. The degree of failure is defined by the Margin of Failure (MoF), a value equal to the difference between the two rolls. If the two die rolls are equal, a draw occurs. Draws are won by the defender.

The Turn Sequence

Lightning Strike is played as a series of turns during which both Players may act. In each turn, Players will roll off to determine initiative. The Player who wins initiative decides which Player will go first. When both Players have completed their actions for the turn, another turn begins, with a new roll for initiative.

Initiative Phase: each Player rolls two dice — the high roll wins, reroll ties. The winner gains initiative for one full turn. At the beginning of the Main Phase, the Player who has initiative chooses which side must go first (if there are more than two Players, the winner of initiative decides the order in which the Players will go).

The Main Phase: this is where the vehicles move and act. The term **activation** is used to refer to a Unit's movement and actions, when it is actively doing something during the Main Phase, as opposed to sitting around. A Unit's activation comprises the period of time between a Player's choosing it and it finishing any movement or Actions it needs to execute for the turn; this may be, if the Player desires, no movement and no Action at all.

At any point in its activation (i.e. before, during or after its movement), a standard Unit may use any or all of its Actions. The number of Actions a Unit may spend each turn is listed on its datacard. For most non-ship Units, this number is one, although some (like CEGA's Wrath fighter) have two or more.

At the start of a Unit's activation, the Player may choose to retain, add or remove an Overthrust or Evasive counter (see *Movement*) from the Unit. The Unit then moves or acts as its owning Player desires. A standard Unit has one activation each turn and may thus only move its full MP allowance once per turn.

The End Phase: this Phase is very important for warships, but less so for other Units. Since spaceships are not covered in this demo game, ignore this phase. Command Points go back to zero. Any Action not spent by this point is lost.

A game may end when one side has completely cleared all opponents from the table, or when all sides but one concede victory. Depending on which scenario (if any) is being played, other conditions for victory may also exist, adding to or replacing the basic goal of completely destroying one's opponent(s).

Command Points

Command Points (CPs) represent the pilots reacting to or anticipating the enemy's actions. CPs are valid for one round only, but are refreshed during each new Initiative roll. A single Command Point may be used as an additional regular Action incurring no penalty. One Command Point can be used to buy a +2 modifier to a single Defense roll. A Command Point can be used to activate a Unit out of sequence — to get out of harm's way, for example. In the latter case, the Unit must not have been activated (i.e., moved) previously, and it cannot be moved again (though it may act if it has any Actions left). Finally, a Command Point may be used to turn a Unit around by up to 180 degrees, even if it has been activated before (and thus has no MP left). A Unit can use only one Command Point per round.

Movement

Each Unit has a Movement entry on its data card. This is the basic distance (in centimeters) that the Unit may move each turn. All Units may only move once per Phase. Units may move over and through each other without harm, with effectively no chance of a collision. Units may also end their movement anywhere, even atop other Units, although this may get awkward. A Unit that leaves the edge of the playing area is considered to have retreated from battle and is immediately out of the game.

Evasive maneuvers must be declared before the activation. This adds +3 to all defense rolls for that Unit for the combat round, but forbids it from taking any Action. Multiple "evasive" counters cannot be stacked. Exos cannot both evade and overthrust; Fighters can, but must move at least their basic Move.

Exo-Armors: an exo-armor may, during its activation, move anywhere within a circle centered on its starting position in that turn and whose radius in centimeters is equal to the Movement available that turn. For instance, an exo with Movement 10 cm that starts at point A may end up anywhere within 10 centimeters of point A; its path may be in any direction and in any shape. The exo-armor's facing is independent of its movement: the exo may fly 'backwards' for the entire battle, if its owner so desires. The only purpose of facing is to determine which side is the 'blind' (or rear) side. If an exo-armor is attacked while not activated, its current facing is used for targeting purposes. At the end of its activation, an exo-armor may be turned to face any direction, and will remain so until its next activation.

An exo-armor may use **Overthrust** movement. The use of Overthrust movement must be declared at the start of the exo-armor's activation, and an Overthrust counter is immediately placed on the Unit. The Overthrust movement allowance is the number after the slash in the datacard's Movement entry. Attacks and other Actions are made with a -3 modifier until the start of the exo-armor's next activation (this status is denoted by the Overthrust counter).

Space Fighters: under normal movement, a fighter may move a number of centimeters equal to its basic Movement. Fighters must pay for facing changes: they may make one turn of up to ninety degrees at any point for free; any additional turns cost half of the fighter's Movement. For example, a Lancer has a basic Movement of 12 — if it only turns ninety degrees, it may move 12 centimeters. If it wants to turn around completely, it may only move a total of 6 centimeters. A fighter cannot move in any direction like an exo-armor, but must instead move in the direction in which its nose is facing.

Fighters excel when throttles are opened wide. A fighter using Overthrust uses the Movement after the slash on its datacard. The fighter may make only one turn of up to ninety degrees at the start of its phase. It may make no other turns at all. An Overthrusting fighter must also move a minimum distance equal to its basic Movement. Fighters have no penalties for attacking or performing other Actions while using Overthrust movement, and so do not need to be marked with Overthrust counters.

Combat

The basic goal of maneuvering in battle is to get in a position to attack (and hopefully destroy) the enemy. All Units in Lightning Strike are assumed to have enough ammunition to last through a battle. Only some special weapons require ammunition to be tracked; rules for such weapons are provided with their descriptions. Units are also assumed to have sufficient fuel to last through the battle.

Line-of-Sight: space is big. There is seldom any cover worth speaking of, and it is generally not hard to get a clear shot at a target — provided one knows where it is. Line-of-Sight (LOS) is defined as the knowledge a Unit has of the exact location of its target, and the implied ability to launch an attack against it. If a Unit does not have LOS because its target is hiding behind a rock, dust cloud or another Unit, then the target may not be attacked until LOS is established. LOS is blocked if the target is in base-to-base contact with an intervening piece of terrain or a similarly intervening other Unit whose Size is equal to or greater than the Unit being targeted. Also see *Obstacles*, further on.

Firing Arcs: vehicles may only detect and target opponents that are within their weapons' firing arcs. There are several firing arcs: Forward (F), Right (R), Left (L), Rear (Rr), Fixed Forward (FF) and Turreted (T). The first four are 180-degree arcs; side arcs include directly forward and backward. The fixed forward arc is a 120-degree arc on a Unit's front facing. Turreted arcs span 360 degrees.

Range: measure the distance in centimeters from the center of the attacker's counter to the center of the target's. Units in physical or base-to-base contact are considered to be in close combat, and the range between them is considered to be zero (or "C" on the datacards). The Range column on the datacards provides range information for attacks in one or more range bands. These bands correspond with the bands that are in the Accuracy and Damage columns, giving an attack different Accuracy and Damage values depending on the range to the target. If a weapon does not have "C" as one of its range bands, then it cannot be used in close combat.

Avoidance: all Units have an Avoidance value, which defines their ability to dodge or otherwise avoid detection or being struck by an attack. Standard Units have fixed Avoidances, which act as modifiers applied to all of that Unit's defense rolls.

Defense Arcs: these are similar to fire arcs, but they are largely simplified. There are only two defense arcs, Front and Rear. For standard Units, each arc is a one-hundred-eighty-degree semicircle, covering the front half and rear half, respectively, of the Unit. Attacks that originate from the Unit's front use its Front defense stats, while attacks from the rear use the Rear defense stats.

Ranged Combat

Attack Rolls: combat is always harder under certain conditions, easier under others. Modifiers resolve this by introducing penalties and bonuses to each and every combat roll. Refer to the Attack Roll table for the complete procedure. Each "Attack" line on the datacard corresponds to one weapon; for each Action spent to attack a target, the Unit may choose one of those weapons to use. The only way to attack with more than one type of weapon in a single turn is by expending more Actions.

Defense Roll: targets rely on several modifiers to help them avoid shots. Refer to the Defense Roll table for the complete procedure. A target's Avoidance affects how easy it is to hit; it may vary depending on the facing of the target.

Close Combat

When two or more Units are in contact, they are considered to be in close combat. If one of the Units is smaller than the other, it may hide behind the larger Unit; LOS cannot be drawn to the hiding Unit if the larger Unit is between the smaller Unit and the Unit attempting to draw LOS. If the Units are the same Size, then any ranged attack on one of those Units has a chance of accidentally hitting the other; roll randomly to see which Unit is attacked, and then make the attack-defense roll as normal. A Unit that is in close combat with several other Units may choose which of the other Units with which it is in base-to-base contact it will attack, with no chance of striking the wrong target.

In close combat ('C' range), Units add the rating of the Close Combat Optimized Perk (if available) to their Attack and Defense rolls when fighting Units without this characteristic. If both the attacker and the target have this Perk, use the difference between the two ratings (if any) as the attack and defense bonus for the Unit with the higher Close Combat Optimized rating. A Close Combat Optimized Unit cannot be attacked from behind in close combat unless there is more than one attacker. It may always turn itself to face an incoming *close combat* attack; however, it must keep its new facing even after the attack ends, and it may not turn in this manner if there is currently an enemy in base-to-base contact with it.

Damage

An attack's damage is equal to the Damage Multiplier times the Margin of Success of the attack roll. The final damage is compared to the target's Protection rating. There are three values for each defense arc: the Stun Threshold, the Crippled Threshold and the Overkill Threshold. Furthermore, there are two possible types of damage, designated by letters next to the Damage Multipliers on the data cards. *Type* shows whether the attack is 'P' (Projectile) or 'E' (Energy). Certain Units are better protected against one type of damage than another: if a Unit is attacked with a weapon that does this type of damage, it gets a different Protection (listed beside 'Protection' on the Datacard).

If the damage is less than or equal to Stun, the hit was a glancing blow, and no important damage is incurred. If the damage is greater than the Stun Threshold, the Unit is Stunned. If the damage is greater than the Crippled Threshold, the Unit is Crippled. Finally, if the damage is greater than the Overkill Threshold, the Unit is destroyed outright. A Threshold number must be exceeded, not merely equaled, to have an effect: thus, a Unit that sustains damage equal to the Overkill Threshold is only Crippled, not Overkilled. Only the most severe of these possible damage results applies to the target: a Unit that sustains Crippling damage gains only a Crippled counter. It does not gain a Stunned counter, even though the damage was obviously enough to exceed the Stunned Threshold. Only one damage result can be inflicted from each hit.

Stunned Units are mildly shaken up by the attack, but not seriously damaged: place a Stun counter on the Unit. To remove it, the Unit must spend one Action. If, at any time, a Unit has two Stunned counters, both Stuns are immediately removed and replaced with a single Crippled counter. Note that a Stunned Unit is *not* required to remove the Stun counter if it does not want to: the only danger is that if the Unit gets Stunned again, it will become Crippled.

Crippled Units are permanently affected. They follow the 'rule of halves': values for Movement and weapon damage are all halved, rounding up. A Crippled counter may not be removed from a Unit; it stays until the Unit is dead (or repaired after the battle). If a Unit ever has two Crippled counters on it (from new damage or an accumulation of two Stuns), it is immediately Overkilled.

Overkilled Units are immediately eliminated from the game and should be removed from the board as they explode in a blinding ball of fire.

Obstacles

If Players decide to use Obstacles, each should get to place an equal number of Obstacles on the table, all assigned randomly. Obstacles block LOS but otherwise pose no threat to anyone, having no Actions or defenses. Each Obstacle marker is considered to actually be in scale with the table: any contact with an Obstacle results in that Unit being affected by it. Obstacles may not be destroyed.

Dust Clouds: These vast areas are filled with electromagnetic radiation-absorbing dust. Exo-armors and fighters inside a dust cloud get a +1 bonus to their Defense rolls.

Debris Fields: These are like dust clouds, but are made up of larger objects. In game terms, they work just like dust clouds, with one addition: Units entering a debris field must make a Skill check against a Threshold of 2. If the roll is failed, the Unit takes a single Crippled hit from a collision.

Rock Fields: These are dense manmade fields of depleted mining asteroids. They inflict a -2 penalty to Units attempting to fire into, out of, or through any part of the rock field. Units entering a rock field must make a Skill check against a Threshold of 2. If the roll is failed, the Unit takes a single Crippled hit from a collision.

Factory Complexes: These are huge arrays of robotic manufacturing complexes. They inflict a -2 penalty to Units attempting to fire into or through any part of the complex. They do not penalize Units that are firing from inside the complex, however. Factory complexes do not have any penalties associated with entering them.

Electronic Warfare

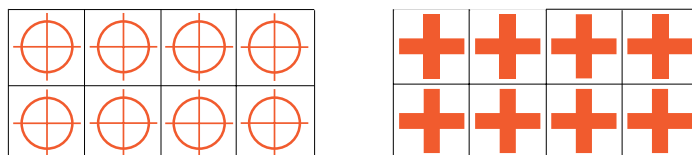
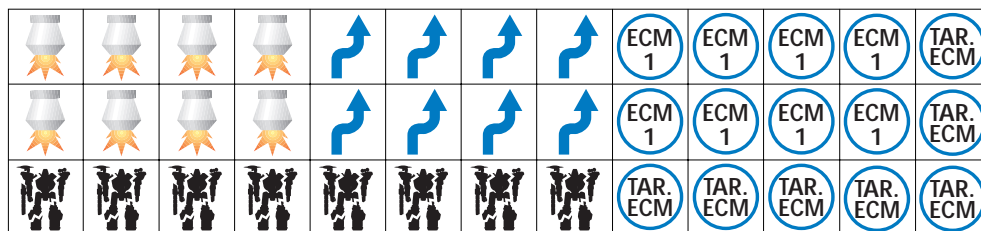
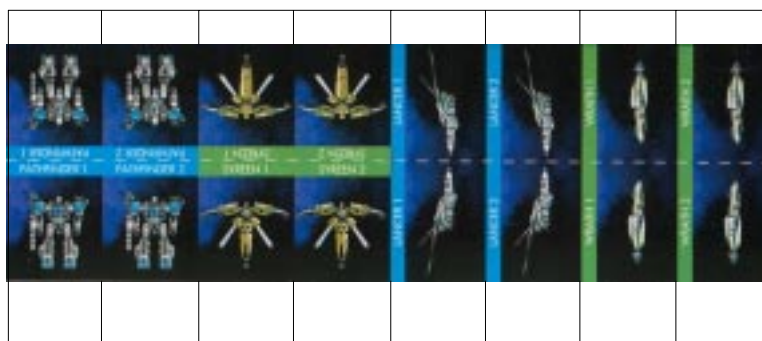
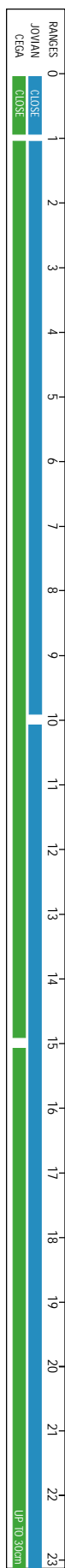
ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) systems consist of jammers, white noise generators and other devices that can only be effectively canceled out by dedicated ECCM (Electronic Counter Counter Measures) systems. Units equipped with ECM and ECCM are marked as such on their data cards.

It costs one Action to activate ECM, and it costs one Action every turn thereafter to maintain it. A Skill roll is made, and the rating of the ECM is added to the result: this is the ECM's Threshold. Place an ECM counter with the Threshold near the broadcasting Unit; no Units on the opposing side may use Command Points. If the Unit cannot pay an Action to maintain its ECM (if, for instance, it is Stunned and wishes to remove the Stun counter), the ECM counter is removed at the end of its Action phase. If a Unit that is activating or maintaining ECM is Crippled, its ECM counter is removed, and it may no longer use ECM. If several Units on the same side use ECM at the same time, only the highest gets a counter.

Targeted ECM: instead of using ECM to create broad-based communications disruption, an electronics-warfare Unit can also attempt to interfere with a single target on a deeper level: ECM can also help a friendly Unit by masking its location. By spending one action, the ECM-using Unit may nominate a single target (including itself). An opposed Skill roll is made: both Units add their Electronics; the attacker also adds its ECM, and the target may add its ECCM, if desired. The target may decline to roll, using zero as its result. If the attacker wins, place the counter next to the Unit being affected. If the target is friendly, it gains a +2 bonus to its Avoidance while the Targeted ECM counter is in play.

If the target is an enemy, it receives a -2 penalty to its Attack rolls, may not use ECM or spend Command Points. These effects last as long as the Targeted ECM counter is in play. Any number of Targeted ECM counters may be present at any time, though they are not cumulative. In each End Phase, every Unit with Targeted-ECM counters make a Skill roll against 4 for each ECM counter (friendly or hostile) it has: if the roll succeeds, remove the counter. A Unit with ECCM may spend an Action to remove an enemy ECM counter on it without having to roll, but is unable to use ECCM to help other Units.

Electronic Counter Counter Measures (ECCM): Units with ECCM can use it to dispel the effects of hostile ECM. For each Action spent on ECCM, a Skill roll is made, and the Unit's ECCM rating is added to the result. If the total is higher than the ECM Threshold, the ECM counter is removed. If the total is lower than the Threshold, the attempt fails and the ECM counter remains. If the roll ties the ECM Threshold, the ECM Threshold is halved (rounding down) but remains (the counter should be changed). Crippled Units may not use ECCM.



JOVIAN FORCES

| PATHFINDER | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|---------|-------------|
| TV: | 8 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | +2 | MOVE: | 10/20 | FACING: Exo |
| AVOIDANCE: 0/-1 PROTECT: 4/10/12, 4/10/12 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: Close Combat (2), ECCM (4) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| P. Cannon | F | C/10/25 | +1/+1/0 | 4/3/2 E |

| PATHFINDER | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|---------|-------------|
| TV: | 8 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | +2 | MOVE: | 10/20 | FACING: Exo |
| AVOIDANCE: 0/-1 PROTECT: 4/10/12, 4/10/12 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: Close Combat (2), ECCM (4) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| P. Cannon | F | C/10/25 | +1/+1/0 | 4/3/2 E |

| LANCER | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| TV: | 8 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 15/45 | FACING: Fighter | |
| AVOIDANCE: -1 -3 PROTECT.: 4/6/11, 4/6/11 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: ECM (3), ECCM (4), Missile Defense (2) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| Light Missiles | FF | C/10/25 | 0/0/1 | 3 E Mis |

| LANCER | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| TV: | 8 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 15/45 | FACING: Fighter | |
| AVOIDANCE: -1 -3 PROTECT.: 4/6/11, 4/6/11 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: ECM (3), ECCM (4), Missile Defense (2) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| Light Missiles | FF | C/10/25 | 0/0/1 | 3 E Mis |

CEGA FORCES

| SYREEN | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|-------------|------------|
| TV: | 7 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 15/25 | FACING: Exo | |
| AVOIDANCE: 0/-2 PROTECT: 3/6/11, 3/6/11 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: Close Combat (1), ECCM (3) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| ACDLS Laser | F | C/15/30 | +1/0/0 | 4/3/2 E |

| SYREEN | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|-------------|------------|
| TV: | 7 | ACTIONS: | 1 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 15/25 | FACING: Exo | |
| AVOIDANCE: 0/-2 PROTECT: 3/6/11, 3/6/11 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: Close Combat (1), ECCM (3) | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| ACDLS Laser | F | C/15/30 | +1/0/0 | 4/3/2 E |

| WRAITH | | | | |
|--|-----|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| TV: | 10 | ACTIONS: | 2 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 10/35 | FACING: Fighter | |
| AVOIDANCE: -1 -3 PROTECT.: 6/12/18/6/12/18 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: none | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| P. Cannon | FF | C/15/30 | +1/0/0 | 3/2/1E |

| WRAITH | | | | |
|--|-----|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| TV: | 10 | ACTIONS: | 2 | SIZE: 3 |
| E-TRONICS: | 0 | MOVE.: 10/35 | FACING: Fighter | |
| AVOIDANCE: -1 -3 PROTECT.: 6/12/18/6/12/18 | | | | |
| PERKS/FLAWS: none | | | | |
| ATTACKS | ARC | RANGE | ACC. | DAM. NOTES |
| P. Cannon | FF | C/15/30 | +1/0/0 | 3/2/1E |