Skyships of Nova Avalon

The skies are filled with Skyships of all kinds and conflict between the powers is most often fought in the skies between their lands. Pirates and privateers swoop down upon merchantmen and warships alike to destroy and plunder all that they can, to build their own fleets and carve out their niche in the world. Power stems from the thunder of your cannons, the skill of your crew and the reputation of your vessel

The rules here will provide for aerial combat – using the usual rules-set – and for the design and building of your own vessels. The rules allow for treating these Skyships as 'characters', as well as vessels. The truly famous ships are able to become named and feared in their own right regardless of who is at the helm.

Basics

The Skyship combat rules follow many of the same basics as character combat. Skyship combat, like character combat, can take place on a grid with each ship occupying one or more squares on that grid and moving around it in order to gain advantage, attack or to ram one another. The scale of squares in aerial combat is abstracted, but is assumed to be approximately ten feet per square, twice the size of normal character combat.

Chant of Sky Gypsy Pirate Ship

To the mast nail our flag it is dark as the grave, Or the death which it bears while it sweeps o'er the wave;

Let our deck clear for action, our guns be prepared; Be the boarding-axe sharpened, the scimetar bared:

Set the canisters ready, and then bring to me, For the last of my duties, the powder-room key.

It shall never be lowered, the black flag we bear; If the sea be denied us, we sweep through the air.

Unshared have we left our last victory's prey; It is mine to divide it, and yours to obey.

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Fighting Space

Each square in Skyship-scale combat is approximately ten feet across instead of five feet as you find with the character combat. All Skyships, regardless of their actual size, need to take up at least one of these spaces which actually represents a cube of space, ten feet on each side. Skyships are three-dimensional and actually take up more space than is represented by that single square/cube but this complication is ignored for the sake of simplicity, as is altitude unless you want to use the optional rule for it.

A medium-sized vessel can be up to ten feet wide and twenty feet long as well as being up to ten feet high.

A large-sized vessel can be up to twenty feet wide and thirty feet long, as well as being up to twenty feet high.

A huge-sized vessel can be up to thirty feet wide and forty feet long, as well as being up to thirty feet high.

A gargantuan-sized vessel can be up to forty feet wide and seventy feet long, as well as being up to thirty feet high.

A colossal-sized vessel can be up to fifty feet wide and a hundred feet long, or more, as well as being up to fifty feet high.

Skyship Combat Sequence

Skyship combat is played out in rounds, as with character combat. Each round, each Skyship acts in turn according to its initiative, completing the ship and crew actions before play passes to the next Skyship in sequence.

Every Skyship begins the battle flat-footed, once it has taken an action it is no longer considered to be flat-footed.

The Games Master determines which Skyships can see each other at the start of the battle. He may require Perception rolls to detect vessels which are in or behind cloud, hidden by illusions or otherwise rendered invisible.

If some ships are aware of enemy vessels and others, or all of them, aren't then a surprise round occurs before regular combat begins. Only ships aware of each other may act during the round with initiative rolled normally to determine action order. Skyships which aren't aware don't get to act or to roll initiative during this surprise turn.

Any Skyships which haven't rolled initiative now do so. The first regular round begins.

When every Skyship has had a turn then a new round begins with initiative remaining with the highest initiative vessel.

Combat Statistics

Several crucial combat statistics determine how well a vessel performs in combat. These statistics are summarized here:

Attack

Each attack roll represents an attempt for the crew of one vessel to strike another vessel with their weaponry. Most Skyships are armed with ranged weapons which are aimed by gunners.

When an Skyship makes an attack roll 1d20 and add the modifiers listed below as appropriate. There may be other modifiers from other aspects of the ship and crew and these will be noted in their entries. An Skyship attack roll is:

1d20 + Gunner's Ranged Attack Bonus + Range Penalty + Skyship Size Modifier + Miscellaneous Bonuses.

Gunner's Ranged Attack Bonus: Generic crew have a ranged attack bonus dependent upon their skill, individual characters may also direct guns and use their own bonus.

Range Penalty: Each range increment beyond the first applies a cumulative -2 penalty to attack rolls.

Size Modifier: Larger ships are more ungainly, though they make up for it by having more guns and more assistance for their gunners. A Medium or Large Skyship applies no modifier, a Huge ship has a penalty of -2, a Gargantuan vessel of -4 and a Colossal vessel of -8.

Criticals and Automatic Misses: As with normal combat a roll of '20' has a chance of being a critical hit while a roll of '1' automatically misses.

Defense

An Skyship's defense shows how difficult it is to hit in combat. This is the target for the attack roll of enemy vessels. Most Skyships are quite easy to hit, given their size, so most vessels rely on armor and magic to deflect or absorb strikes, rather than on speed and agility. An Skyship's defense depends partly on its inherent qualities and partly on the skill of the man at the wheel.

10 + Skyship Size Modifier + Pilot's Total Reflex Save + Miscellaneous.

Skyship Size Modifier: The bigger the vessel, the easier it is to hit. Medium and Large vessels get no penalty, Huge vessels get a -2 penalty, Gargantuan a -4 penalty and Colossal vessels a -8 penalty to defense.

Reflex Bonus: The pilot's Reflex save is added to the Skyship's defense.

Crew

The ability of the crew on board a vessel has a massive impact on its capability and effectiveness both in terms of crew numbers and their expertise. Crew are rated in the following ways:

Quality: This describes the expertise and ability of the crew involved.

Skill: This gives a generic bonus to rolls made in appropriate skills for that crewman.

Pilot Ship Defense Bonus: If the crewman is the pilot then this is the bonus he provides to the ship's defense. This is also used as the default save roll for the crew.

Gunner Attack Bonus: This is the bonus the crewman gets to attack if he is a gunner.

Crew Quality	Crew Skill	Pilot Bonus	Gunner
Untrained	+0	+0	+0
Green	+5	+3	+1
Regular	+6	+4	+2
Veteran	+7	+4	+3
Elite	+8	+5	+4
Ace	+9	+5	+5

Damage

When an Skyship hits with a weapon – or a member of its crew does – it deals damage according to the type of weapon and damage is deducted from the vessel's current hit points. If an Skyship is reduced to zero hit points, it's in trouble.

Skyship Armor

Skyships are designed to take punishment, rather than to avoid it. Skyship armor tends to deflect and absorb damage as a result. Almost all Skyships have damage reduction and so ignore the first few points of damage done to them. Anything over that is applied to their hit points.

Damage Control Crews

Crew can be assigned to damage control duties, patching up the ship temporarily while it's in battle. With a successful DC 15 Profession (sailor) check damage control crew can restore one temporary hit point for each crewman assigned to the task. This can only go up to the vessel's original hit point total and cannot go beyond. These crewmen are, of course, not free for other duties such as firing guns or manning the sails.

Hit Points

Hit Points represent the overall structural integrity of the Skyship and is an abstraction of how much varied punishment it can take before being rendered inoperable and starting to break up. The Skyship's hit points decrease as it gets struck by weapons, rams into other Skyships, runs aground against rocky islands, catches fire, weathers storms and otherwise degrades over time.

At zero hit points an Skyship is disabled.

At negative hit points an Skyship begins to break up.

When an Skyship reaches a certain negative hit points total – depending on its size – it is destroyed. The negative hit points at which this happens is given below.

Ship Size	Destruction Point
Medium	-20
Large	-40
Huge	-60
Gargantuan	-80
Colossal	-100

Disabled

When an Skyship is reduced to exactly zero hit points it is disabled. The Skyship can now only make one move or attack in each turn, not both. It cannot take any full-round actions. If it does anything that could be construed as a strain on its frame or systems it takes one hit point of damage and begins breaking apart. A disabled Skyship reduces its defense by five and cannot add the pilot's reflex save to its defense. Repairs that raise the vessel above zero hit points make it fully functional again, at least temporarily.

Breaking Apart

When an Skyship drops into negative hit points it begins to break apart. In this state the Skyship is immobile, helpless and beyond repair, even temporary patching. A ship that is breaking apart loses one hit point every round until it is destroyed.

Destroyed

When an Skyship's current hit points reach the destruction point in negative hit points, the ship loses integrity and breaks into pieces. The time it takes for the vessel to go from breaking apart to destroyed may be enough for the crew to evacuate, if there's enough time and enough space on a ship's boat for them all.

Critical Hits

Critical hits against Skyships work just as they do against characters. When you make an attack roll and get a natural 20 you roll again to confirm it and, if it is confirmed (rolls what would be a normal hit) then critical damage takes place. This is a multiplier, at least x2, of the normal damage of the weapon. In addition to this effect critical hits against Skyships can have some spectacular extra effects.

Critical Hit Roll	Extra Effect
01-30	Normal critical hit, no extra effect.
31-50	Crew Hit
51-60	Armament Hit
61-70	Propulsion Hit
71-80	Floatation Hit
81-95	Cargo Hit
96-00	Fire!

Normal Critical Hit: The critical hit only has the normal effect, there are no special circumstances.

Crew Hit: For every five full points of damage that the attack does, factoring in critical damage, a crew member or

passenger is killed or incapacitated. Characters are immune to this effect.

Armament Hit: One of the ship's guns is disabled or destroyed by the attack. Pick one at random. If the weapon uses powder or other explosives, roll a six-sided dice, on a six the weapon's magazine explodes doing a critical hit with its normal damage to the vessel. Roll again for special critical hit effects on this table.

Floatation Hit: Whatever it is that keeps the vessel aloft is damaged. If you're using the height rules its ceiling (maximum height) is reduced by one. Once this has taken three criticals the vessel will fall out of the sky.

Propulsion Hit: The vessel's propulsion system is damaged, dropping its speed by one. If reduced to zero the vessel is dead in the air and cannot move or be steered. As a sitting duck it gets no bonus to its defense from its pilot.

Cargo Hit: 500 lbs of cargo are destroyed or rendered worthless by the hit.

Fire: A fire starts in the vessel doing 1d6 damage starting the following turn. Two crew members can be assigned to put it out and need to make a DC 15 Profession (sailor) check to do so. For each turn that the fire is not put out it spreads, gaining a D6 in damage and needing an extra crewman to put it out as well as increasing the DC by 1.

Conditions

As with characters, any number of conditions can afflict a vessel and reduce its effectiveness.

Blinded: Crew and look-outs have been dazed or dazzled by some effect, meaning that the ship has a 50% miss chance when attacking so long as this persists.

Breaking Apart: The vessel is at negative hit points. It cannot take actions, cannot be repaired and loses one hit point each round – or when hit by a damaging attack – until it reaches its maximum negative hit points, at which point it breaks into pieces.

Dazed: The crew are momentarily stunned and can take no actions, but suffer no penalty to defense.

Destroyed: The ship is destroyed and violently breaks apart. Anyone still on board takes 10d6 points of damage and is thrown into the air.

Entangled: An entangled Skyship takes a -2 penalty to attack and defense and, if anchored to a larger object, cannot move.

Flat-Footed: An Skyship that has not yet acted in combat is flat-footed. A flat-footed Skyship does not add its pilots bonus to its defense.

Grappled: When grappled an Skyship cannot move. It can attack, attempt to break free or perform other actions. It cannot add its pilot's bonus to its defense.

Helpless: An Skyship that is brought to negative hit points or whose crew is destroyed is considered helpless and its defense is reduced by five and gets no pilot defense bonus.

Immobilized: An immobilized ship is immobile, but not helpless, usually gummed up in plants or grappled to a larger ship. It takes a -4 penalty to defense and cannot add its pilot defense bonus.

Shaken: All passengers and crew members take a -2 penalty on attack, save and skill checks.

Stunned: All passengers and crew members lose their Dexterity bonus, drop what they are holding and can take no attack or move actions as well as getting a -2 penalty to defense.

Movement

Movement at the Skyship scale is more abstracted than in character combat and determines relative speeds rather than actual speeds. This is the speed of a ship during its combat maneuvers and doesn't represent its full cruising speed.

Turning

Skyships change direction forty-five degrees at a time, meaning that they can move on the diagonal across the grid. Skyships are not the fastest vehicles to turn and so each change of direction costs one of their movement speed. They must move at least half of their speed in order to make a second forty-five degree turn and may not turn more than ninety degrees in a turn under normal circumstances.

On a game grid ship turns are pivoted around the front of the ship.

The Wind

Determine the direction of the wind by rolling a d8.

1	2	3
4	*	5
6	7	8

Ships powered by sails are affected by the wind. Increase their speed by one when moving with the wind, normal speed when side on to the wind and halved when sailing into it.

Ships that are no longer under power move one space with the wind on their turn.

Initiative

At the beginning of a battle every Skyship rolls a d20 and adds its pilot's Reflex to determine its initiative. An Skyship without a pilot gets a bonus of +0, but still gets to roll initiative. Each Skyship then acts in turn from highest initiative to lowest. If two ships are tied for initiative, compare the pilot's Reflex scores and the highest goes first. If they are still the same, roll a die to determine who goes first.

At the start of a battle, before an Skyship has taken its turn, it's considered to be flat-footed.

New vessels joining a battle roll initiative and slot into the turn order according to their roll.

Skyship Combat

Splintering wood, rams, cannons, ballistae, explosions, fire, boarding actions… there's no point to having sweeping Skyships plying the skies if you have none of these things and that means violent conflict in the skies. That's a lot to cover and many situations cannot be covered in their entirety, requiring a lot of improvisation and attentiveness on the part of the Games Master.

The Combat Round

As with movement and much else, combat turns in Skyship scale are even more abstracted than in character combat but they still amount to approximately six seconds of action in which the vessels move, fire and perform other actions.

Each round begins with the Skyship that has the highest initiative taking its actions – movement, combat and so forth – followed by the Skyship with the next highest initiative and so on until every Skyship has completed its actions. This cycle then repeats until the victor is found.

Actions

Each vessel may make one attack action and one movement action in a turn. Alternatively they may make a full-round action which uses both of these actions. Actions may only be taken if there are crew – or passengers – available to take them.

There are no attacks of opportunity in Skyship combat.

Attack Actions

Aid Another: The Skyship can aid a friendly target against an enemy by acting as a distraction. So long as the Skyship is within weapon range of the enemy vessel it can provide its ally with a +2 bonus to attack and defense, but cannot cause harm or damage itself. These bonuses are not cumulative for multiple helpers.

Ranged Attack: The Skyship can attack with every weapon for which it has crew and every weapon that can reach an available target.

Escape a Grapple: See the equipment/weapon section for rules on grappling and escaping from grapples.

Feint: The commander of the vessels makes a Bluff check against the commander of the opposing vessel. If successful then, on the following turn the enemy ship does not get their pilot's Reflex bonus to their defense.

Grapple Another Ship: See the equipment/weapon section for rules on grappling and escaping from grapples.

Total Defense: Instead of attacking the vessel enters a series of evasive manoeuvres designed to ward off attacks. It gains +4 defense for one round, starting and ending with the vessel's action.

Fighting Defense: The vessel fights defensively, hoping to ward off enemy attacks but to get in some lucky shots of its own. It gains +2 defense but -4 attack for one round, starting and ending with the vessel's action.

Total Attack: The Skyship goes all out in attack, leaving itself open to counterattack. The vessel gains +4 attack but it's considered flat-footed for defense and reduces that total by -5.

Exposed Attack: The Skyship lowers its defenses in the hopes of getting in a well-placed attack. The vessel gains +2 attack, but reduces its defense by -4.

Prepare a Hazard: If properly equipped the Skyship can dispense aerial mines or other defensive hazards to ward off pursuers or attackers.

Move Actions

Damage Control: Detailing men to make temporary repairs is considered a

Optional Rule: Altitude

To keep things simple Skyship combat is normally considered to occur at the same altitude. If you want to include more complicated movement including altitude then you can use these optional rules. A ship can be at any height from -6 to +6 (you can mark this with dice of different colors, no dice means the ship is at level zero).

A ship changing height loses two speed and changes height by one. A ship can crash-dive or power-ascend by using all its movement, gaining or losing two altitude.

The higher ship in an engagement gains a +1 bonus to attack and defense. It also boosts the range of its weapons by 10 ft for each level of altitude it is higher than the target. The lower ship in an engagement reduces the range of its weapons by 10 ft for each level of altitude it is lower than the target.

move action, though the vessel may still move provided there are enough spare crew to man the propulsion system.

Move: Provided there are enough crew to man the propulsion system the vessel may move up to its speed.

Ram: A ship may deliberately ram another vessel on its move action. Each ship pilot makes a skill check and compares totals. If the attacker succeeds then the opposing ship is rammed and takes damage, otherwise it manages to avoid the blow and movement continues. Movement stops instantly when a ram occurs. For damage, see 'ram' under armaments.

Signal Another Vessel: Flags and other signals may be used to send a message to another vessel, this takes two crewmen which must come off from other duties.

Full-Round Actions

Surge Forward: With full cruising sale deployed or the propulsion systems fired into overdrive, the vessel can move at up to three times its normal speed, but may not turn or attack.

Withdraw: An Skyship may attempt to withdraw from combat by setting sale and moving as fast as it can from the scene. The Skyship may not attack, may only make one forty-five degree turn but moves at double its normal speed.

Make Ready: Remaining still and observing the play of the battle the vessel may add a +2 bonus to its initiative; this accumulates through multiple uses of this action.

Boarding Action: If two vessels are abutted against each other in a grapple or a ram then one of the vessels may launch a boarding action. Neither vessel may move or attack while the boarding action takes place and it is played out either using the mass combat rules or as normal character combat on a game board based upon the ships in question.

Free Actions

Shift: Any vessel may shift its position by one square to port or starboard as a free action, provided it is under power.

Avoid Hazard: Avoiding hazards, such as mines, takes no action but takes place on the movement action.

Skyships

Skyships are built by defining a series of choices for how they are built and then filling that hull with equipment and crew based on the amount of space that the hull can accommodate. The steps to creating an Skyship are as follows:

- Choose what size the hull is.
- Choose what material the hull is made from.
- Choose what propulsion system the hull is driven by.
- Choose what floatation system the hull is suspended by.
- Fill out the Skyship with weapons and equipment.

- Apply an Skyship Template.
- Calculate the final statistics.

Size

The most important aspect of any vessel is its size. Size determines basic hit points and how much space the vessel has to be crammed with equipment and crew. These can all be

Size	Base Hit Points	Space	Cost
Medium	20	5	500 GP
Large	40	15	5,000 GP
Huge	120	30	10,000 GP
Gargantuan	240	60	25,000 GP
Colossal	440	120	75,000 GP

Hull

The shape of a hull helps determine how much space is available, modified from the raw space given according to size and can help to determine how effective the ship is in different roles.

Shape	Penalties	Bonuses
'Barrel'	-	-
Wedge	Reduce Space by 1/4/16/25/36	Increase speed by 1.
Flying Ship	Reduce Space by 1/4/16/25/36	Additional 45 degree turn at the end of movement.
Fortress	Halve speed, -5 Defense.	Increase Space by 50%, add 50% hit points.
Tall Ship	Only make one 45 degree turn per move. -1 Defense.	Broadside attacks get a +1 bonus to attack.
Open Frame	Reduce Hit Points by Half	Enemy attacks have a 10% miss chance.

Barrel: A 'barrel' is the standard shape for a ship. An enclosed hull of normal design with no outstanding features or capabilities.

Wedge: A 'wedge' is a pointed shape that cuts through the air more easily than the standard design, allowing it to move faster. Increase cost by one tenth of size cost.

Flying Ship: A design based on seagoing vessels, this is a flat-top, open decked Skyship which can also land on water and sail like a normal waterborne vessel if need be. The slung design enables it to turn quickly through the air, swaying on its central axis.

Fortress: A boxy lump of construction, the fortress is not designed to move fast – if at all – merely to float in place and take – and dish out – punishment. Securing an area. Increase cost by half of size cost.

Tall Ship: A tall ship is a floating lump, extended down and relatively thin, providing more room down its sides for more cannon to enable a devastating broadside from many levels of cannon. Increase cost by one quarter of size cost.

Open Frame: An open framed vessel is a tangle of beams, nets and frames to which various components are lashed or fitted without the benefit of an enclosed hull. Relatively weak and heart-stoppingly scary to sail in, open-framed vessels are, at least, light and relatively cheap. Decrease size cost by half.

Material

The substance that a vessel is made from can have an effect on its capabilities, most particularly its defenses.

Light Wooden Construction: This vessel is made from lighter, more flexible wood and has a relatively scant construction. This makes it lighter and faster but more vulnerable to harm. Damage Reduction 0, reduce cost by one tenth of basic size cost. Increase speed by one.

Wooden construction: This is the standard degree of construction, heavy wood, well fastened together. Damage Reduction 5. No modification to cost.

Reinforced Wooden Construction: This vessel has been constructed with heavy use or combat in mind. The beams are reinforced and the hull is studded with bolts and metal bands to reinforce it and to help hold it together. Damage Reduction 6. Increase cost by one tenth of size cost.

Ironclad: The Skyship is protected by plates of iron, or other metal, clamped and bolted to its surface, surrounding it in an impenetrable layer of armor. Damage Reduction 8, reduce speed by one, increase cost by half of size cost.

SkyStone: The vessel is constructed or carved from an outcrop of floating stone, the same material that suspends the islands and nations of the world. As such it requires no floatation device and if destroyed merely breaks into a mass of floating boulders. Damage Reduction 10, reduce speed by two, add the basic size cost on again.

Propulsion

The propulsion system of the vessel determines how fast it can move. Various methods of propulsion exist for different kinds of vessels and each have their own strengths and weaknesses for the vessel that they're attached to.

Sails

Sails project in all directions from the vessel and have the advantage of not taking up any interior space, leaving more room free for cargo and other concerns. On the downside sails are fairly crew intensive, vulnerable and subject to the capricious whims of the prevailing winds.

Cost: 50 gp, **Crew:** 1, **Basic Speed:** 3, **Space:** 0.

- A medium vessel requires one 'unit' of sails.
- A large vessel requires four.
- A huge vessel requires eight.
- A gargantuan vessel requires sixteen.
- A colossal vessel requires thirty-two.
- Add half as many sails again for each +1 speed up to a maximum of +3.

Ornithopter Wings

Great mechanical or magical flapping wings, ornithopter wings can propel a vessel with great rapidity and grace, mimicking the actions of flying creatures in a number of configurations from those that resemble bird wings to those that look more like the sweeping fins of fish.

Cost: Magical 122,000, mechanical 5,000 gp, **Crew:** Magical 0, mechanical 2, **Basic Speed:** 5, **Space:** 1.

- A medium vessel requires one 'unit' of ornithopter wings.
- A large vessel requires two.
- A huge vessel requires four.
- A gargantuan vessel requires eight.
- A colossal vessel requires sixteen.
- Add half as many ornithopter wings again for each +1 speed to a maximum of +3.

Mechanical ornithopter wings consume 500 lbs (one space) of fuel every unit, every four hours of flight.

Wing-Oars

Either one great oar or a pair of smaller oars protruding through both sides of the vessel, wing oars are large, swooping, feather shaped oars which can be turned to cut through the air or to scoop great wingfuls of it to propel the vessel, powered by human effort.

Cost: 10 gp, **Crew:** 1, **Basic Speed:** 1, **Space:** 1.

- A medium vessel requires one 'unit' of oars.
- A large vessel requires four units of oars.
- A huge vessel requires nine units of oars.
- A gargantuan vessel requires sixteen units of oars.
- Add the same number of oars for each +1 speed, up to a maximum of +3.

Flight Enchantment

A vessel can be enchanted so that it inherently flies. This is a relatively weak enchantment, given the weight of most vessels and must be combined with a separate enchantment to make it float, but it is otherwise a very robust way to make a vessel capable of flight. An enchanted vessel is its own propulsion system and this means that it cannot be prevented from flying without being destroyed.

Cost: 30,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Basic Speed:** 1, **Space:** 0.

- A medium vessel requires one enchantment.
- A large vessel requires two enchantments.
- A huge vessel requires three enchantments.
- A gargantuan vessel requires four enchantments.
- A colossal vessel requires five enchantments.
- Buy the same number of enchantments for each +1 speed up to a maximum of speed 6.

Harnessed Animal

Flying animals, even elementals, can be used to pull Skyships through the sky. The pulling animal needs to be the size, or the equivalent size, of the vessel that it is pulling and it is limited to its normal flying speed and may not run or otherwise move any faster.

Four medium beasts is equivalent to one large one, four large to one huge, four huge to one gargantuan, four gargantuan to one colossal.

The beast will cost its CR squared and then multiplied by 1,000 gold pieces.

The harnessing equipment itself is priced below.

Cost: 100 gp, **Crew:** 1, **Basic Speed:** N/A, **Space:** 1.

This is the cost for the basic harness attachments and the number of animal handlers required to maintain the animal and control it. If the beast is not controlled then it will travel randomly.

- Medium vessels require one harness attachment.
- Large vessels require two.
- Huge vessels require four.

- Gargantuan vessels require six.
- Colossal vessels require eight.

Floatation

The floatation system is what suspends the Skyship in the void between the islands. Some Skyships require no additional floatation as their inherent nature suspends them in the ether. Others require one device or another to keep them in the air.

Levistones

Fragments of magically intensified island rock, these boulders are strapped to the vessel or placed on pontoons to make the vessel buoyant in the atmosphere. The flow of magic to these stones must be carefully controlled in order to keep the vessel level.

Cost: 1,000 gp, **Crew:** 1. **Space:** 0/1. (At least one space must be used up regardless, for the control system).

If placed on pontoons the levistones take up no space, if placed internally to the vessel the levistones do take up space, but have more protection. Levistones on pontoons take four critical hits to be destroyed, internal levistones take six.

- Medium vessels require one levistone.
- Large vessels require two levistones.
- Huge vessels require four levistones.
- Gargantuan vessels require eight levistones.
- Colossal vessels require sixteen levistones.

Tempest Jars

Tempest Jars are large bulbs of magically toughened glass which are used to bind air-elementals into service as floatation devices for vessels. Each scale of jar is different and priced differently for each type.

- Medium Tempest Jar: **Cost:** 10,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 1.
- Large Tempest Jar: **Cost:** 25,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 3.
- Huge Tempest Jar: **Cost:** 50,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 7.
- Gargantuan Tempest Jar: **Cost:** 200,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 15.
- Colossal Tempest Jar: **Cost:** 800,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 30

Gasbags

One of the cheapest options, with good reason. Gasbags extend above the Skyship and are filled with lighter than air gas, keeping the vessel at neutral buoyancy. Gasbags are incredibly vulnerable, a single floatation critical hit is sufficient to burst the bag and cause the vessel to catastrophically descend. The bags are generally covered with netting which allows crewmen to crawl over the bags, maintaining them and making small repairs as necessary.

Cost: 50 gp, **Crew:** 1, **Space:** 0.

- A medium vessel requires a single gasbag.

Cannons

Name	Cost	Damage	Spaces	Range	Crew	Ready (Standard Actions)
Cannon	8,000 gp	10d10	5	300 ft.	5	6 rounds
Demi-Cannon	6,000 gp	8d10	4	250 ft.	4	5 rounds
Culverin	4,000 gp	6d10	3	200 ft.	3	4 rounds
Small Culverin	2,000 gp	4d10	2	150 ft.	2	3 rounds
Swivel Gun	1,000 gp	2d10	1	100 ft.	1	2 rounds
Barking Dragon	20,000 gp	20d10	10	500 ft.	10	10 rounds
Flametongue	8,000 gp	4d6 fire	4	50 ft total.	3	4 rounds
Grapnel Gun	1,200 gp	1d10	1	50 ft total.	2	3 rounds

- A large vessel requires two gasbags.
- A huge vessel requires four gasbags.
- A gargantuan vessel requires eight gasbags.
- A colossal vessel requires sixteen gasbags.

Chutesails

A chutesail is a large, horizontal sail of billowing fabric, crudely shaped like a sail. These sails are big and broad and catch winds and thermals, keeping the ship aloft. This is fast, (raising the Skyship's speed by 1) but crew intensive, requiring lots of men to keep it working.

Cost: 100 gp, **Crew:** 2, **Space:** 0.

- A medium vessel requires a single chutesail.
- A large vessel requires two.
- A huge vessel requires four.
- A gargantuan vessel requires eight.
- A colossal vessel requires sixteen.

Levitation Enchantment

A levitation enchantment suspends the vessel with magic. It cannot be destroyed save when the vessel itself is destroyed and requires no crew, it is an inherent quality of the ship itself.

Cost: 12,000 gp, **Crew:** 0, **Space:** 0.

- A medium vessel requires one enchantment.
- A large vessel requires two enchantments.
- A huge vessel requires three enchantments.
- A gargantuan vessel requires four enchantments.
- A colossal vessel requires five enchantments.

Weapons and Equipment
Armaments

Ships need weapons in order to defend themselves against attack. While magical weapons are employed, they are also extremely expensive. Mechanical weapons – such as ballistae – also linger, but are outdated and not as capable as cannon and other powder weapons.

Cannon: A heavy bronze cannon firing a 36 to 50 pound shot, also known as a basilisk. These usually can only be placed on the bow mount of very large galleys.

Demi-Cannon: Also known as the cannon-perier, it fires a 24 pound shot. This is the heaviest weapon that can be fired from the side of a ship, and a large ship at that.

Culverin: The culverin is a medium cannon firing an 18 lb shot. These are the most common large weapon mounted broadside on sailing ships.

Small Culverin: Also known as the demi-culverin, this weapon fires a 10 lb shot and is suitable for mounting on many ships, including on the top deck.

Swivel-gun: Swivel-guns, which come in varieties also known as falcons, falconets, or robinets, can take a 1-2 pound solid shot or be filled with a dozen pistol shots. They do 2d10 damage with solid shot, but when loaded with pistol shot do 4d6 damage, less 2 points per range increment, in a 10×10 square. A gunner applies their Dexterity bonus to hit instead of their Int bonus with a swivel-gun.

Barking Dragon: The barking dragon is an enormous, front-firing cannon that fires immense shot, capable of splintering and annihilating enemy vessels. It is a beast of a cannon primarily used for siege work and which requires a great deal of resources from any vessel that carries it.

Flametongue: The flametongue fires a gout of flammable fluid, typically oil, in a jet of flame which can stick to enemy vessels and set them aflame. Any hit with a flametongue that scores a critical automatically causes the fire result.

Grapnel Gun: Grapnel guns are very small cannon loaded with hooks which are strung with chains. These chains can be used to string two vessels together or to allow boarders to climb across to the enemy vessel. Boarding actions will be covered in more detail in the mass combat rules. When two vessels are grappled the larger vessel drags the smaller vessel with it on its movement and the smaller vessel cannot get free without cutting all the chain. In order to hook on a grapnel gun must hit and do damage.

Ram

A ram must be affixed to the front of a vessel and takes up one space, this being the fittings and reinforcements. A ram increases the normal ramming damage of a vessel by 3d8 and reduces the amount of damage that the ramming vessel takes – by ramming – by half. The table below shows the amount of damage inflicted to both vessels involved in a ram.

Cost: 1,000 gp, **Damage:** +3d8, **Spaces:** 1, Range: N/A, **Crew:** 0, Ready: 0.

Size of Smaller Ship/Object	Collision Damage
Colossal	12d6 x 10
Gargantuan	6d6 x 10
Huge	1d6 x 10
Large	1d6 x 10
Medium	1

Ballistae

A ballista is, essentially, a giant crossbow. Until the advent of black powder cannon the ballista was the last word in air-to-air combat and though it has now been superseded many examples remain as a cheap option for merchant vessels and as enchanted weapons of legend from the past.

Cost: 500 gp, **Damage:** 3d8, **Spaces:** 2, **Range:** 120 ft, **Crew:** 1, Ready: 2.

Bolts: Fifty shots take up one ship space with a cost of 50 gp.

Ammunition

All of these weapons require ammunition and powder in order to be fired and this takes up space within the vessel as well as costing money.

Cannon: Ten cannon shots take up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of powder and cannon balls has a base cost of 50 gp.

Demi-Cannon: Twenty demi-cannon shots takes up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of powder and cannon balls has a base cost of 80 gp.

Culverin: Twenty five culverin shots takes up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of powder and cannon balls has a base cost of 75 gp.

Small Culverin: Fifty small culverin shots take up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of cannon balls has a base cost of 100 gp.

Swivel Gun: Two-hundred-and-fifty swivel gun shots take up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of cannon balls has a base cost of 250 gp.

Barking Dragon: Five barking dragon shots take up one ship space, along with the powder to fire them. This lot of cannon balls has a base cost of 500 gp.

Flametongue: Five hundred flame-tongue shots take up one ship space. This lot of ammunition has a base cost of 50 gp.

Grapnel Gun: Grapnel guns come loaded with one shot which is attached to the gun. They do not need ammunition. The powder to fire the grapnel guns a total of five-hundred times is contained in a single ship space and costs 250 gp.

Special Ammunition

Supernatural and alchemical shot supplements the arsenals of properly equipped ships and enables them to tailor their shots to appropriate targets or to meet a variety of dangerous, aerial foes.

Fire Shot: Fire shot is made up of hollow balls filled with alchemical fire. When the ball strikes a vessel it shatters, spraying fire and igniting everything it touches. The cannon shot is reduced from d10 to d6 but if it scores a critical it automatically causes a 'fire' critical hit and rolls again. Fire shot costs double the amount of normal ammunition.

Ice Shot: A hollow shot filled with an alchemical fluid, when the ice shot strikes it breaks open and sprays the fluid which instantly freezes into ice, clogging up workings and slowing down the vessel it attaches to. Damage is reduced to d6 but if the weapon scores a critical it slows the enemy vessel down, reducing its speed by 1. The ice can be chipped away by three crew making a skill check against a DC of 18. Ice shot costs double the amount of normal ammunition.

Acid Shot: A hollow shot filled with a horribly effective acid, the acid shot bursts open when it strikes a target and continues to burn away over several turns. Damage is reduced to d6 instead of d10 but it continues to burn, half that number of dice the following turn (rounding down) before it burns out. Acid shot costs double the amount of normal ammunition.

Construct Cannonballs: These cannonballs unfurl as they strike and cling onto the vessel, clambering up over the sides to attack the people inside. The stats for a construct cannonballs are given at the end of this section, along with their cost.

Grapeshot: Double the number of dice rolled by the cannon but make them d6 rather than d10 and double the damage Reduction of the enemy hull. Any criticals are automatically done against the crew when scored with this shot. Grapeshot costs the same as normal cannonballs.

Chainshot: Chainshot does half the normal damage of a cannonball but critical hits can be automatically directed at propulsion or flotation that's external to the vessel. Chain shot costs 150% the cost of normal ammunition but can only be fired by cannon, demi-cannon or barking dragons.

Skyburst: Skyburst shells explode in proximity to an enemy ship and flash with cruel intensity and the sound of a thunderbolt. The crew must make a FORT Save against a DC of 15 (using their pilot bonus for NPCs) or be dazed. Skyburst shells cost twice as much as regular shells.

Exploding Shot: Exploding shells impact the enemy vessel and explode, blowing out fragments of hull. The damage of the shell is reduced by half as it is of less solid construction but, provided it does damage the vessel it rolls this damage again, without applying any Damage Reduction and with +2 damage per dice rolled. Exploding shot costs three times as much as regular ammunition.

Ghost Shell: Ghost shells are magical cannonballs that become incorporeal as they are fired and pass through the side of the vessel, burning the souls of the crew it passes through. The cannon converts damage to d6 and applies it as if it were a critical hit against the crew, but does no damage to the vessel itself. Ghost shells cost four times as much as regular ammunition.

Gun Options

The standard cannons are smoothbore and, as such, suffer a -4 penalty to attack checks. There are options that can be added to the standard guns in order to make them more effective than the usual.

Rifling: Rifled cannon have longer range and greater accuracy. They increase their range by 10% and their penalty to hit is reduced to -2. This adds 50% to the base cost of the weapon.

Overcharged: These cannon are reinforced to take additional charge and to blast with more power. They add +1 damage to each dice rolled for damage and add 50% to the base cost of the weapon.

Turret: Cannon are normally emplaced and so can only fire in one direction, fore, aft, port or starboard. Set within a turret a cannon can fire in three directions (and either up or down). Such a turret takes up twice as much space as a normal cannon and doubles the base price of the weapon.

Rapid Loader: A rapid loader cannon has three rotating casings so it can fire three times in quick succession. It takes twice as long to ready as a normal cannon and takes up an extra space for the mechanics. It increases the base cost of the gun by five times.

Hazards

As well as weapons to allow one ship to directly attack another there are any number of passive weapons which can provide protection or leave hazards for other ships to avoid.

Smoke: A smoke launcher takes up one space and has a single shot effect. It leaves a 20 ft. trail of smoke behind the ship for three turns, which then dissipates after three more turns. The smoke imparts a -4 penalty to attack rolls made through the smoke. Smoke launchers cost 200 gp and have a crew of 1.

Fireballoon: A fire balloon is a large sac, filled with flammable gas which drifts into the path of oncoming vessels and when hit explodes, setting fire to the vessel. A fire balloon launcher has three fire balloons, takes up one space and has a crew of 1. Avoiding fire balloons requires a pilot check against a DC of 15, if they're struck they explode for 4d6 fire damage and automatically cause a 'fire' critical hit effect. Fire balloon launchers cost 500 gp.

Acid Gas: Acidic gas has the same effect etc as smoke, but costs 500 gp and does 2d6 damage to any Skyship sailing through it, every turn remain within the cloud.

Explosive Mines: A mine launcher takes up one space and contains three explosive mines which can be floated into the path of an oncoming vessel. Avoiding these requires a pilot check against a DC of 15. Otherwise the mine explodes doing 4d10 damage. A mine launcher costs 1,200 gp.

Construct Cannonballs

Construct cannonballs are, in effect, boarding parties which can be fired from cannon in order to attack other vessels. They unfurl as they are shot, springing forth from the cannonball, latching on and climbing over the deck to fight the crew.

Construct Cannonball – Barking Dragon - cr 3

A large, round, metallic ball which sprouts bladed limbs like a four-legged spider to hack and cut at the crew and to capture the ship.

XP 800

N Medium construct

Init: +0, **Senses:** darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision, Perception -5

Defense

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 natural).

HP 36 (3d10+20 size)

Fort +1 **Ref** +1 **Will** +1

Defensive abilities: hardness 5, **Immune:** Construct traits.

Offence

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Blade arms +3 (2d6+0)

Statistics

Str 10 **Dex** 10 **Con** – **Int** – **Wis** 1 **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3, **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

Construct Cannonball – Cannon - cr 2

A knee-high spherical 'spider' of sharp metal that scurries around the deck, slashing and impaling, frenziedly attacking crewmen in a mechanical fervour until nobody is left alive.

XP 600

N Small construct

Init: +1, **Senses:** darkvision 60 ft, low-light vision, Perception -5

Defense

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, +1 Size).

HP 21 (2d10+10 size)

Fort +0 **Ref** +1 **Will** +0

Defensive abilities: hardness 5, Immune: Construct traits.

Offence

Speed 30 ft.

Melee Blade arms +1 (2d4-2)

Statistics

Str 6 **Dex** 12 **Con** – **Int** – **Wis** 1 **Cha** 1

Base Atk +2, **CMB** -1; **CMD** 10

Equipment

As well as weaponry ships have need of equipment and cabin space, rooms for various purposes and cargo holds. Space is always at a premium on any vessel but a ship with no stowage has no magazine for ammunition and no room for cargo.

Crew Quarters

Every person on board needs a place to sleep and a place to call their own. Because people can share bunks, taking shifts, it's possible for a bunk to do double duty for two men. So the bare minimum of crew space required for any vessel is half that of its crew compliment, not equal to the full crew number. Spare capacity can be used for passengers.

Crew bunks: A set of four crew bunks takes up a single space with a very small amount of room for personal gear belonging to the crewmen. Each set of bunks costs 20 gp.

Small Cabin: A small cabin, suitable for an officer, takes up a single space and houses a single person at a cost of 100 gp.

Big Cabin: A large and luxurious cabin takes up two spaces and costs 100 gp. It comes with a storage chest and a small fold-out writing desk. This is suitable for a well-appointed captain.

Cargo Hold

Cargo hold on board a ship is essentially empty space. There are considered to be enough ropes, chains and containers to hold whatever the cargo is, safely in place.

Cargo Space: Cargo space costs nothing and can contain up to 500 lbs of equipment or cargo.

Rations: 250 gp buys five-hundred crew/days worth of basic rations and water, which takes up a single space. This is enough to sustain a single crewman for five-hundred days, ten crewman for fifty days or a hundred crewmen for five days.

Ammunition: This is detailed in the weapon section above.

Brig

This is a small holding cell capable of holding up to four Medium-size characters or creatures. Included within the cell are two cots, a head, and absolutely nothing else. The cell's door is locked (DC 35).

Surgeon's Office

A ship surgeon's office takes up four spaces and has room for the ship's surgeon to operate or for a shipboard cleric to apply healing magic to patients. Medical care on board a ship is usually crude but a surgeon's office means that more crewmen injured in battle are likely to recover and still be able to aid the ship.

Galley

A ship's galley takes up two spaces and allows the crew of the vessel to prepare fresh food from caught fish or supplies taken on board on islands. This supplements the basic rations of biscuit and salted meat, making for a happier, healthier ship.

Crew

Every ship needs a crew. The required crew numbers are determined by the needs of the ship's systems, propulsion, floatation devices and armaments. This provides a minimum crew level that must be filled out for everything to be working. Additional crew allow for systems to be kept running even with casualties or for repair and fire control parties to be sent out.

Finally there are some specialist crew with particular skills that can be used to fill out the crew compliment of a vessel.

Command Crew

The command crew keeps the crew in order, represents them and represents the ship. A good set of officers is essential to the ordered running of a vessel and bring a set of skills to the service of the ship to keep it running ship-shape.

Officer Quality	Skill	Wage/Day
Green	+5	5 sp
Regular	+6	10 sp
Veteran	+7	15 sp
Elite	+8	20 sp
Ace	+9	30 sp

Captain

Captains are full characters who often own the vessel or at least run it for the government, company or the navy. If captains draw a wage it is from the ship's profit, a share – if a pirate vessel – or from whoever owns the vessel.

First Mate: Intimidate Skill

The first mate is the captain's right hand, the main disciplinarian of the ship and the conduit of the captain's orders.

Quartermaster: Appraise Skill

The quartermaster is entrusted by crew and officers with handling the money and keeping track of cargo and other essentials. On pirate ships quartermasters are commonly elected by the crew and on similar status to the mate.

Boatswain: Diplomacy Skill

Boatswains act as intermediary officers in charge of particular areas of the ship, such as the riggers, the floatation crew or commanding the gunners, bringing their concerns to the attention of the captain and other higher officers.

Sailors

'Sailor' covers all the non-specialist, non-officer members of the crew. Generic crewmen who can fulfill any number of roles on-board ship.

Sailor Quality	Skill	Wage/Day
Green	+5	3 sp
Regular	+6	4 sp
Veteran	+7	6 sp
Elite	+8	8 sp
Ace	+9	10 sp

Specialists

Specialists bring particularly useful skills to the ship that make life easier on board or provide expertise where regular sailors can only make do and mend.

Carpenter: Carpenters can make better repairs and even replace broken or destroyed ship components, with access to enough material.

Sniper: A specialist with a long rifle, the sniper can attempt to pick off officers from other vessels, firing from decks, gun ports or rigging on the vessel.

Sawbones: A sawbones has access to the Heal skill and may also have some alchemical skill.

Cook: A good shipboard cook can make a half-decent meal out of almost anything, even unfamiliar and alien species or the corpses of monsters.

Specialist	Skill	Wage/Day
Green	+5	4 sp
Regular	+6	6 sp
Veteran	+7	8 sp
Elite	+8	10 sp
Ace	+9	12 sp

Final Statistics

Once your ship is designed you note down the final statistics and the description in order to finalize the vessel. Some, particular, special vessels with special construction from particular nations or peoples might also apply templates to these final statistics but these will be detailed elsewhere.

Sample Skyship Creation

A much larger vessel needs some escape craft – which can be strapped to the outside of the vessel – so we set about designing an escape launch, a way for crew to flee a burning warship rather than simply a lifeboat or a ship's launch. Built to escape, rather than to fight.

We settle on a medium sized frame, the smallest true-flying vessel possible.

A medium frame has 20 hit points, 5 spaces and costs 500 gp.

We decide to make it a wedge, sacrificing some space, but making it faster to get away from enemy vessels.

This reduces the space by 1 to 4 spaces and gives the vessel +1 speed.

We decide to make the vessel of light wood, sacrificing protection for velocity.

A light wooden frame will reduce the cost by -50 gp and increase the speed by +1, it has no damage Reduction.

We decide to have the vessel move by sails.

Sails provide a base speed of 3, with the bonuses this is now 5. Sails require one crew to operate and cost 50 gp.

We float the vessel with a chute-sail.

Chute sails require two crew and cost 100 gp.

Four internal spaces are given over to crew quarters and space.

This provides room for 16 crewmen and costs 80 gp.

One internal space – the last one – is given over to rations.

This costs 250 gp and can keep the escaping crewmen going for some time.

Added together with the combat statistics this gives us:

Escape Launch

A canvas-winged 'dart' of a vessel, the escape launch cuts through the air like an arrowhead, fleeing battle with considerable speed.

Medium Wedge Skyship

Attack: Crew +0
Defense: Pilot +10
HP: 20
Destruction Point: -20
DR: 0 (Light wood)
Speed: 5
Crew: 3 (Crew quality depends on those escaping from the main vessel).
Quarters: 16
Cargo: Rations x1
Flight: Sails (Crew 1)
Floatation: Chute Sail (Crew 2)
Cost: 930 gp.

Ships as Characters

Some ships can become as famous and notorious as their captains or crews. Accruing a mystique and an aura of power all of their own. As vessels accrue a legend, some of that power becomes real, becomes true and the quirks of that particular ship become its being.

Ships do not raise in level by experience points but by significant encounters. These can be battles or adventures of significance in which the ship played a role. These events form the legend of the ship as it progresses along its 'career'. The ship that stood off the Crimson Sails pirate fleet, the vessel that discovered the Golden Temple of Azkara and helped the rebels escape Fort Gravel is infamous and known for what it can do, something that puts steel in the spines of its crew and fear in the hearts of its enemies.

Every Ship Level a vessel gains provides it with a 'Ship Feat', special modifiers and abilities that render the infamous vessels worthy of the name.

Significant Encounters	Ship Level	Ship Feat
3	1	
4	2	
6	3	+1
8	4	
11	5	
14	6	+1
18	7	
22	8	
27	9	+1
32	10	
38	11	
44	12	+1
51	13	
58	14	
66	15	+1
74	16	
83	17	
92	18	+1
102	19	
112	20	+1

Ship Feats

As ships advance in their notoriety they gain Ship Feats. Ship Feats are a means to reflect the gathering legend of the ship and grant it certain bonuses to reflect their growing notoriety and capabilities.

Agile in the Air

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: Vessel is renown for its agility in the sky and the pilots of the vessel find her a pleasure to steer. On piloting checks for the ship they receive a +1 bonus, up to a total bonus of +3.

Animal Watchmen

Perquisites: Ship Level 5
Benefit: The ship attracts a flock of birds, skyfish or other creatures who adopt the vessel – and its crew – becoming somewhat tame and dependent upon the vessel. The crew get used to the behavior of the animals and learn to read their habits. This provides a +2 bonus to Perception checks for the crew to detect hidden vessels or threats.

Beak of the Kraken

Perquisites: Ship Level 10
Benefit: The vessel is notorious for its ramming capabilities, strong and tough, with a solid prow that can cleave through weaker hulls with ease. The vessel increases its damage

Reduction by 5 when ramming another vessel and increases the ramming damage it causes by 1d10. This Ship Feat may be taken twice.

Billowing Sails

Perquisites: Sail Propulsion.
Benefit: The vessel can play through the winds better than most other vessels and never takes a penalty to its speed from adverse wind conditions or direction.

Blood on the Decks

Perquisites: Ship Level 15
Benefit: The ship has seen a great deal of battle and death upon its decks. The stain of blood is worked into every beam and every rope. The crew breathe in death and breathe out war. The crew receive a +1 bonus to their attack and damage rolls when boarding or defending against boarders.

Cloud Shark

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: The vessel has some inherent knack for vanishing from view into clouds or behind rocks, for blending in and not being seen. The crew get a +2 bonus on Stealth checks made to hide from other skyships. This Ship Feat may be taken twice.

Come on Baby, Hold Together

Perquisites: Ship Level 10
Benefit: The ship has a surprising amount of tenacity and is very hard to break. When breaking up it has a chance, every turn, of 'stabilising', the break up coming to a halt. Each turn that the ship is breaking up roll a d20, on a result of 18-20 the ship stops breaking up. This Ship Feat can be taken up to three times, each extra time it is taken the range increases by two points, to 16-20 and then 14-20.

Deadly Accuracy

Perquisites: Ship Level 15
Benefit: The ships's gunners have a reputation for unerring and terrible accuracy. The gun ports are well made and the guns are of good weight, kept in perfect condition by scrupulous crews, eager to maintain their reputation. The gunners receive a +1 bonus to their attack rolls. This Ship Feat may be taken up to three times.

Dread Colors

Perquisites: Ship Level 5
Benefit: The ship's flag, figurehead and silhouette have gained a certain level of notoriety. The Skyship's reputation precedes it and strikes terror into enemy crews. The ship itself provides a +1 bonus to Intimidate checks made by the officers against opposing crews and officers. This Ship Feat may be taken up to three times.

Empty Air

Perquisites: None.

Benefit: The ship has an eerie talent to fly where the cannonballs aren't. It receives a +1 bonus to its defense and this Ship Feat can be taken up to three times.

Fleet of Wing

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: The ship has clean lines and seems to be built to cut through the air. Perhaps the sails are of a novel design, perhaps the engines are overcharged or particularly well made. Whatever the truth the ship gains +1 speed and this Ship Feat can be taken twice.

Hammer Blow

Perquisites: Ship Level 15.
Benefit: The crew are drilled to perfection and able to unleash a devastating broadside, all at once, striking as a single blow that can shatter a ship in a single hit. Once per encounter the ship can choose to deliver a perfectly timed fusillade that does double damage. This must be 'activated' before the attack roll is made.

Hard as Stone

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: The ship has hardened and seasoned over the time of its service and repairs and reinforcements have made it tough. Increase the damage Reduction of the vessel by 2. This Ship Feat can be taken up to three times.

Inspiring Legend

Perquisites: Ship Level 15
Benefit: The ship is so well known and such a legend that the crew strive, constantly, breaking their own backs in order to meet the expectations of the vessel. The grade of the crew is considered to be one higher, or one cheaper, as appropriate, so inspiring is the vessel and so hard working the crew.

Lucky Cat

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: The ship has a mascot, typically a cat or similar pest hunter, that the crew have developed a powerful superstition around, considering it to be their lucky charm. The ship gets one free re-roll per session due to the presence of this lucky animal.

More Space

Perquisites: None.
Benefit: The ship has hidden space and the crew have learned to square things away with unsurpassed skill. It's almost like the ship is bigger on the inside than it appears. Increase the available spaces by 1/10th of the total spaces of the craft, rounded up.

Our Ship, our Home

Perquisites: Ship Level 5
Benefit: The crew know and love their ship and move around it with ease and skill. It has become more than a mere ship

and has become their home. The crew can move an extra five feet while on board the ship, or receive a +1 bonus to armor class in mass combat during boarding actions.

Run out the Guns

Perquisites: Ship Level 15
Benefit: Something about the ship's layout or the techniques that its crew have developed makes loading faster and more effective. The ready time for the guns is reduced by one, to a minimum of 1.

She Speaks to Us

Perquisites: Ship Level 5
Benefit: The ship speaks to its crew, every creak, every flex of the boards, every flap of the sail tells the crew something about her. The crew gain a +1 bonus to Perception while on board and a +1 bonus to any repair or similar rolls due to their close relationship with the ship.

Skeleton Crew

Perquisites: Ship Level 10
Benefit: The ship seems to almost sail itself. It can fly with the minimum of crew. Every system or weapon that needs a crew needs one less person to run, to a minimum of 1.

Tough as old Boots

Perquisites: Ship Level 5
Benefit: The ship can take a lot of punishment, she tries to hold together with all she has, even under the worst kind of punishment. The ship gains an additional hit point for each Ship Level that it has. This Ship Feat may be taken up to three times.

Skyship Wreck Scenario Generator

The following generator is designed to produce create skyship wreck scenarios. Rolling a 1d6 for each of the following 4 tables will produce a ship type, a location, a cargo and a complication that describes a skyship wreck.

For example, we roll a d6 four times and come up with 6, 4, 3 and 2. This translates to a commercial passenger vessel, slowly orbiting the periphery of a Tumult with a religious or mystical (or heretical) cargo and it has an alien or ancient origin.

With a little brainstorming, we can use these suggestions to come up with a wreck of an ancient passenger transport from a nearly forgotten era – a time of epic war in the open sky that plays a central role in the history of a splinter order of the Monarchy who are the guardians of peace of justice in the open sky. A search of the wreck turns up a document (perhaps an arcane log stored on the ship's log) that gives a firsthand account of this ancient war that directly contradicts the version presented by the Monarchy. In this version, the benevolent Monarchy used their cunning to rule the open sky with an iron fist and they sought to violently eradicate a peaceful group of dissident civilians who advocated a less tyrannical path. Whether or not this is the truth is left for the PCs to mull over. It's possible that the evidence was planted by a devious mastermind seeking to sow seeds of doubt in a neophyte member of the Monarchy in the party. Unfortunately, the crushing gravity of the Tumult compels the PCs to flee the wreck – destroying the evidence before they could verify its authenticity.

Another series of rolls with the d6 turns up the following results: 2, 6, 1, and 4. This result generates a corvette that has crash-landed into a island with valuable trading goods as cargo with a hostile salvage party as a complication. The corvette can be a smuggler's ship and contains a load of skyship components that he was smuggling to an Avalonian open sky station desperately in need of them. Unfortunately the smuggler was shot down by a Monarchy patrol over a jungle covered island. The PCs are dispatched to recover the cargo. Unfortunately they have to contend with both the fierce natives of the jungle covered island (an optional additional complication from the Location chart) and the arrival of a rogue salvage crew that wants to claim the cargo. The rogue salvage crew comes from a pirate outpost. The pirates have been fighting with the natives for years. After some initial hostilities, the PCs may realize that they share a common enemy with the natives and propose a truce.

Table 1: Type of Ship

Roll	Result
1	Bounty Hunter's Ship
2	Corvette (favored ship of Independent traders/ smugglers)
3	Military Scout Ship
4	Large Military Ship
5	Commercial Cargo Transport
6	Commercial Passenger Transport

Written by Louis Porter Jr Design,
Artwork by Tamas Baranya & Ean Moody

Table 2: Location

Roll	Result
1	Drifting aimlessly through open sky
2	Island Rock field (additional difficulty may be applied to piloting skill checks to avoid taking collisions damage)
3	Unusual clouds and gaseous formations (increasing combat skill checks and reducing protection from defensive systems)
4	Slowly orbiting just outside the periphery of a Tumult (i.e. - it's possible to investigate the ship safely but only for a short time before it's drawn too deeply into the gravity well)
5	Impacted into a large Island Rock
6	Crash-landed onto a large Island Rock (hostile natives or challenging terrain might provide additional complications)

Table 3: Cargo

Roll	Result
1	Valuable Trading Goods. (Examples: precious metal, medical supplies, robotic components, skyship components.)
2	Military Cargo. (Examples: weapons, large carrier sized vessel, military grade weaponry , heavy weaponry, armor)
3	Religious/mystical Cargo. (Examples: relics or artifacts of a spiritual nature. Alternately, these could be of a heretical nature)
4	Living Cargo. (Examples: the captain or crew of the ship, slaves destined for sale on a Frontier planet, military prisoners being transferred to a holding facility or a bounty target being transported back to the client.)
5	Secrets. On a military vessel these could be log files with blue- prints for a new super weapon or the hardware used to decrypt coded transmissions from Central Command. On a commercial vessel these could files found in files carried by a diplomat with details of a proposed alliance between two factions or a report listing suspected double agents within the Central Military. These could also be the secrets of a criminal organization – such as a list of targets for assassination or plans for the takeover of a rival criminal group.
6	Scientific Knowledge. (Examples: academic or scholarly reports about a groundbreaking advancement. What is considered "ground breaking" will depend on the technology level of your campaign.)

Table 4: Complications

Roll	Result
1	A band of pirates is hiding nearby (hiding in hollow Island Rock or hiding amongst other open sky debris) - using the wreck as bait to draw in unwary ships to ambush.
2	The wreck is of alien origin - and appears to be a previously unknown species. Alternately, it is of ancient origin from a time only dimly recalled by modern history.
3	The ship's defenses and some crew are still operational and/or alive and attempt to repel/destroy any boarders.
4	A hostile salvage party shows up while the PC are investigating the wreck and asserts that they had an official claim on the vessel first.
5	A force from an unfriendly, interested authority (the Monarchy, the Shan-Wei, a patrol from the local Avalonian force, the owner of the wrecked vessel, the partner of the bounty hunter who owned the ship etc.) shows up while the PCs are investigating the wreck.
6	The ship contains a well-known individual (governor of a local system, high priest of a religion, general of the rebellion, commodore in the Monarchy.) The individual could be dead (in which case his remains are present), or alive (either survived on the wreck, placed in hibernation, etc.)

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Firearms and Gunpowder

The current state of the art in personal firearms is a smoothbore weapon with a wheellock firing mechanism. Earlier matchlocks, which required a lit match held in a "matchlock" to fire, and the even earlier hand culverins, which required manual application of a lit match, are still in circulation but no regular forces use them. Though most firearms come from the mass production gunworks of the Monarchy weapon forges, there are skilled craftsmen in other locations that can and do build firearms.

The smiths of the Monarchy weapon forges have just developed snaplocks, but have kept the innovation to themselves so far. More reliable and inexpensive flintlocks are doubtless not far behind. A couple artisans have made rifled hunting weapons but these are still unique curiosities.

Proficiency: All wheellock weapons require Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*firearms*) to use without penalty.

Chant of Golden Wasp Pirate Ship

To the mast nail our flag
it is dark as the grave,

Or the death which it bears
while it sweeps o'er the wave;

Let our deck clear for action,
our guns be prepared;

Be the boarding-axe sharpened,
the scimetar bared:

Set the canisters ready,
and then bring to me,

For the last of my duties,
the powder-room key.

It shall never be lowered,
the black flag we bear;

If the sea be denied us,
we sweep through the air.

Unshared have we left
our last victory's prey;

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