

RANGED BRUTES

You know the situation well. Your giant, brutish monster appears on scene. You chuckle to yourself with glee, imagining how afraid your players will be... and then watch as they demolish it from range while it hardly gets an attack in. It goes out like a chump.

When one side has ranged attacks and the other does not, the odds swing very heavily in favour of the former. That's why ranged weapons were invented after all.

This article introduces a number of ranged exploits for your melee brutes. No longer will they stand there taking damage, helpless to respond!

But first, some advice - where possible, don't let your brute stand still and take it! It's probably big and easy to hit already; it likely has multiple actions, so it should be charging those pesky ranged opponents and engaging in melee combat as soon as possible. Of course, the easiest way to avoid the

problem is to have other creatures accompany your brute. But sometimes you don't want to do that.



EXISTING EXPLOITS

Brutish foes should take the Opportunity Strike exploit, as well as Stop Right There! Both of these can be found in *EONS #4: New Universal Exploits*, but are repeated below for convenience.

Opportunity Strike. You can take a free action attack against a foe which disengages from melee combat with you.

Stop Right There! Enemies which try to move past you (move within your reach) are subject to a free action attack, which stops their movement if successful.

Other important exploits from the core rules include Charge, Roar, Tail Swipe, Breath Weapon.

MOVEMENT

Many brutes will have movement opportunities available to them. Charge is a no-brainer, of course. Consider giving the creature the Pounce exploit, too - a mighty Hulk-like monster leaping at you can be extremely effective!

Additionally, mighty creatures can often ignore difficult terrain, or even obstacles. Any object two sizes smaller than the creature does not obstruct it.

And against those pesky flying foes? How about a monstrous leap!

Monstrous Leap. The creature leaps into the air a height of 5' per point of STR, making an attack against one foe it can reach while doing so.

AURAS

Auras are important, also. Creatures with an aura are able to affect foes not adjacent to them. Auras can have a variety of effects which take place when a creature enters or begins their turn in the aura. Often this is damage, but status tracks are also appropriate effects. The following abilities extend the capability of auras.

Extended Aura. The creature has an aura twice the normal size of the aura of a creature of its size.

Sight Aura. The creature's aura applies to anybody who can see the creature.

Auras can inflict damage, or they can inflict statuses. The Fear, Fire, and Nausea tracks are particularly appropriate. These auras should require the PC make a check to avoid damage or statuses when they enter or begin their turn, with a difficulty based on the creature's Maximum Dice Pool (use the average number: multiply by 3.5 and round up; for example, an 8d6 creature would have a difficulty of 28).

RANGED ATTACKS

Also consider giving brutes a ranged attack. If necessary, they can grab things from around them and use them as improvised (-2d6) ranged weapons which do the creature's natural damage. The Throw Anything exploit from *EONS #4: New Universal Exploits* removes that -2d6 penalty.

Thrown weapons typically have a range increment of 3 squares (15') for medium sized creature.

Large or smaller	3 squares
Enormous	5 squares
Gigantic	10 squares
Colossal	20 squares
Titanic	40 squares

If you want your brute to be especially good at throwing stuff, give it Far Shot, which increases range increments by 50% (round up).

Far Shot. You increase range increments by 50%.

Throw Anything. The creature suffers no attack penalty for improvised ranged weapons (including throwing melee weapons, which count as improvised when used in this way).

When designing a brute, be sure to include thrown objects in their attack list in their stat block so you don't forget to use it.

Other ranged attacks include breath weapons and roars (both detailed in the core rules).

Some more attacks are suggested below.

Quake. The creature slams a foot, fist, or tail on the ground, shaking the area within its aura. The creature makes a STR attack against everybody within the area, knocking targets prone and doing 1d6 damage to them.

Quills. The creature is able to fire quills (or bone shards, or other bodily parts), making a ranged attack with a range increment equal to its aura, and doing natural damage on a successful hit.

Tongue-lash. The creature has a tongue which can lash out to a range equal to its aura. The tongue is sticky and grabs the target, pulling adjacent to the creature.

HARDER AT RANGE

One inescapable fact about brutes is that they will generally never be harder to hit at range than in melee. This, of course, encourages PCs to keep their distance.

However, many brutes SOAK more damage from ranged attacks than from melee attacks. Consider the following exploit.

Monumental. The creature has double SOAK against ranged weapons.

Many brutes object to being attacked at range. They might pick up parts of the environment (a crate, a door, a vehicle, depending on the size of the creature) to use as a shield, granting it +2, +4, or +6 DEFENSE.

Living Shield. The creature picks up another creature two or more sizes smaller than itself and uses it as a shield. The target can escape the grab as normal. Until then, the creature gains the protection of a shield of the same size category (e.g. a medium-sized creature is a medium shield granting +4 DEFENSE). Additionally, attacks which miss but would have hit had the shield not been in place hit the grabbed creature instead.

Scenery Shield. As a free action, the creature snatches up a nearby door, table, vehicle, wall panel, or other piece of the

scenery to use as a small, medium, or large shield.

CALLLED SHOTS

Giving a brute a called shot location (-2d6 to hit) which can only be attacked with a melee attack is an easy option. The called shot location might ignore SOAK, or it might have some other effect, such as a Status Track.

WEAPONS

Not all brutes can use weapons - a T-Rex would struggle! - but those with arms and a little intelligence should avail themselves of spiked chains, whips, harpoons, and other weapons which can be used to grab foes and pull them towards the brute. The weapons below are useful for any brutish creature. They all have the qualities of great reach and trap.

Great Reach. Weapons with great reach reach out to the creature's aura, but cannot be used within the creature's normal melee reach.

Trap. Some weapons can be used to trap a foe. A weapon which can trap an enemy does so on a successful hit, rendering the target immobilised until they shake off the status.

If a creature is using one of these weapons, consider giving it the following exploit:

Come Here! A target struck with a weapon which has the trap trait is pulled adjacent to the creature. The target cannot be of a larger size category than the attacker.

You can devise more exotic weapons, depending on your setting. Electro-harpoons or laser lassos sound fun!

BRUTISH CHECKLIST

Below is a list of all the exploits referenced in this article. Any brute should have some of these.

Aura	Opportunity Strike
Breath Weapon	Pounce
Called Shot	Quake
Charge	Quills
Come Here!	Roar
Extended Aura	Scenery Shield
Far Shot	Sight Aura
Living Shield	Stop Right There!
Monstrous Leap	Tail Swipe
Monumental	Throw Anything
	Tongue Lash

Weapon	Damage	Type	Cost	Size	Weight (lbs)	Special
Great Whip	3d6	Slashing	500	E	100	Trap, great reach
Spiked Chain	3d6	Piercing	1000	E	500	Trap, great reach
Harpoon	3d6	Piercing	400	L	400	Trap, great reach