THE ASSAULT PHASE

While firepower may be enough to drive an enemy back from open ground or lightly held positions, shifting a determined foe from a fortified bunker or ruined settlement will need sterner measures. In an assault troops storm forward, screaming their battle cries, eager to strike at their foe with knives, claws, gun butts or anything else in a desperate close combat. The term Assault covers all seven steps summarised below: -.

1: Declare Charges. Announce which of your units intend to charge.

2: Move Charging Units. Move units which are charging.

3: Fight Close Combat. Troops fight in close combat. Models roll to hit, wound and saving throws are made through ten Initiative steps

4: Determine Assault Results. Total up wounds inflicted. The side which inflicted the most wounds in each combat is the winner.

5: Loser Checks Morale. The loser has to pass a Leadership test or fall back. If the loser fails the test go to step 7.

6: Pile in. If units are still locked in close combat then any models not in base to base contact are moved towards the enemy to continue the fight next turn.

7: Losers break-off and winners consolidate. Units falling back from close combat must test to see if they successfully break off, the winners may try to keep them in combat, engage a new foe or reorder their ranks

1. DECLARE CHARGES

In his own assault phase a player can declare a charge with any of his units that are within Assault range of an enemy unit and not already in close combat. Assault range is typically 6" but some units can assault 9", 12" or more, where this is the case it will be noted in the units' special rules. The unit may charge any enemy unit that can be contacted by at least one of its models making an assault move which avoids any obstructions such as impassable terrain or other enemy units which you do not wish to contact.

A unit that fired in the shooting phase of the current turn may only declare a Charge against the unit it shot at. A unit that remained stationary in the movement phase in order to fire heavy weapons or fire twice with pistols or rapid fire weapons may not charge at all in the assault phase.

A unit may Charge multiple enemy units but only if the charging unit can reach them all without losing unit coherency. Select one unit as the primary target and move to engage that one first as detailed below. If the unit fired in the shooting phase it must start its charge by engaging the unit it shot at first.

Designers Note: The change to having to charge the target of your shooting is an important one, the old assault unit tricks of hitting one unit with ranged attacks and then charging a different enemy can no longer be used (unless you can reach both of course). This helps bring assault units more into line with firepower based ones in that they can only attack one enemy unit in their turn. The one exception to this is units such as Hormagaunts which are both very fast and very numerous as these may be able to engage several enemy units at once, effectively swamping the enemy defence. Also note that a unit doesn't have to charge the nearest enemy unit, although it can be difficult to bypass one unit to reach another as we'll see later.

2.MOVE CHARGING UNITS

Charging units may now move into close combat with the unit (or units) they have declared charges against.

Once a model is in base to base contact with an enemy model it is said to be ENGAGED (as in engaged in combat) the unit that the models belong to are then said to be LOCKED (as in locked in close combat).

Move all the models in each charging unit before moving on to the next unit. The charging player decides the sequence in which his units will move. All the models in a charging unit make an extra 6" move in exactly the same way as if moving in the movement phase, note some units may be able to charge further than this, where this is the case it will be noted in their army list.

Start the charge by moving a single model from the charging unit. The model selected <u>must</u> be the one nearest the enemy being charged. Move the model into contact with the nearest enemy model in the unit being charged, This is the start point of the close combat. Next move each model in the charging unit in turn up to 6" toward the unit or units they have declared a charge on. Remember that if the enemy is not within 6" of at least one model the charge does not happen.

After the first model in the unit has been moved you can move the others in any sequence you desire. There are some constraints on their movement though. The most important one is that each model must end its charge move in coherency with another model in the same unit that has already moved.

If possible the model must contact an enemy model which is not already Engaged in combat. If there are no unengaged models in reach then you must contact an enemy model that is already engaged with one or more friendly models. If you cannot reach any enemy models you must try to move within 2" of one of your own models that is Engaged with an enemy model. If this is impossible then the charging model must just obey the main rule and move to within 2" of a member of its own unit that has already moved.

If you follow this sequence you will end up with all the models in the charging unit in 2" unit coherency distance of one another, having engaged as many enemy models as possible with as many chargers as possible.

In all cases models may not move through friendly or enemy models and may not pass through gaps narrower than their base diameter. You may not move models within 1" of enemy models they are not charging.

Terrain Effects

Models assaulting into, out of or through difficult terrain will be slowed down in the same manner as models moving through it in the movement phase. Roll two D6 and pick the highest to see how far they can move. If their move is insufficient to reach the target unit then the charge does not proceed and no hand to hand combat ensues, the models are not moved and it is assumed they simply did not have time to scramble through the difficult terrain or thought better of it due to their poor progress.

Didn't make it?

Enemy units that have been charged but have not been contacted are not considered to be Locked and are not involved in the combat in any way.

Designers Note: The rules for charging have been tightened up considerably for the sake of clarity. During the initial charge the attackers are subject to the normal movement rules with the exception that they can now move within 1" of the enemy in order to fight them in close combat. It is possible to set up units to block the path of a charge however since models may still not move through each other. Tight terrain can also mean initial charges become 'choked', although if the combat continues it is assumed to sprawl out as detailed later. Note that difficult terrain is handled differently to the Movement phase, this way we save lots of pointless assault moves which won't result in combats occurring.

3.FIGHTING A CLOSE COMBAT

How good creatures are in close combat depends almost entirely on their physical characteristics, in other words how fast, strong, tough and ferocious they are. Armour remains useful for warding off blows and shots but ranged weaponry becomes a secondary consideration – the best gun in the galaxy won't help if your opponent is bashing your brains out with a rock!

In close combat both players' models fight. How many blows are struck and who strikes first is discussed below. The rules are written assuming that there is only a single close combat occurring in the turn, of course there may be several separate assaults being fought simultaneously in different parts of the battlefield. If this is the case the player whose turn it is can choose what order to fight the combats in.

Who can fight?

Close combat is a swirling mêlée of fighters leaping forward, spinning, hacking and slashing at one another. As well as fighting hand-to-hand, warriors will be firing at point blank range at any target that presents itself.

Models in base to base contact with the enemy fight with their full number of attacks and count the benefits of any special close combat attack forms they have. All models that are within 2" of an friendly model which is engaged in combat will take part in the fighting as well, not just those in base contact. They only get a single attack though regardless of the number of attacks on their profile and get no benefit from any special close combat attack forms they have.

WHO STRIKES FIRST

Troops who are defending cover have a massive advantage in an assault. They can fire from their hiding place at their approaching enemies and then smite them down as they struggle to get to grips with their hidden foe. It's all in the reflexes when it comes to combat in the open: slow lumbering opponents can be quickly dispatched by a faster and more agile foe. Unfortunately, lumbering opponents such as Orks are tough enough to be able to withstand a vicious pummelling and still come back for more.

In close combat models defending in or behind cover strike first. Resolve all their attacks and remove any casualties before moving on to the rest of the models. Fighting for the remainder is resolved according to the Initiative value of the models. Models with the highest Initiative attack first, then the next highest and so on.

Work your way down the Initiative scores in each separate combat until everyone has fought (assuming they haven't already been killed by a model in cover or with a higher Initiative). If both sides have models with the same Initiative, attacks are made simultaneously.

COVER

Models in or behind cover normally fight in close combat with Initiative 10. This represents the advantage of cover – their attacks include not only close fighting but also shots against the enemy as they charge in. Apart from this cover does not affect hits or anything else in an assault. After the first round of close combat fighting is assumed to have swept into the cover so it gives no further advantage to models in it. Note that cover advantage applies only to models in cover that are being charged. Some units count as being in cover all the time because of psychic abilities or weird force fields, these are of no benefit if the unit charges.

Sometimes a unit will only count as being in cover if it is assaulted from a specific direction from which the cover has an effect. For example a Space Marine squad behind some oil drums is in cover if assaulted over the oil drums but not if assaulted from the rear. If a direct line from any of the assaulting models to the closest enemy model, before assaulting troops are moved passes through the cover then it is assumed to be enough of an obstruction to count.

Designers note: The cover rules are intended to make it hard to dislodge defending units without a concerted effort or plenty of armour. Grenades can help to mitigate this as they can force the enemy under cover during the vulnerable charge. Units with special abilities which confer 'continuous cover' do not benefit from its advantages when charging as they have to move up to close quarters and their concealment is less effective.

ATTACKS

Attacks in close combat work like shots in shooting – each attack that hits has a chance to wound, the wounded model gets a chance to save, and if it fails is (generally) removed as a casualty. Each model base-to-base with an enemy model strikes with the number of Attacks (A) on his characteristics profile. In addition the following bonus attacks apply.

+1 Two Weapons. Models in base-to-base contact with an additional close combat weapon or pistol in each hand have an extra +1 Attack. Models with more than two weapons gain no additional benefit – you only get one extra Attack regardless of whether you have two or more close combat weapons.

+1 Charge. Models in base-to-base contact who launched the close assault that turn (ie charged) get +1 Attack on their normal profile for that turn only if they did not fire in the shooting phase. Models belonging to units which fired in the shooting phase do not receive the charge bonus.

Exception: Models such as Terminators, Bikes, Dreadnoughts and Walkers which always count as stationary when firing always receive the charge bonus whether or not they fire before entering close combat.

Models not touching an enemy, but within 2" of a model from their own unit that is touching an enemy, may make one Attack regardless of their profile, armament or whether they charged.

Designers note: This is another important change, under the previous rules there was seldom any good reason <u>not</u> to charge into close combat in order to get the bonus attack for charging (do it to them before they do it to you). This change means that troops well armed with guns may be more inclined to stand their ground and shoot, leading to more short-ranged 'firefights'. Units using flamers and other short ranged weapons must weigh up the benefits of shooting over getting an extra attack in close combat

Rolling to hit

To determine whether hits are scored roll a D6 for each Attack a model has. The dice roll needed to score a hit on your enemies depends on the relative Weapon Skills (WS) of the attackers and their foes. Compare the Weapon Skill of the attackers with the Weapon Skill of their opponents and consult the following chart to find the minimum score needed on a D6 to hit.

EXAMPLE*: A unit of five Space Marines fighting five Eldar would roll five D6s for their attacks. If they were charging and did not shoot in the shooting phase they would roll ten D6s (1 Attack +1 each for charging).*

Attacks should be rolled together where the same to hit roll is needed, this approach saves time and speeds up the game when you've got several big close combats going on at once. In the example above therefore the Space Marine player would roll his ten attacks together.

Hitting units with different weapon skills

Many units in Warhammer 40,000 contain models with different levels of Weapon Skill. Attacks against a unit are resolved using the Weapon Skill of the majority type in the unit. If for example . A mob of twenty Grots (WS2) is led by an Ork Slaver (WS4), while the grots are in the majority attacks against the unit are resolved using their WS of 2, however skilled the Slaver is he can't prevent the Grots getting hit in the first place. If there is no majority Weapon Skill type use the lowest Weapon Skill in the unit.

When models attack calculate their own to hit numbers based on their own Weapon Skill. If the Grots and Slaver hit back at their enemies The grots to hit number will be based on a comparison of WS2 with the enemy WS, the Slaver on a comparison of WS4 with the enemy WS.

Allocating Attacks

We simply assume that the warrior is contributing his shots and blows to the swirling combat going on. This means we don't have to worry about whether individual models strike their respective opponents in base contact.

When a unit inflicts hits they may only affect enemy models who are in contact with them or who are within 2" of a model that is in contact with them. These are the only enemies able to strike back at them so it is reasonable that these are the only ones who can be hurt. If all the enemy models in the 2" 'danger zone' are slain any excess wounds are lost.

Remember that attacks are resolved in initiative order, so its possible that all the available enemy may be slain before some models get to strike.

WOUNDS

Rolling to Wound

Not all of the attacks that do hit will harm your enemy. They may be deflected by equipment, parried at the last moment or merely inflict a graze or flesh wound. Once you have scored a hit with an Attack you must roll again to see if you score a Wound and incapacitate your foe.

The procedure is the same as for shooting. Consult the chart above, cross-referencing the attacker's Strength characteristic (S) with the defender's Toughness (T). The chart indicates the minimum D6 roll required to inflict a Wound.

Example: A Space Marine (Strength 4) hits a Dark Eldar (Toughness 3). Referring to the Damage chart above we find that the Space Marine requires a 3 or more on a D6 to wound.

What Strength To Use

In almost all cases, when rolling to wound in close combat use the Strength on the attacker's profile, regardless of what gun they are using. Some (but not all) close combat weapons may give the attacker a Strength bonus, this is explained in Close Combat weapons. In a unit containing different strength models roll their attacks separately (they'll quite often have different Intiative characteristics too). So, for example, in a unit of Gretchin and an Ork Slaver the Grots attacks are made with their puny Strength of 2, but the Slaver's attacks use his more macho Strength of 3.

Different Toughness'

If the unit being attacked contains models with different Toughness characteristics, then the hits are converted to wounds using the majority Toughness in the unit. If there is an equal number of models with different Toughness characteristics the owning player chooses which Toughness is used. To continue the example above, The unit of Grots (T2) and Ork slaver (T4) will suffer to wound rolls using the Grots meagre Toughness as long as they are in the majority. Once again remember that this is figured at each Initiative step. So, for example, if the Grot unit was whittled down to a single grot and the Slaver remaining.the attacks at the next Initiative step could be resolved at the Toughness of the Slaver at the option of the owing player, all in all a smart move.

Designers note: The majority Toughness of the unit is used to prevent the combat bogging down into allocating individual attacks against different models and having to make separate to wound rolls. There are few units with differing Toughness values and this rule prevents weaker models 'hiding behind' the higher Toughness of an anomalous individual.

ARMOUR SAVES

Models struck and wounded in close combat can attempt an armour save to avoid becoming casualties. Models usually get to save regardless of the attacker's Strength but some especially monstrous creatures and powerful close combat weapons will punch straight through armour.

Note that cover provides no extra protection in close combat as it does against shooting. Remember that invulnerable models are allowed to make invulnerable saving throws even where armour saving throws

would not normally be allowed. If the rules for a weapon or attack states that no armour save is allowed then only an Invulnerable save may be made.

SUFFERING WOUNDS AND REMOVING CASUALTIES

When a unit inflicts wounds they may only affect enemy models in contact with them or within 2" of a model in contact with them. This is effectively the danger zone from which all casualties will be drawn. Otherwise the player suffering the casualties may choose which models die from those in the unit. If the unit has mixed armour types then casualties must be removed from troops with the armour that was used before removing any others. Allocate wounds to one model at a time, each model can absorb wounds equal to their Wound characteristic. Keep allocating wounds to a model until it is dead or all the wounds have been allocated. When a model dies and there are still wounds to be inflicted pick another model and repeat the sequence until all possible casualties have been suffered or the wounds inflicted have all been allocated. Casualties should be removed in such a way that the unit maintains coherency wherever possible. This represents the way that a unit can be whittled down to a tight knot in close combat.

It is possible that casualties may exceed the number of models in the danger zone in which case the surplus hits are discarded. The calculation of which models are in the 2" 'danger zone' is made at the start of step 2 (fight close combat) and is not affected by casualties. If a model started a combat in contact with an enemy model that is killed it will be treated as an model Engaged in combat until the end of the assault phase.

If a model becomes a casualty before he has an opportunity to attack then he may not strike back. When striking blows simultaneously you may find it more convenient to resolve one sides attacks and simply lie wounded models on their side to remind you that they are yet to attack back.

Multi-wound creatures

As noted previously, with multi-wound creatures whole models must be removed as casualties wherever possible.

Different Armour saves

If the unit being attacked contains models with different armour saves the same procedure is used as for shooting at mixed armour units. So the opposing player rolls to hit and wound for whichever unit he is attacking with as normal. However when the defending player makes armour saves before removing casualties from a unit with mixed armour saves he uses the best armour saves as long as the models wearing that type of armour are in the majority (ie they outnumber models with worse saves in the unit). Any casualties which are removed after saving throws have been taken must come from the amongst the most heavily armoured models first (ie the ones with the best saving throws take the hits).

If heavier armoured models are in the minority use the worse armour saves and take the casualties from the lightly armoured models first. If there are more hits than the majority type distribute them out so that all go on the majority type before hitting minority models, in each case the differently armoured models get to use their own saves if they are hit. If there is no save type in the majority the owning player gets to decide which group gets hit first.

Example: A squad of Black templars Space Marines includes four Initiates (Sv3+) and Six Neophytes (Sv4+) is inside the enemies' 2" kill zone. The squad suffer eight wounds in close combat. There are six models in the unit with a save of 4+ so six armour save rolls are attempted, four fail and four of the Neophytes are removed as casualties, the remaining two hits spillover onto the Initiates and are saved against using their 3+ armour save.

More Attacks than models

If the unit has the misfortune to suffer more wounds than it has models in the kill zone then the remaining wounds are 'lapped round' and start hitting the majority type again.. For example if the Black Templars had suffered fourteen wounds, six would go on the Neophytes, four on the Intiatites and then the remaining four

wounds would be resolved on the Neophytes as they were in majority. As with all attacks, the results of each Initiative step are resolved before moving on to the next, so the majority type of armour for the unit could change through the phase as casualties occur. For example the squad above has now been reduced to two Initiates and two Neophytes, if suffers more wounds in the next Intiative step then they could go to the Initiates or the Neophytes first at the option of the owning player.

Invulnerable saves

A model may only elect to use its invulnerable save each time it is allocated a wound under the majority rules given above.

Designers note: This last obscure reference is to prevent individual models with stormshields, rune armour et al taking a disproportionate amount of the damage during close combat, claiming they can break the majority rules or other weirdness.

SPECIAL CLOSE COMBAT ATTACKS

Even though high powered lasers and plasma weapons scour the battlefields of the 41st millennium close combat remains commonplace – sieges, city fighting, boarding actions and tunnel warfare are noted more for the ferocity of the fighting than any strategic nuances. Seasoned warriors always bear a deadly array of clubs, knives, frag grenades and bayonets for close-quarter fighting.

Assault troops will be even more fully equipped, taking pistols, swords and axes into battle with them. Most deadly of all are the power weapons that are sheathed in disruptive energy fields of crackling blue bale-fire. Power weapons splinter ceramite armour plates and melt plasteel in the blink of an eye, smashing through even the toughest armour like paper.

Specialised weaponry can give troops a real edge in close combat. Some of the most common close combat weapons and special attacks are listed below. Note that models with special close combat attacks can always choose not to use them and attack normally instead, if you're wondering why you might want to do that read the Power Fist entry below! Sometimes a model might be equipped with more than one type of special weapon, a power fist in one hand and a power axe in the other for example. In this situation the player can opt to have the model strike in initiative sequence with the power axe counting the power fist as an additional close combat weapon or strike at initiative 1 with the power fist counting the power axe as an additional close combat weapon.

Important Note: Unless noted otherwise, only models in base to base contact with the enemy can use their special close combat attacks.

Power Fist or Claw

A power fist or claw is a powered, armoured gauntlet surrounded by an energy field that disrupts solid matter. It is an awesome weapon most commonly seen fitted to Space Marine Terminator armour.

A power fist or claw doubles the user's Strength up to a maximum of 10 and ignores armour saves. Only users' basic strength is doubled, any additional bonus for special abilities are added after strength has been doubled.

The only drawback is that a power fist is slow and cumbersome to use, so a model armed with a power fist or claw always strikes at Initiative 1 no matter what its bearer's Initiative is (including any bonuses for special rules, cover, grenades or wargear – power fists always strike at Initiative 1 no matter what!).

Lightning Claws

Lightning claws are commonly used as matched pairs. They consist a number of blades extending from a housing on the wrist and back of the hand. Each blade is a mini-power weapon in its own right and if they hit one blade or another is likely to wound. Lightning Claws ignore Armour Saves and may re-roll any to

wound dice that fail to wound once each. The only weapon that can provide an additional close combat weapon attack bonus for a model with a Lightning Claw is another Lightning Claw.

Power Weapons

A power weapon (typically a sword or axe, but more rarely a glaive, halberd or mace) is sheathed in the lethal haze of a disruptive energy field. When a blow is struck a crackling blast of energy tears at the target, eating through armour, flesh and bone with ease.

A model armed with a power weapon ignores armour saves. Note that some power weapons may provide the attacker with bonus strength in addition or wound on fixed dice score regardless of the enemies' Toughness characteristic. These will be detailed in the appropriate army codex.

Close Combat Weapons (chainswords/swords/axes/pistols etc)

There is a bewildering array of close combat weapons ranging from simple clubs and axes to hand flamers and chainswords. These weapons confer no bonus to the strength or hitting power of combatants. However, as a model with a weapon in each hand gains an additional attack against an enemy in base-to-base contact, swords and pistols (or similar hand weapons) remain a useful combination for hand-to-hand fighting. A plasma pistol like other pistols can be used as a close combat weapon. It confers no strength bonus or particular armour penetration advantages though.

Poisoned Weapons

Poisoned Weapons are particularly feared and can include everything from normal weapons daubed in venom to hypodermic claws. They do not rely on a comparison of strength and toughness to wound but will normally wound on a 4+. Some venoms are so lethal that the merest drop can kill, these will wound on a 2+, weapons with this type of lethal venom are described in the appropriate Army Codex's.

Heavy Close Combat Weapons

Heavy close combat weapons are similar to close combat weapons but are particularly massive and are used to batter through an opponents defences. Examples include the Ork Choppa and the mighty Chainaxe used by Berserkers of Khorne. There is no armour that can completely protect its wearer against a direct blow from such a weapon and the best hope is to dodge to turn it into a glancing blow. Against a heavy close combat weapon better armour provides sharply diminishing rewards, the maximum armour save that applies against Heavy Close Combat weapons is 4+ and any model with a better save will only save on 4+.

Rending Weapons

Rending weapons is a category that includes the sharpest edged and pointed weapons. Whilst not massive or excessively powerful a well-placed blow from a rending weapon can tear through any armour and make a mockery of flesh and bone. Any roll to hit of 6 with a rending weapon will automatically cause a wound with no armour saving throw possible. Against a vehicle any penetration roll of 6 allows a further D6 to be rolled and the result added to the total score.

Force Weapons

Force weapons are potent psychic weapons that can only be used by a trained psyker such as a Librarian. They are treated as a power weapon, but can unleash a psychic attack that kills an opponent outright. Roll to hit and wound as normal, taking any Invulnerable saving throws. Then, as long as one wound has been inflicted make a single psychic test for the psyker against one opponent wounded by the weapon. The normal rules for using psychic powers apply, and you may not use another psychic power in the same turn. If the test is passed then the opponent is slain outright, no matter how many wounds it has (but count the

actual number inflicted for determining who won the assault). Force weapons have no special effect against targets that don't have wounds such as vehicles.

Frag Grenades

Fragmentation grenades can be thrown at opponents in cover to force them to keep their heads down during a charge. The lethal storm of shrapnel from exploding frag grenades will drive opponents further into cover for a few precious moments while the attackers close in. Troops armed with frag grenades that are charging enemy in or behind cover fight with Initiative 10 so they strike blows simultaneously with the defenders.

Plasma Grenades

Rather than the crude fragmentation grenades used by other races, the Eldar employ advanced Plasma grenades to stun their enemies when they charge into close combat. The effects of cover on close combat is negated by plasma grenades so all fighting is done in the standard Initiative sequence as the Initiative 10 bonus for being in cover is lost.

Monstrous Creatures

A monstrous creature is so huge and powerful that its attacks make a mockery of armour, foes are not so much wounded as hideously mangled and crushed.

A monstrous model (Carnifex, Greater Daemon etc,) ignores armour saves.

When attacking vehicles a monstrous model rolls 2D6 for armour penetration and adds them before adding their strength.

Special close combat attacks vs different armour saves

If special close combat attacks come into play against a unit with different armour saves use the method of making majority saves noted above but applying all special close combat attacks as early as possible. For example the Black Templars squad noted above suffer four power weapon hits and four normal hits in a single Intiative step. The six Neophytes with a 4+ save are in the majority so they suffer the four power weapon hits with no save allowed. Two more hits can be saved against however and one is made, resulting in one more casualty on the unfortunate Neophytes, the remaining two hits spillover and now the Intiates take saves using their armour save of 3+.

4. DETERMINE ASSAULT RESULTS

Assaults are usually very decisive, one side or the other quickly gains the upper hand and forces back their foe. Numbers and leadership can keep a side in the fight but the casualties each side inflicts is the most telling factor.

To decide who has won the combat, total up the number of wounds inflicted by each side. The side that causes the most is the winner, the other side is the loser and may be forced back if they fail a Morale check. Note that wounds which have been negated by armour saves do not count, nor do wounds in excess of a model's Wounds characteristic, only wounds actually inflicted.

If both sides score the same number of wounds the combat is drawn and continues next turn.

Wipe Out!

If one side destroys the enemy it wins automatically – even if it sustained more casualties. They may consolidate as normal (see 7. below). In addition the destruction of the unit will unnerve nearby friends if they are not already Engaged in close combat. Take a morale check for every unengaged friendly unit within 6" of the victorious unit before it consolidates. If the check is failed, the unit in question will fallback as described below.

Designers Note: The rule above is borrowed from Warhammer Fantasy Battle, which quite sensibly supposes that troops seeing their fellows wiped out to a man will start giving serious thought to hoofing it

before they're next. It means that tough assault units can break an enemy gun line, throwing the foe into confusion as they try to pull back,. This helps balance off some of the risks intrinsic in braving enemy fire to assault in the first place, and the vulnerability of assaulters to get blasting with supporting fire the moment they emerge from a close combat.

5. LOSER CHECKS MORALE

Units who lose a close combat must test their morale to hold their ground. If they fail they must abandon the fight and fall back (see 7. below). If they pass the unit holds its ground and fights on – basically the combat is drawn and no further account is made of the unit's defeat (apart from some good natured taunting by the winner!).

Morale checks are covered in more detail in the Morale section of the rules. The fallback rules are presented below. Some units have differing fallback rules, where this is the case it is detailed in their special rules.

6..REINFORCEMENT (or 'Pile in') MOVES

At the end of each assault phase models in units that are Locked but which are not Engaged in combat themselves MUST move up to 6" in an attempt to contact enemy which their own unit is Locked with..If they cannot engage the enemy they must get as close as they can to them without moving out of unit coherency. Terrain does not not affect reinforcement moves, or the presence of enemy models. Unlike in a charge reinforcing models may move through obstructing terrain and models in order to engage, it can be imagined that the fighters at the front of the combat are becoming increasingly embroiled and making such movement possible. Note that the other restrictions of making a charge still apply, so models must contact enemy models who are not already engaged in combat in preference to those who already are and must end their moves in coherency with another member of their own unit.

Whenever both sides in an engagement have extra models to move, the player whose turn it is moves first.

7.LOSERS BREAK OFF AND WINNERS CONSOLIDATE

Where a side has won and their enemies fall back, the victors can choose to make a Sweeping Advance and/or consolidate their position.

SWEEPING ADVANCES

Just because the losers of a close combat want to break off, it doesn't mean their opponents are willing to let them! A quick, ferocious opponent will drive home their advantage unmercifully. To represent this the victors can opt to roll 2d6 and compare it to the distance that the defeated troops have rolled to fall back. If it is greater they get an opportunity to seize the initiative and keep them engaged in a Sweeping Advance. The unit attempting to fall back does not move and the Sweeping unit makes a 'pile in' move as described in 6. above. We assume that the cornered foe will fight back at full effect against their pursuers so in the next assault phase the combat continues as before, with no-one counting as charging. In effect the attackers have chosen to continue the combat instead of allowing their opponents to fall back.

If the sweeping advance roll is equal to or under the fall back roll the losers extricate themselves from the combat successfully. Make the fall back move for the losing unit, the winners can now consolidate as detailed below.

Some units like bikes and jump packers make faster sweeping advances – typically 3D6", where this is the case it will be detailed in their special rules. Such units excel in harrying an opposing unit to death with their superior speed and should be employed against battered or fragile enemies for best effect. Conversely

some units like Terminators are too slow and ponderous to pursue a defeated enemy and are not allowed to make a sweeping advance, where this is the case it will be noted in their special rules.

> Designers Notes: Sweeping advances have been heavily modified in order to prevent assault units rampaging across the tabletop faster than speeding bullet. We've also taken into account that units which must make compulsory Sweeping Advances will tend to get wrapped up in slaughtering what they are fighting instead of acting with the best of tactical pecunity.

CONSOLIDATATION

If they do not choose to sweeping advance, or the sweeping advance attempt fails, the victors of a close combat may move up to 3" in any direction to consolidate their position and recover an effective formation. Units consolidating their position ignore difficult terrain. This move may be used to contact enemy units and lock them in combat but the consolidating unit must maintain unit coherency and does not count as charging when the combat is worked out next turn. Note; Sometimes a losing unit will only fallback 2 or 3" from a combat and it is perfectly possible for a consolidating unit to move back into contact with such slow-footed foes.

Consolidation may not be used to embark on a transport vehicle unless it is open-topped.

MULTIPLE COMBATS

If several units are fighting in the same combat, total up the number of Wounds inflicted by each side to determine who is the winner. All the units on the losing side have to check their morale. Individual winning units can only sweeping advance or consolidate if all of the units they are Locked with fall back. If the unit choses to Sweeping Advance it makes a single roll and compares it to each of the enemy units fallback scores, any that it beats are kept Locked in combat. . Units that stay fighting may make Reinforcement moves. When a unit is fighting more than one enemy unit their attacks must be divided between them. This is done as follows. Models engaged in combat with with or supporting a model engaged in combat with a single unit must attack that unit. Models engaged with enemy from more than one unit or able to support friends engaged with enemy from more than one unit can choose which enemy unit they fight against.

SHOOTING INTO AND OUT OF CLOSE COMBAT

Models engaged in close combat may not fire weapons in the shooting phase. Their attentions are completely engaged by the swirling mêlée. Likewise, while especially twisted and soulless commanders may wish their warriors to fire indiscriminately into close combats in the hopes of hitting the enemy, this is not permitted. The events in a close combat move too quickly and the warriors themselves will be understandably hesitant about firing on their comrades (they may end up in the same straits soon enough after all).

Models belonging to Locked units that are not engaged in combat themselves or within 2" of engaged friends may shoot normally in their own shooting phase and may be shot at in the enemy shooting phase. Blast markers can be re-positioned subject to the normal rules however so it is probably not a good idea to fire plasma cannon into the back of a close combat if you value the combatants much.

FALL BACK!

Fall back is a fighting withdrawal, not an out-and-out rout. Sometimes a fighting retreat in the face of overwhelming odds is the only option left. A withdrawal can give troops the chance to retire to a stronger position to mount a fresh attack or hold off the enemy.

As a unit falls back it moves directly to the player's table edge, or to the base line where the unit deployed/entered the table if it came on at a different place. We've specified this in the Mission descriptions for Warhammer 40,000 but if you make up your own scenarios be sure you know where your units fall back to. If possible the unit must remain coherent, with gaps of no more than 2" between models as they fall back.

Most units fall back 2D6" each turn until they regroup, some, faster, units such as those on bikes or using jump packs fall back 3d6".

A unit that falls back must move within a corridor which lies between its most extended models as shown in the diagram – but individual models can move within this corridor as you wish. If a unit is spread out such that its models are more than 2" apart the models must be moved back into coherency as the unit moves.

If the unit moves into, out of or through difficult terrain the distance rolled on the dice that it falls back is halved. Troops will divert around impassable or dangerous terrain and enemy models, but must move in such a way as to get back to their base line by the shortest route.

FIRING WHILE FALLING BACK

Troops who are falling back may continue to shoot, but as they are moving they may not fire heavy weapons, or rapid fire weapons at full effect. They also cannot launch an assault.

Assaulted While Falling Back

A unit which is assaulted by the enemy whilst falling back must check to regroup immediately (see Regrouping below). No modifiers apply to the check in this case, and even units which would not normally be allowed to regroup are allowed to make the check – the situation is sufficiently life or death threatening for the usual regrouping restrictions to be ignored. If successful the unit is regrouped and will fight the close combat normally. If it fails to regroup the unit is scattered and counts as destroyed.

Trapped!

Sometimes a unit will find its fall-back corridor blocked by impassable terrain and/or enemy models. Ignore enemy models that have fought in close combat against the unit this turn. A unit falling back may move around any obstruction in such a way as to get back to their baseline by the shortest route. If a unit cannot perform a full fall back move in any direction, without doubling back, entering impassable terrain or coming within 1" of the enemy it is destroyed.

Note: This replaces the old crossfire rules.

CHARACTERS IN ASSAULTS

All characters in assaults fight just like normal troopers, though their characteristics are usually better. If a unit including an independent character charges into close combat the character must charge in too. Likewise if the character charges, the unit he is with charges too -inspired by his heroic example!

An independent character on their own can charge into close combat if they are within 6" of the enemy in the assault phase.

Independent Characters always fight separately to any unit they have joined or are part of. They charge just as another member of the unit but when they fight their dice are rolled separately. An Independent Character may allocate his hits between units he is Engaged with. Only enemy models engaged in combat with the Independent Character or only able to support a model engaged in combat with the Independent Character may strike their blows against the Independent Character.

Monstrous Creatures

Monstrous creatures are treated just like Independent characters is an assault and always count as being a unit in their own right.