

# CHAPTER 5: COMBAT

*The Vogar crouched behind a crate in the darkened warehouse. He ran a paw across the burnt stubble where a blaster bolt had singed the fur on his head. In the distance he could hear Cyberpunks rummaging through the building, looking for him and the data chip he carried. His ears perked up. Someone was close. Very close. The Vogar gripped his weapon a little tighter and stood up. An orange blast of plasma illuminated the darkness. A Cyberpunk, a peculiar look of surprise and pain on his face, slumped into a pile of death.*

The Imperium is a dangerous place, and combat will become an occupational hazard for characters sooner or later. This chapter discusses regular combat between characters and their opponents. To learn about space combat, see the chapter covering starships.

## COMBAT BASICS

### Combat Rounds

Combat is broken down into units of time called *rounds*. Within each round, participants can move, attack, and perform other important actions based on their initiative.

### Initiative

At the beginning of each round, initiative is determined to see who goes first, second, and so on. Each player rolls 1d20 + DEX modifier for his character. The GM makes the same roll for each opponent. Whoever has the highest roll goes first, the second highest goes second, etc.

### Attacks

Several different attacks are available to characters (and their opponents). These include: melee, ranged, and special attacks.

**Melee Attacks:** This includes close combat (within 3 meters) using weapons such as swords, daggers, etc.

**Ranged Attacks:** This includes fighting at a distance using weapons such as pistols, rifles, bows, and grenades.

**Special Attacks:** This includes all other attacks such as offensive abilities (psionics, martial arts,

and brawling) and any other attack that requires a saving throw.

### Attack Roll

The attack (or “to hit”) roll involves rolling 1d20 and adding the applicable modifiers:

**Melee Attack Roll:** 1d20 + STR modifier + other modifiers.

**Ranged Attack Roll:** 1d20 + DEX modifier + other modifiers.

**Special Attack Roll:** 1d20 + varies depending on the type of attack.

### Defense

The result of the attack roll is then compared to the opponent’s defense. If the result is equal to or greater than the defense, then the attack was successful.

**Defense:** 1d20 + DEX modifier + other modifiers.

### Damage

If an attack succeeds, the character determines damage by rolling one or more dice. Depending on the weapon or attack used, additional damage may be added to the result of the roll.

### *Critical Damage*

In some cases, the attack will cause critical damage. When that happens, the damage result is doubled.

### *Armor*

If the character or opponent is wearing armor or using a force field, some of the damage will be absorbed. The amount of damage absorbed will depend on the type of armor or force field.



### *Saving Throw*

Certain abilities (especially those that cause damage) allow the character (if he's the target) to make a saving roll to avoid some or all of the effects.

The character rolls 1d20 and adds a modifier based on the type of effect in question. For example if the ability does Cold damage, the character's Cold resistance modifier would be used. Other abilities might require a saving throw against his INT score, in which case he'd use his INT modifier. Whatever the case, the result of the modified roll is compared to a DL of 10, plus the opponent's experience level divided by 2. In other words, a level 12 opponent would make the DL 16 (12 / 2 + 10).

For example: an Akiak with a Heat resistance modifier of +5 is hit by a psionic that does Heat damage. The Akiak rolls 1d20 and gets a result of 8. Adding 5 to 8 gives the final result of 13. The caster was level 6, which means the DL to be beat is 13 (6 / 2 + 10 = 13). The Akiak's roll equals the DL, so his save was a success!

In the case of damage-causing abilities, a successful saving roll will mean the character takes either half damage or no damage (negates), depending on the ability. A successful roll with a non-damaging ability will normally result in no effect on the character (negation).

### Hit Points

Hit points (HPs) equals the amount of damage a character can take before dying. When a character's hit points reach zero, he dies and cannot be healed or otherwise revived.

## COMBAT DETAILS

### Attack Modifiers

During combat, several modifiers will affect the character's attack roll:

#### Dexterity

A character's DEX will help determine how well a character uses ranged weapons. Whenever a character uses such a weapon, he gets to add his DEX modifier (see Table 1.1).

### Strength

Whenever using Melee weapons, the character's STR modifier is added to his attack roll. Unlike DEX, however, STR has no impact on the character's defense.

### Proficiency

If a character does not have a proficiency (i.e.: Ranged Weapon Proficiency) in the weapon he is using, he receives a -4 attack roll modifier.

### Range

Ranged weapons will have a modifier based on distance from the target. The ranges for each weapon are: point blank, short, medium, long, and extreme. The actual distance for those ranges will vary from weapon to weapon. However, the modifier for each range equals the following:

**Table 5.2 Range Modifiers**

| Size        | Modifier |
|-------------|----------|
| Point Blank | +2       |
| Short       | +0       |
| Medium      | -2       |
| Long        | -6       |
| Extreme     | -10      |

### Stance

When using a ranged weapon, the character will receive a +2 attack roll modifier if in a kneeling position, and a +4 modifier if in a prone position. However, he cannot use bows or thrown ranged weapons when in a prone stance.

When using melee weapons, a character receives a -4 attack roll modifier when in a kneeling stance, and cannot use melee weapons at all if in a prone position.

### Firing into a Crowd

Whenever a character fires (or throws) at an opponent who's engaged in melee combat with an ally, the character takes a -4 attack roll modifier to avoid hitting the ally.



If the opponent is at least two sizes larger than the ally (i.e.: Large versus Huge, or Small versus Large), then no modifier is imposed.

### Rifles at Close Range

Due to the length of a rifle, the character receives a -4 attack roll modifier when firing at an adjacent opponent (within 3 meters). Carbines do not count as rifles in this case.

### Zero-G

Due to the disorientation that can occur when in a zero-g environment, characters suffer a -4 penalty when fighting in zero-g (unless the character takes the Zero-G ability; see the Ability chapter).

### Defense Modifiers

Several modifiers will affect the character's defense:

#### Dexterity

Since DEX measures his coordination and speed, the character also uses his DEX modifier when determining his Defense value.

#### Size

Size does matter. A character's size, whether large or small, will modify his Defense. Larger individuals are easier to hit, while smaller ones are more difficult.

**Table 5.1 Size Modifiers**

| Size             | Modifier |
|------------------|----------|
| Tiny (rat)       | +6       |
| V. Small (dog)   | +4       |
| Small (Gordian)  | +2       |
| Medium (Human)   | +0       |
| Large (Magna)    | -2       |
| V. Large (tiger) | -4       |
| Huge (elephant)  | -6       |

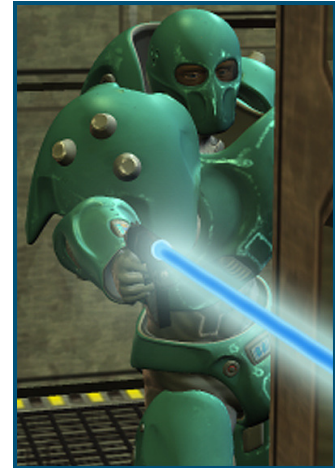
#### Stance

During ranged combat, the character receives a +2 defense modifier when in a kneeling position and a +4 modifier when in a prone position.

Against melee attacks, however, the character receives a -2 defense modifier when in a kneeling stance, and a -4 modifier when prone.

### Cover

Cover modifiers are based on the percentage the character or opponent is protected. For every 25% of the character's body that is behind cover, he gains a +2 defense modifier. Of course, once cover reaches 100%, the character is completely protected and cannot be hit.



### Damage

When an attack succeeds, the amount and type of damage caused is based on the weapon or attack used. Depending on whether the defender is wearing armor or using a force field, some of the damage is absorbed harmlessly. The remaining damage, however, is deducted from the defender's hit points.

### Basic Damage Types

There are six basic damage types: piercing, blunt, slashing, energy, kinetic, and explosive.

#### *Piercing Damage*

Pointed weapons such as daggers and rapiers cause piercing damage. Stingers, such as from a giant insect, will also cause piercing damage.

#### *Blunt Damage*

Blunt weapons such as clubs and staffs cause blunt/crushing damage. Punches and kicks are also considered blunt weapons.

#### *Slashing Damage*

Slashing damage comes from edged weapons such as swords and axes.