

## VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Vehicles move just like creatures. Each has a movement rate, which indicates how far it can move in a round. Most vehicles require a driver, and when moving, they usually require that the driver spends every action controlling the movement. This is a routine task that rarely requires a roll. Any round not spent driving the vehicle increases the difficulty of the task in the next round by one step and precludes any change in speed or direction. In other words, driving down the road normally is difficulty 0. Spending

an action to retrieve a backpack from the back seat means that in the following round, the driver must attempt a difficulty 1 task. If he instead uses his action to pull a handgun from the backpack, in the next round the difficulty to drive will be 2, and so on. Failure results are based on the situation but might involve a collision or something similar.

In a vehicular chase, drivers attempt Speed actions just like in a regular chase, but the difficulty may be based either on the level of the driver (modified by the level and movement rate of the vehicle) or on the level of the vehicle (modified by the level of the driver). So if a PC driving a typical car is chasing a level 3 NPC driving a level 5 sports car, he would make three chase rolls with a difficulty of 5. If the PC's car is a souped-up custom vehicle, it might grant him an asset in the chase. If he's not in a car at all, but riding a bicycle, it might increase the difficulty by two or three steps, or the GM might simply rule that it's impossible.

## VEHICULAR COMBAT

Much of the time, a fight between foes in cars, boats, or other vehicles is just like any other combat situation. The combatants probably have **cover** and are moving fast. Attacks to disable a vehicle or a portion of it are based on the level of the vehicle. If the vehicle is an armored car or a tank, all attacks are likely aimed at the vehicle, which has a level and probably an appropriate Armor rating, not unlike a creature. The only time this isn't true is with battles where only vehicles and not characters are involved. Thus, if the PCs are in a shootout with bank robbers and both groups are in cars, use the standard rules. If the PCs are in a submarine, a tank, or a starship and they are fighting opponents who are likewise in a vehicle, special rules are needed.

Battles between starships of various kinds—from gigantic capital ships to single-pilot fighters—are a frequent occurrence in far-future science fiction settings. A submarine battle between two deep sea craft could be quite exciting. Characters in a modern-day game might find themselves in a tank fight. If PCs are involved in combat in which they are entirely enclosed in vehicles (so that it's not really the characters fighting, but the vehicles), use the following quick and easy guidelines.

On this scale, combat between vehicles isn't like traditional combat. Don't worry about health, Armor, or anything like that. Instead, just compare the levels of the vehicles involved. If the PCs' vehicle has the higher level, the difference in levels becomes a reduction in the difficulty of attack and defense rolls involved. If the PCs' vehicle has the lower level, the difference is an increase in difficulty. If the levels are the same, there is no modification.

These attack and defense rolls are modified by skill and Effort, as usual. Some vehicles also have superior weapons, which reduce the difficulty of the attack (since there is no "damage" amount to worry about), but this circumstance is probably uncommon in this abstract system and should not affect the difficulty by more than one or maybe two steps. Further, if two

vehicles coordinate their attack against one vehicle, the difficulty of the attack is reduced by one step. If three or more vehicles coordinate, the difficulty is reduced by two steps.

The attacker must try to target a specific system on or portion of an enemy vehicle. This **modifies the attack** in the defender's favor based on the system or portion targeted:

Targeting Task	Modification	Effect
Disable weapons	Two steps	One or more of the vehicle's weapons no longer function
Disable defenses (if applicable)	Two steps	Difficulty of attacks against the vehicle are reduced by one step
Disable engine/drive	Three steps	Vehicle cannot move, or movement is hampered
Disable maneuverability	Two steps	Vehicle cannot alter its present course
Strike power core or vital spot	Five steps	Vehicle is completely destroyed

That's a lot of modifications. But it's not really that hard. Let's look at an example. A PC in a small level 2 fighter attacks a level 4 frigate. Since the frigate is level 4, the difficulty of the attack starts at 4. But the attacking craft is weaker than the defender, so the difference in their levels (2) is added to the difficulty. The fighter pilot must make a difficulty 6 attack on the frigate. However, the fighter is trying to swoop in and damage the frigate's drive, which modifies the attack by another three steps, for a total difficulty of 9. If the fighter pilot is trained in space combat, she reduces the difficulty to 8, but it's still impossible without help. So let's say that two other PCs—also in level 2 fighters—join in and coordinate their attack. Three ships coordinating an attack on one target reduces the difficulty by two steps, resulting in a final difficulty of 6. Still, the attacking PC would be wise to use Effort.

Then the frigate retaliates and the PC needs to make a defense roll. The level difference between the ships is a two-step modification in the frigate's favor, so the

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*In some cases, the GM may wish to use the level of an NPC pilot or driver rather than the level of the vehicle, but this is only for special circumstances, such as a very skilled or very inept pilot.*

*During a vehicular battle, particularly a space battle, there's a lot of chatter about shields failing, hull integrity, being outmaneuvered, coming in too fast, and whatnot. These sorts of details are great, but they're all flavor, so they're represented in the rules generally, rather than specifically.*

*For more details about vehicles, refer to the appropriate genre chapter.*

difficulty of the defense roll starts out at 6. But the frigate tries to take out the fighter's weapons, reducing the difficulty of the defense roll by two steps. Thus, the PC needs to succeed at a difficulty 4 task or lose his main weapons systems.

It's important to remember that a failed attack doesn't always mean a miss. The target ship might rock and reel from the hit, but the bulk of the damage was absorbed by the shields, so there's no significant damage.

This bare-bones system should allow the GM and players to flesh out exciting encounters involving the whole group. For example, perhaps while one PC pilots a ship, another mans the guns, and another frantically attempts to repair damage to the maneuvering thrusters before they crash into the space station they're trying to defend.

## STARSHIPS

Here are a few sample starship types:

Starship	Level	Crew	Weapon Systems
Fighter	1	1	1
Interceptor	2	1	1
Freighter	3 (4 for defense)	4	1
Frigate	4	20	4
Cruiser	4	25	5
Battleship	10	1,000	36

“Crew” indicates the minimum number of people needed to operate the ship. Many ships can carry more passengers. “Weapon Systems” indicates the maximum number of different enemies the ship can target at once (but only one attack per ship in any circumstance).

*Since it's frighteningly easy to die in a space battle if your ship is destroyed, most ships have escape pods. Even fighter craft have ejection systems that put the pilot out into space in an environment suit. In other words, GMs should try to give PCs a way out of immediately dying if they get on the wrong end of a space battle.*