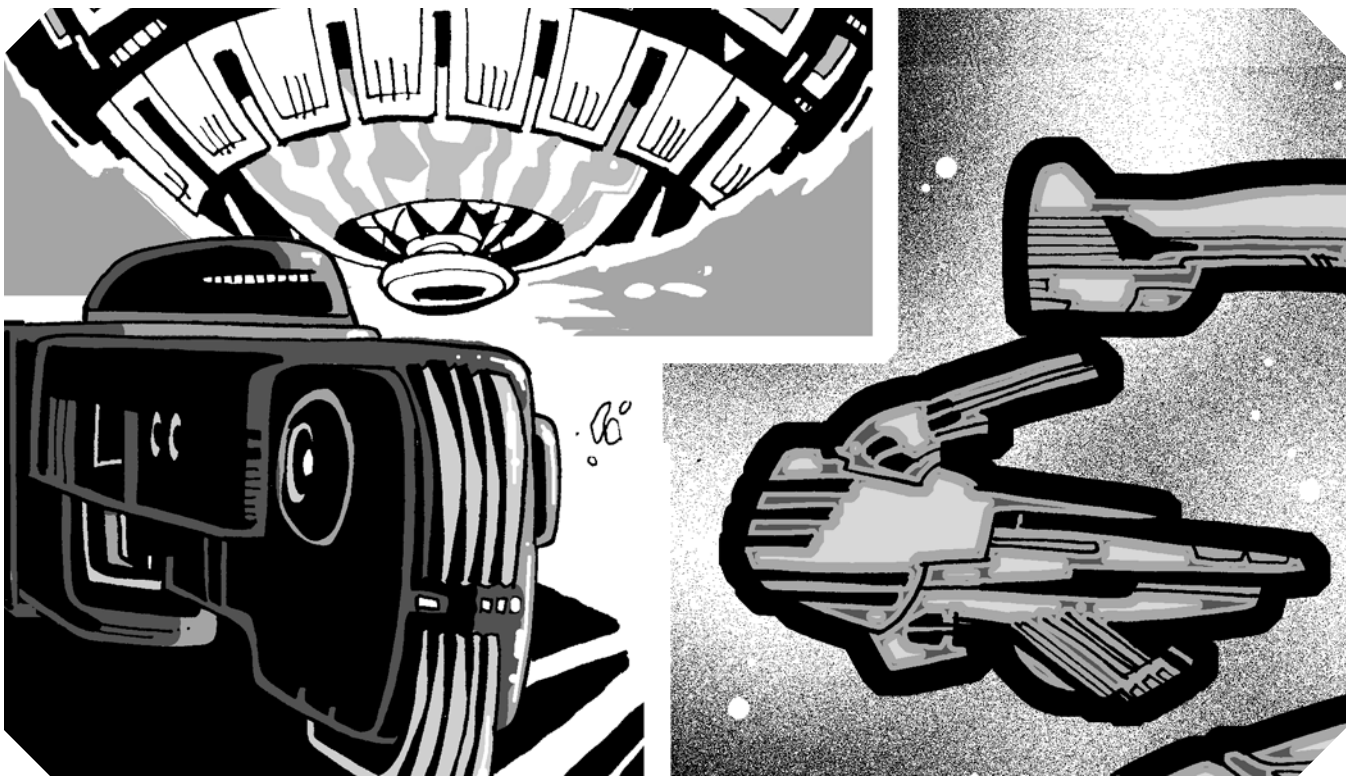


GURPS

Fourth Edition

SPACESHIPS 3

WARSHIPS AND SPACE PIRATES™



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An e23 Sourcebook for GURPS®

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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INTRODUCTION

Space warships, whether commanded by military officers or swashbuckling pirates, are a defining element of space opera and indeed science fiction. Intended as a tool kit for GMs who wish to focus on this aspect of space roleplaying, this book presents a complete fleet of easily customized warships, as well as outlining how pirates and space navies might operate. For GMs and players who want more tactical options, these rules adapt the **GURPS Spaceships** combat system into a hex-based tactical combat game, allowing space battles to be resolved with counters or miniatures.

About the Series

GURPS Spaceships 3: Warships and Space Pirates is one of several books in the **GURPS Spaceships** series, which supports **GURPS Space** campaigns by providing GMs with ready-to-use spacecraft descriptions and rules. Each volume offers spacecraft descriptions and supplementary rules. This book doesn't cover all warships – space fighters, carriers, and troop ships are presented in a later volume.

The core book, **GURPS Spaceships**, is required to use this book. **GURPS Spaceships 2: Traders, Liners, and Transports** will be useful.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

Some of the rules for tactical space combat are derived from the space combat system written by David L. Pulver for **GURPS Traveller** (which was adapted in **GURPS Traveller: Interstellar Wars**).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Pulver is a freelance writer and game designer based in Victoria, British Columbia. He is the co-author of the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition** and author of **Transhuman Space**, **GURPS Spaceships**, and numerous other RPGs and supplements.

The captain wants the biggest fleet in history if we're gonna end this war. The way things are shaping up out there, it looks like he just might get it.

– Commander Ivanova, **Babylon 5**

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

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Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the resources that interest you! Go to each book's web page and look for the "Bibliography" link.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all **GURPS** releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

CHAPTER ONE

SPACE NAVIES AND PIRATES

“Captain, the second Yezendi frigate has just accelerated at 3G, closing at five miles per second. He’s flanking us. Six minutes until we can fire our particle beam . . .”

There was no vibration, no feeling of impact . . . but suddenly a dozen indicators on the cruiser’s threat board went red.

“Sir, we’ve been hit!”

“Damage report, Mr. Khafaji!”

“Central hull, burn through both layers of armor – he fired his spinal laser. The #2 laser turret battery’s disabled. We lost the central fuel tank and the hangar bay.”

“Helm, bring us about to starboard! 1G acceleration. Engineering, get a team down to that battery! Gunnery, reload tubes one and two with antimatter missiles. Fire when ready.”

SPACE NAVIES

A space navy’s missions are similar to those of a wet navy. Its purposes are to protect society’s ability to move through space, and deny that capability to opponents. From the least to most demanding, these goals are local space defense, space denial, space control, and power projection. The interstellar navies of economic superpowers can usually perform all types of missions, but the smaller forces of minor or non-militaristic powers only have the resources to perform local space defense and space denial.

Local Space Defense: Hindering or defeating enemy attempts at power projection. This involves fighting off or intercepting enemy spacecraft engaging in bombardment, troop landings, or smuggling. Local defense forces protect the space around a world, including valuable assets such as satellites, moon bases, orbital spaceports, and other commercial and industrial facilities. Local space defense can be attempted with a single ship or space station.

Space Denial: Threatening a rival society’s ability to travel through interplanetary or interstellar space. This involves intercepting spacecraft that cross disputed borders, raiding enemy shipping, or blockading a world (or entire system).

Space Control: Protecting the transit of the society’s spacecraft and the security of any commercial shipping lanes. This can involve patrolling to “show the flag” or deter enemy activity, escorting friendly vessels, or fighting battles in deep space to defeat rival navies engaged in space denial, power projection, or space control. The desire of multiple major powers to protect their traders and explorers could drive an attempt to create an interstellar or galactic civilization. Space control requires spreading forces to protect and patrol multiple potential targets and space lanes.

Power Projection: Ensuring the delivery of matter or energy to an enemy world or space facility. This involves bombarding planets, supporting troop landings, delivering agents or

information, or even forcing open a closed economy. Power projection often requires spacecraft optimized for troop transport or planetary bombardment. *Effective* power projection requires achieving space control first, by defeating local space defenses. The ultimate form of power projection, and perhaps the most difficult of all military operations, is a full-scale invasion.

PEACETIME OPERATIONS

Naval forces are nearly as busy in peacetime as in war. Activities that consume the attention of a space force are detailed below.

Exercises: An effective navy trains constantly, practicing varied operations in realistic scenarios. Less effective navies hold more “spit and polish” parade exercises, showcasing the regime’s toys or overawing restive subjects. Some exercises are multinational, involving warships from allied powers. Many also have a political purpose, e.g., a major exercise off an enemy border to demonstrate resolve or send a political message. An announced “exercise” can also be a cover for an actual invasion!

Refit and Maintenance: Warships spend as much as a third of their time in port for repairs, rearming, refueling, major maintenance, or upgrades to new systems.

Police Patrols: These are local space defense operations to disrupt piracy, smuggling (including supplies for any terrorist or rebel groups), poaching, slave raids, unauthorized gas mining, illegal immigration or settlement, and asteroid claim jumping. The usual goal is to intercept, board, and arrest rather than destroy, and targets will often surrender or run when approached. Police patrols also perform humanitarian duties such as rescue missions, and may be responsible for enforcing safety and traffic control regulations on commercial ships. Sometimes these activities are assigned exclusively to paramilitary patrol forces.

LOKI-CLASS CORSAIR (TL10[^])

This is a heavy freightliner with small weapon batteries replacing some of the holds and the original steel hull reinforced with internal nanocomposite panels (the resulting hybrid is assumed to be equivalent to metallic laminate armor). Built on an unstreamlined hull, the ship masses 10,000 tons (SM +10) and is about 450 feet long. It cannot lift off from an Earth-sized planet, and so must rely on orbital port facilities or shuttlecraft.

Front Hull System

- [1] Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 20).
- [2] Habitat (five cabins, two-bed automated sickbay, minifac fabricator, 260 tons cargo).*
- [3-5] Cargo Holds (500 tons capacity each).
- [6] Hangar Bay (300 tons capacity).*

Central Hull System

- [1] Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 20).
- [2-5] Cargo Hold (500 tons cargo each).
- [6] Tertiary Batteries (10 fixed-mount 28cm missile launchers and 300 tons cargo each).*

Central Hull System

- [core] Control Room (C9 computer, comm/sensor 9, only six control stations).*

Rear Hull System

- [1] Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 20).
- [2!] Secondary Battery (one turret with 30 MJ rapid fire particle beam, 450 tons cargo).
- [3-4] Fuel Tanks (500 tons of hydrogen providing 15 mps delta-V each).
- [5!] Stardrive Engine (FTL-1).*
- [6] Fusion Torch Engine (0.5G acceleration).*
- [core] Fusion Reactor (de-rated to one Power Point).*

* One technician mans each system.

It has spin gravity (0.2G) and exposed radiators.

The ship's usual complement consists of four bridge crew (captain-pilot, navigator/gunner, communications operator, and a chief engineer), and eight technicians. The technicians and crew double as a boarding party.



TL Spacecraft dST/HP Hnd/SR HT Move LWt. Load SM Occ dDR Range Cost

PILOTING/TL10 (HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPACECRAFT)

10[^] *Loki-class* 150 -3/5 13 0.5G/30 mps 10,000 4,811 +10 10ASV 20 1x \$444.5M

RENEGADE-CLASS CORSAIR (TL11[^])

This is a more typical interstellar pirate: a modified stock freehauler, upgraded with salvaged or war-surplus weapons, a force screen, and a second maneuver drive to improve performance. However, it lacks the power to fire all weapons and have full thrust. It replaces cabin space with bunkrooms (and cells) to carry additional boarding crew or captives, and adds a retractable boarding clamp (probably salvaged from a tug). It uses a 1,000-ton (SM +8) streamlined hull that is 150 feet long. It can land and take off from planets.

Front Hull System

- [1] Steel Armor (dDR 3).
- [2-3] Cargo Holds (50 tons capacity each).
- [4!] Secondary Battery (two turrets with 30 MJ improved UV lasers; 40 tons cargo).
- [5] Habitat (three cabins, three-bed automated sickbay).
- [6] Habitat (one cabin, three bunkrooms, minifac fabricator, one cells).
- [core] Control Room (C9 computer, comm/sensor 8, four control stations).

Central Hull System

- [1] Steel Armor (dDR 3).
- [2-4] Cargo Holds (50 tons capacity each).
- [5!] Light Force Screen (dDR 70).
- [6!] Tertiary Battery (four turrets with 10 MJ improved UV lasers; 39 tons cargo).

Rear Hull System

- [1] Steel Armor (dDR 3).
- [2-3!] Super Reactionless Engines (50G acceleration each).
- [4-5!] Stardrive (FTL-1 each).
- [6] Engine Room (one workspace).
- [core] Fusion Reactor (two Power Points).

Modified stock freehaulers are typical pirate ships.

The ship is equipped with artificial gravity.

The normal complement is four bridge crew (pilot-captain, navigator-gunner, and engineering officer), an engine-room technician, and a cargo master.

TL Spacecraft dST/HP Hnd/SR HT Move LWt. Load SM Occ dDR Range Cost

PILOTING/TL11 (HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPACECRAFT)

11[^] *Renegade-class* 70 1/5 13 100G/c 1,000 331.4 +8 24ASV 3* 2x \$65.7M

* Plus dDR 70 force screen.

Top air speed is 25,000 mph.

DAMAGE IN TACTICAL COMBAT

Damage rules are unchanged from basic space combat except as noted below.

BALLISTIC ATTACK DAMAGE

Nuclear and antimatter warheads may potentially affect everything in a hex. Collisions and conventional warhead damage depends on relative velocity in hexes/turn.

Collision and Conventional Warheads in Tactical Combat

The *Collision and Conventional Warheads* rules (*GURPS Spaceships*, p. 61) are unchanged, except damage is calculated usually a hex-based formula:

Gun or Missile: $d\text{-damage} \times \text{relative velocity in hexes per turn} \times \text{scale factor}$.

Collision: $6d \times 3 \times \text{lesser } dST \times \text{relative velocity in hexes per turn} \times \text{scale factor}$.

Relative Velocity in hexes per turn is as determined.

Scale Factor is shown on the table below.

Lesser dST is the smaller of the victim or colliding vessel's dST.

D-damage is the dice of damage based on warhead caliber (*GURPS Spaceships*, p. 68).

Scale Factor Table

Scales	10-mile hex	100-mile hex	1,000-mile hex
20-second turn	2	20	200
1-minute turn	0.6	6	60
3-minute turn	0.2	2	20
10-minute turn	0.06	0.6	6

Warp missiles and subwarp drives use pseudo-velocity. For collision *damage* purposes, treat the velocity as 10 mps or

actual velocity, whichever is less. The GM may also rule that any reactionless drives and super missiles use the pseudo-velocity rules.

Nuclear and Antimatter Warheads in Tactical Combat

Use the rules in *GURPS Spaceships* (p. 68), with two additional considerations.

Rendezvous: Any object that the target rendezvoused with is also caught in the blast and takes the same damage. (This should also be the case in basic combat.)

Collateral Damage in 10-Mile Hexes: A 10-mile hex scale is small enough that every other vessel or object in the same hex may also be affected! Roll proximity damage, and then divide the rolled damage by another factor of 100.

*War is nothing but a duel
on a larger scale.*

– Karl von Clausewitz

HULL DAMAGE AND HIT LOCATION

These rules are unchanged. However, the GM may want to make up position and vector counters for characters blown out of a spacecraft (*GURPS Spaceships*, p. 63), treating them just like a small craft that had been (inadvertently) launched. Even if they can't maneuver, this will make it possible to determine whether a rescue mission can reach them!

VECTOR MOVEMENT

In Phase 8, for each spacecraft or other moving object, the GM or a player should do the following:

1. Put a placeholder (such as a small coin or die) in the hex containing the spacecraft's counter.
2. Move the spacecraft's counter into the same hex as its vector counter.
3. Imagine a line from the center of the placeholder's hex through the center of the spacecraft counter's hex and onward in the same direction. Move the vector counter along that line for a distance equal to the distance between the placeholder and the spacecraft counter.

That is, a spacecraft moves into the same place as its vector counter, and the vector counter is moved to a new location along the same projected course. In this way, a spacecraft that

doesn't accelerate will continue to move each turn in the same direction, at the same speed, following its vector.

If a spacecraft or other object passes close to a world, gravity effects come into play, if using those rules. See *Gravity* (p. 33). If gravity effects do *not* come into play, or after they have been resolved, remove the placeholder and proceed with the next vessel or object's movement. The turn ends after all moving objects have been moved.

FTL Movement: If an FTL drive was powered up in the Engineering Task phase, any faster-than-light movement takes place at the start of this phase.

Salvos: GMs may remove salvos from the map at the end of this phase if it appears they can't hit anything and nothing is likely to blunder into them. This is the case for gun salvos and for missile salvos that ran out of burn points.

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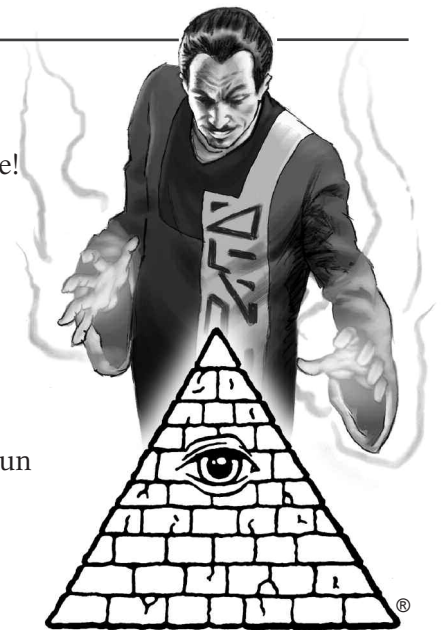
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