



This chapter brings together most, if not all, the rules thus far into a wide-spectrum application, i.e. how it all works together. Although most of the rules in this game revolve around combat, that is not to say that combat should be centric to Tara-Corax. In order to provide a deep experience with nuance, well-defined rules are necessary.

General

Combat, and playing the game in general can be done using two methods. The first is an all-narrative approach, sometimes called “theater of the mind”. The Storyteller narrates everything that takes place, allowing the players to react through responding in turn, everyone imagining what is happening in their own mind.

Theater of the mind is the most common and requires nothing but your character sheet, dice and the rule book. However, spatial considerations, distances, what things look like and more are all left up to explanation. Generally, many of these details are left undescribed for the sake of time, or because they’re not the focus of the current situation. However, these can have consequences or carry opportunity which the Players may not be able to exploit. Thus, this method is far more simplistic.

Another method is to use (all or some of the time) a representational layout. This can be virtual or physical. This way, each encounter can be fully mapped out, distances to opponents are known, how big a room is, etc. Opportunities arise more often using this method, and some Character Classes are far more effective when they can use the terrain to their advantage.

The Hex and Size

Tara-Corax is built on a hex-grid format. All things explained hereon are within this hex-grid construct. When using theater of the mind, this concept and format should be considered for the rules to facilitate the mechanics of the game.

A Hex is 2 yards or 1 Unit. When using a physical board, the size of the board should be physically large enough to provide enough space for maneuver. Typically, a 30 x 50 hex-grid is sufficient, that’s 60 yards by 100.



There are 6 size classifications, each taking up a different space. For the discussion of the Hex, and how many of different sized things can be in melee, the 6 sizes are:

Tiny – This would be something like a rat. There is no defined limit to how many can occupy a Hex, save what would be legitimately possible.

Small – Something the size of a dog. 2 such-sized creatures may occupy one Hex, but don’t have to.

Normal – Man-sized. One per Hex.

Large – Something about the size of a buffalo. Such creatures take up 2 adjacent Hexes.

Huge – This would be elephant-sized and takes up 3 adjacent Hexes. This may be in a line, or bunched up, depending on the shape of the thing.

Gargantuan – Something larger than an elephant. There is no set size of such a thing and takes up as many Hexes as needed to represent the listed size.

Combat

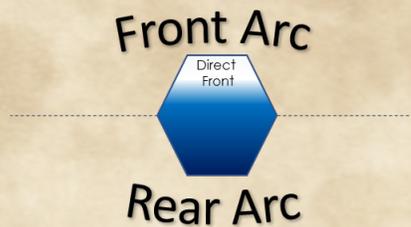
It is important to distinguish what Combat is and is not, although, there may be times where this line is blurred. In general, a character is considered to be “in Combat” when they (or any part of their party) are

attempting to cast an offensive spell, attack at range or in melee, or when there is active aggression against a Player's character or anyone within the party. However, there may be more instances such as sneaking up into an ambush with actively observant opponents.

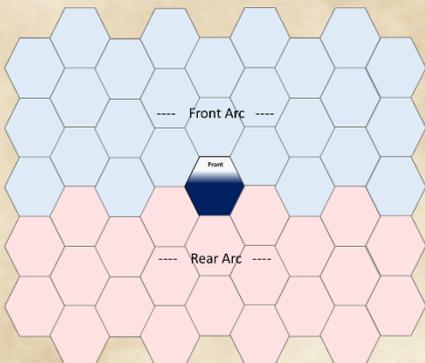
A Combat ends when the danger is gone, the characters have removed themselves from the situation, or no more active tactical positioning is taking place. Again, when this starts and when it ends may be up for subjective interpretation of the Storyteller – who makes the final call. Many rules apply to a “Combat”, certain Abilities can be performed a set number of times per Combat and Initiative is rolled only when in Combat.

Arcs

An Arc refers to the general facing of a character or monster on the battlefield. This is incredibly important when it comes to opponents in melee, spells and more. For characters, one hexface (a specific flat side of a hex) is said to be to their direct front. From there, the hexface to either side is considered their Front Arc, the rest is their Rear Arc.



Any Hex that is bisected by this line (as it would extend) is considered in the Front Arc. In the illustration below, all the blue Hexes would be in the Front Arc, the red is the Rear Arc.



Focus

Characters in Combat, in order to attack, must declare a specific target, called a “Focus”. This is done on their Initiative each Round and may be freely changed each Round. Characters always face their Focus. The Focus is the only target that may be engaged at Range or in Melee. When casting a spell, the target is declared when the casting starts on the character's Initiative, but is not necessarily a Focus, as it can be a location. Spells with an AoE of “Target” or “Touch” use the Focus rule, other AoEs target a location. A Focus must be in Line of Sight.

If a Focus is defeated in melee, a new Focus is immediately chosen and faced. If a target moves out of LoS for ranged attacks, the character may use a Half Action to designate a new Focus. If a target of a spell moves out of LoS, the spell caster may either launch the spell at the Hex where the target left LoS or Fizzle the spell.

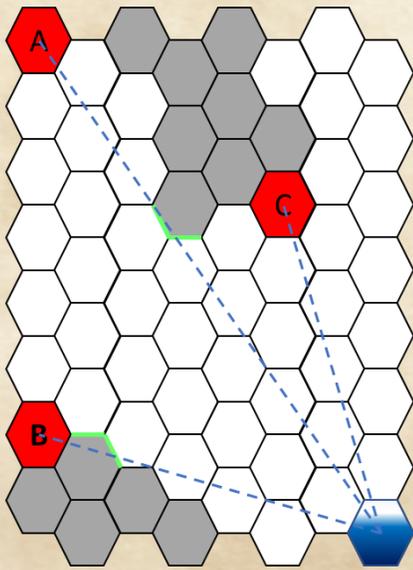
Line of Sight

Line of Sight (LoS) is anything the character can see. Certain terrain, characters and the environment can block LoS. On a hex-grid, LoS is determined by drawing a line from the center of the character's Hex to the center of the Focus/Target. If anything blocks this line, LoS is not achieved. Bear in mind that elevation is also a consideration, and something that blocks LoS on the ground may not if the character is on higher ground.

There will be situations where something that blocks LoS is just barely in the way. A hex-grid is representational, and a tree may not completely fill that area. One may conclude that the very edge of a clump of trees would not deflect an arrow. As an Advanced Rule, you may use the Partial LoS rule. Partial LoS allows a target to be a Focus or target of a spell, but there is a chance that obstructions may interfere.

Partial LoS is achieved when the line between Hex centers passes through adjacent hexfaces of something that blocks LoS. In the illustration below, we have three Targets, A, B and C. The white Hexes

are Open Terrain and do not block LoS, the grey Hexes do.



Target C is in Open Terrain with nothing blocking LoS. The line from the character to Target A passes through adjacent hexfaces (shown in green) of LoS-blocking terrain and is in Partial LoS. The line to Target B passes through non-adjacent hexfaces and is not in LoS.

Targets in Partial LoS gain a Phase (0), and a roll of 4+ on 1d6 means the missile deflected and never got to its target, striking the obstruction instead. If another character was the terrain, a roll of 4+ means the missile hit the other character instead. When there are several things that cause Partial LoS, each one demands a roll on 1d6 and if any of those are a 4+, then the missile hits that thing. If striking a target you do not intend, a roll to-Hit is still needed to actually connect and do damage.

Spells' effects vary in this rule. Those spells that have a radial or cone AoE affects anything within Partial LoS, but receive an additional +5 to their ResCheck, and an additional +2 per thing in Partial LoS in front of their position. Single target spells are under the same rule as missiles and a roll of 4+ means the spell impacted the obstruction instead of the target. This applies to both beneficial and harmful spells.

Round A and B

Combat is divided into Rounds, as we know, and these Rounds are differentiated by a Round "A" and a Round "B." The main point of this is to track how many attacks per Round a character is due. Anything with a decimal of .5 for Attacks per Round indicate that in Round A they get the whole number listed (for 2.5, it would be 2 attacks), and 1 more in Round B (3 attacks in the case of 2.5).

Round A and B are not universal; they apply from character to character individually. Round A occurs when a character first engages an enemy. Each successive Round that they attack the same target is considered Round B. If a character switches a Focus, they reset back to Round A. If the character leaves combat, swaps targets, does anything except attacking the same Target, they reset to Round A. When using the On to the Next One Combatant Ability, remaining attacks can be used on the new target and the next Round is considered Round B.

Rolling "To-Hit"

In game-mechanics terms, striking at an enemy is a simple affair. You roll dice and compare your result against the Evade of the target. If your roll is greater than or equal to the target's Evade, then you hit; if not, you miss.

There are some advanced rules in combat. As with all the advanced rules, it is not needed to play the game. In this case, once you're ready to start using the advanced rules, you might want to make this your first addition.

When rolling to hit, roll 2d10, add in any modifiers, and compare that against your target's Evade. Modifiers include:

- Additions from Attributes (Strength or Dexterity, depending on the weapon).
- Preferred Weapon Bonuses.
- Mastery Style Bonuses.
- Enchantments.
- Effects and Abilities.
- Range modifiers for ranged weapons.

- Environmental modifiers added in by the Storyteller.

If you hit, then roll a die to damage, based on the weapon, add in those modifiers, and let the Storyteller know how much you did. Modifiers to damage include:

- Additions from Strength for melee weapons.
- Mastery Style Bonuses.
- Enchantments.
- Effects and Abilities.
- Environmental modifiers added in by the Storyteller.

Roll Overs, Critical Number and Extra Damage

We've already covered what Roll Over and Naturals are, but they have some special application to combat. First off, every character has a Critical Number, which is normally 10. Some Mastery Styles and Character Classes have reduced Critical Numbers. Whenever you roll to-Hit, and the natural die value is equal or greater than your Critical Number, roll that die again. As with Skills, you continue to do this until that die roll is less than your Critical Number.

When you add all the modifiers to your roll, you have a value. Subtract the Evade from your total, and this is your RO. You then take that RO, and divide it by your weapon's Extra Damage number, rounding down. Add this to your Damage! If the Storyteller is secretive and doesn't tell you the target's Evade, then it is up to them to do the math and generate your Extra Damage.

Extra Damage can be modified by Abilities and Mastery Styles. The minimum ED is 1. For every 1 point the ED is lowered below 1, add +2 to RO when striking. This does not increase the roll to-Hit, but when a hit is scored, the RO is increased by 2. It also raises the Critical Severity by 1 for each point under 1 the ED is lowered.

Critical Strikes

Critical Strikes in Tara-Corax are a function of how well you hit. Every target has a Critical Threshold, which is a combination of a Racial value and Armor. You subtract the target's Critical Threshold from your RO, any value of 0 or more is a "Critical Strike." The value is called the Critical Severity. Each Damage Type applies different Critical Strikes. Some are more damaged-centric, and other add nasty Effects like *Bleeding*, *Blinding* and worse. There is a required Attack Power for some Critical Strikes. You simply cannot leap through the air and decapitate an armored opponent with a dagger. Critical Strike Charts are found in the Appendix.

Fumble!

When a Player rolls any combinations of 1s and 2s on a to-Hit roll (Auto-Miss), fails a Cast Spell Skill Check while in melee, Botches a Skill Check while in melee or misses a Maneuver, all opponents in melee receive a melee strike as a Free Action, as long as they're Set. If a character does it with a ranged weapon that uses ammo, the weapon is disabled for the rest of that Combat.

Courage and Fleeing

For Players, their characters essentially have limitless courage. The only thing holding a Player back is their better judgment. At times, the Storyteller may let the Player know how afraid their character might be, but actions are normally left up to the Player.

The exception is fear causing effects. There are a few General Abilities, Spells and Monsters' Abilities that can make the character flee against the Player's will.

In Combat, if a Player's model or token leaves the battlefield (the surface used to represent the battlefield), then the character has left Combat and cannot return. Normally, fleeing causes a character to run in the opposite direction of whatever caused the fear. The character may run right off the designated

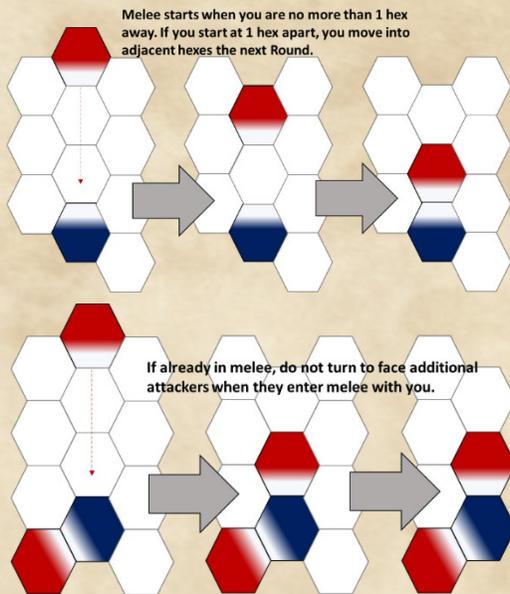
battlefield or space, preventing them from taking any other Action that Combat.

Magic

All the same rules and precepts to engage a target at range also apply to targeting something with a spell. If using a Magic Missile, it counts as ranged combat. However, you can cast a spell at a target, even if in melee. Specifics for using magic in combat are listed in the Magic Chapter.

Melee Combat

Characters are considered to be “in Melee” when they are within 1 Hex or occupy adjacent Hexes with an opponent. The very first opponent that comes into melee with another becomes its Focus, and the two automatically face one another. Others that enter the fray cannot be elected as a Focus until the character designates them at the beginning of their turn in a Round or defeats their current Focus.



Once two characters occupy adjacent Hexes, movement is done for that Round, and the character that moved into melee cannot continue to move about the target.

There are several nuances that also apply to melee combat, all these considered Optional Rules.

Maneuvers

As a Full Action, characters may perform a Maneuver. Maneuvers are special moves the character can perform if they have enough Preferred Weapon Slots spent or a Mastery Style with the weapon they're wielding. Maneuvers, in effect, take up all attacks per Round, and a character may not attack first and then use additional attacks to perform a Maneuver.

To perform a Maneuver, the attacker rolls to-Hit, modified by any Mastery Styles' Maneuver modifiers. Each Maneuver has a number, which is found on the weapon's profile chart. This number is the RO needed to perform that Maneuver. Most Maneuvers cannot Critically Strike.

Each Maneuver attacks a certain Evade. If the Target does not have a Parry or Block Score (and the Maneuver attacks that Evade), then use the Dodge Score. Maneuvers can be performed twice per opponent, per Combat. All Maneuvers will trigger a caster to check for Fizzle if casting a spell.

Disarm (Attacks Parry Evade)

A successful Disarm Maneuver causes the opponent to drop their weapon. Picking up a weapon on melee is a Full Action and is considered a Fumble when they do so. The attack itself causes no damage. This can only be done on a target that is within one category of the attacker's size.

Peirce (Attacks Dodge Evade)

A successful Peirce Maneuver circumvents Absorb in the same way ranged weapons do. No Extra Damage can be added to this attack, modifiers from Strength, Mastery Styles and the like are allowed.

Trip (Attacks Dodge Evade)

A successful Trip Maneuver throws the opponent to the ground. The opponent cannot attack anymore that Round. The target's Initiative Roll has a -10 modifier the next Round. The attack itself causes no damage, but the attacker does get a +5 to-Hit the next attack

only. This can only be done on a target that is within one category of the attacker's size.

Bash (Attacks Block Evade)

A successful Bash Maneuver hits the target in the head with a punch from the hilt of the weapon, the shaft, or flat side of the blade. This has a *Blinding Effect* (X), where "X" is rolled by the attacker on 1d6.

Additionally, if a 6 is rolled, the target is also *Stunned* for the next Round only, then *Blinded* for 5 more Rounds. The attack itself causes only 1 Unavoidable Damage. This can only be done on a target that is within one category of the attacker's size.

Force (Attacks Block Evade)

A successful Force Maneuver means the character put all their weight behind a blow to cause more damage. Roll 1d6 and the attacker's Extra Damage is reduced by that number. If that brings the Extra Damage to less than 1, then each point below 1 adds 5 more damage. This is the only Maneuver that can also Critically Strike.

Target (Attacks Parry Evade)

A successful Target Maneuver allows the user to strike pinpoint blows at the target's limbs. The attacker chooses either legs or arms before the attack. Each successful Maneuver on the legs bestows a -1 Land Speed (to a minimum of 1). Each successful Maneuver on the arms assigns a -1 to-Hit for the rest of that Combat.

Base Maneuver is more for the Storyteller than anyone else. When a Player wants to perform some Maneuver-like action, that is not one of the given Maneuvers above; the Base Maneuver Score is used as a starting point for the Storyteller to assign a difficulty.

Melee Range

The range of a melee attack is typically adjacent Hexes, but there are some exceptions. Any Polearm allows a 1 Hex melee attack. Large-sized creatures likewise have a 1 Hex melee attack range, and 2 if they wield a weapon. Huge Creatures may also attack from 1 Hex away, and 3 if they have a weapon. Gargantuan creatures can attack in melee up to $\frac{1}{4}$ their overall length, or $\frac{1}{3}$ if they wield a weapon.

As before, if a character is within 1 Hex of an opponent, they automatically move into adjacent Hexes the following Round, and are considered to be in melee the whole time. If a character is attacked outside of 1 Hex away, even with a melee attack, nothing happens, and neither is in melee.

Flanking

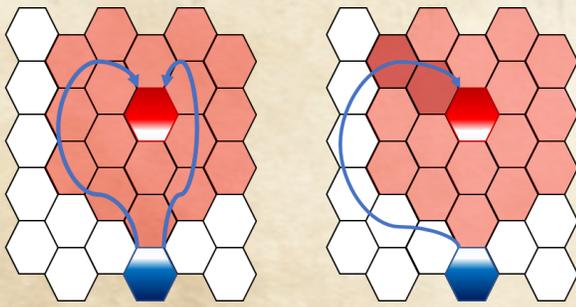
Flanking occurs when an opponent is unable to face an attacker in melee, for whatever reason, and that attacker occupies the Rear Arc. Flanking attacks cannot be parried or blocked – they are against a target's Dodge Score.

Flanking attacks only occurs when an attacker comes into the Rear Arc while remaining out of melee, e.g. outside of one Hex away. Characters may not approach a target to a 1 Hex range, and then move around the side to gain a Flanking Attack. The Rear Arc must be entered from more than 1 Hex away.

In the illustration below, the scenario on the left is not allowed. The attacker (blue) is maneuvering into a Flank while inside of the 1 Hex melee range.

The illustration on the right is permissible because they are entering the Rear Arc from more than 1 Hex away.

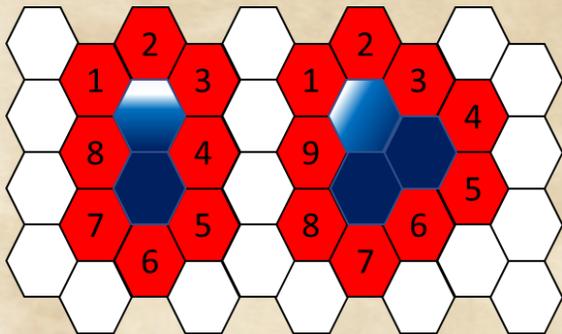
Also, bear in mind that you always face an opponent when they enter melee. In both the below scenarios, the defender would face the attacker as soon as they are 1 Hex away and no flank would occur. However, if the defender already has a Focus (already in melee) then a Flanking Attack would occur.



When executing a Flanking Attack, gain +3 to-Hit and +2 to Damage. Additionally, any Critical Strike has its Critical Severity increased by 2.

Multiple Opponents and Ganging Up

When facing multiple opponents, we first consider if they will fit. A normal-sized target can only ever have 6 opponents attack them at any one time from adjacent Hexes. Potentially, opponents from 1 Hex away could also attack if they had such a melee range. Larger creatures can have as many opponents as can fit around them.



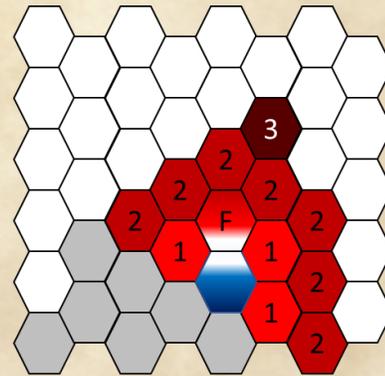
Above are examples of a Large-Sized and Huge-Sized targets facing multiple attackers. The Large-Sized can fit up to 8 opponents, and the Huge-Sized (in this shape) can fit 9.

Multiple attackers can gang up on a single target when they are all in melee. The opponent that is the Focus of the target receives no modifiers, but all others do.

Each attacker outside of the first receives a bonus to-Hit equal to +1 per attacker beyond the Focus, i.e. if there are 4 attackers, one being the Focus, all attackers that are not the Focus receive a +3 to-Hit.

If there are multiple ranks of attackers (meaning, they fill the Hexes that touch adjacent

Hexes and all adjacent Hexes are filled), all attackers have a -1 to their Critical Number per rank. Additional ranks only happen when all available Hexes around the target are filled. If the target is up against a wall and certain Hexes are not available to fill, then ranks would fill up faster. Thus, a Normal-Sized character in the open attacked by 5 opponents does not constitute an extra rank, and all attackers would get +4 to-Hit. The same character up against a wall where there are only 4 available Hexes around them, then 5 attackers would fill all adjacent Hexes and a second rank would be in play. In this latter case, all attackers would receive a +3 to-Hit and -1 to their Critical Number.



The above illustration depicts an unfortunate Normal-Sized character defending against 12 attackers. The gray Hexes are some terrain that cannot be occupied. Here, all available adjacent Hexes are filled. 1 Focus and 3 more attackers mean all those who can attack in melee (except the Focus) receive a +3 to-Hit. 1 Hex away, because all adjacent Hexes are filled, a second rank is constituted, imparting a -1 Critical Number for anyone who can attack. Lastly, we have one attacker who makes the start of a 3rd rank, furthering the Critical Number modifier to -2. In this case, all those who can attack in melee (except the Focus) gain a +3 to-Hit and have a -2 to their Critical Number!

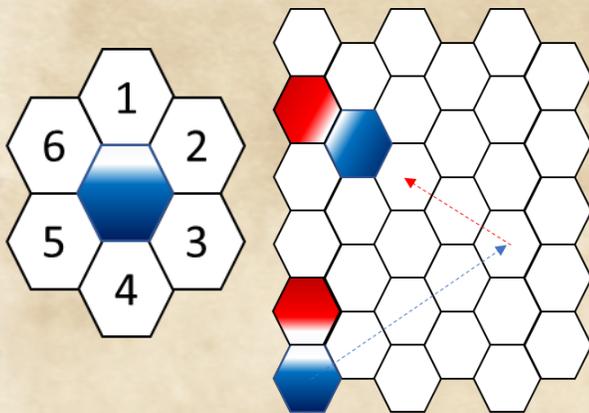
Ganging up only occurs when you attack something bigger than you and only if it is within 2 size classifications. Normal-Sized Player Characters can gang up on a Large or Huge-Sized opponent, but not Gargantuan.

Jockeying for Position

If two opponents are each other's Focus, they always remain facing each other as long as they stay in melee. Each may opt to move the melee around the battlefield. At the end of each Round, roll 1d6 two times; the first determines the direction and the second distance. For direction, a roll of 1 is the forward-facing direction, moving clockwise for each point above 1. Keeping the opponents in adjacent hexes, move the pieces around the board. A character can opt to move less than a roll, but never more.

This movement ignores movement penalties for moving into terrain, but it cannot move the opponents through or over unpassable terrain. Nor will it knock them off a cliff by virtue of this rule alone – but a character may be able to do just that using a Skill, ability or an Attribute Check.

One or both characters may roll this rule as they wish, and the final position is the combination of the two, the pair moving based on the higher Initiative Roll first. Orientation is in line with the direction of the last move.



Above is an illustration of Jockeying for Position. Blue has higher Initiative this Round and rolls a 2 for direction and 4 for distance. Then, Red rolls a 3 for direction (remember, direction is 1 for straight ahead and then move clockwise around) and a 2 for distance. They end up oriented along the path they came.

Ranged Combat

In many ways, Ranged Combat is a lot simpler. First, there are no facing requirements between opponents. The attacker must face their Focus, the target need not.

To attack a target at ranged, you must meet these conditions:

- Have the target in your Front Arc
- Be within the range of your weapon
- Have Line of Sight
- Be able to physically use your weapon
- Be able to see your target (can't be *Hidden*)

You cannot attack at range if you are engaged in melee. Your allies count as obstacles and block Line of Sight. You can shoot past them using the Partial LoS Rule. Most weapons have a minimal range and have modifiers for each range.

Ranges

Short Range: Based off the weapon's "Range" with a modifier to-Hit as listed on "Hit Mod". Lightning Casters, Gonts and Flamers are limited to Short Range only.

Medium Range: Weapon's Range x2. To-Hit is the "Hit Mod" -3. Throwing Weapons are limited to only Short and Medium Range.

Long Range: Weapon's Range x3. To-Hit is "Hit Mod" -5.

Minimum Range: Bows and Crossbows have a minimum range of 6 Yards. Throwing Weapons, Gonts, the Hand Crossbow and Grenades can be used just on the verge of melee, 1 Hex away. Lightning Casters have a minimum range of 10 Yards, and the Flamer may be used in melee.

Firing into Melee

If you shoot at something in melee and miss, you risk hitting something you don't intend. When you miss, roll 1d6, with 1 being the Hex adjacent to the forward face of your original target. Move in a clockwise fashion for each number. If something occupies that Hex, roll to-Hit again and apply it against that unintended target.



Ranged Maneuvers

Ranged Maneuver work the same as melee, with the same requirements for Preferred Weapons and Mastery Styles to use a Ranged Maneuver, and with a few exceptions and provisos. First, the character must always be Set, even if using a Throwing Weapon. Modifiers to hit from a Ranged Maneuver are additive to the normal Range penalty. Certain Ranged Maneuver are only available at certain Ranges. Lastly, Acid Vials, Fire Vials, Grathen Torches, Flamers, and Lightning Casters cannot use Maneuvers.

All Ranged Maneuver impart a modifier to-Hit, vice a targeted RO. Furthermore, Mastery Styles can lessen this modifier to-Hit. The numbers stated in the Mastery Style Charts are positives, counteracting the modifiers from a Ranged Maneuver and can only ever nullify the modifiers for the Ranged Maneuver itself.

All Range Maneuvers attack the Block Evade. As with Melee Maneuvers, Ranged Maneuvers are a Full Action and use all attacks for that Round.

Called Shot

(-5 to-Hit, Short & Medium Range only)

This allows the character to target a specific point on the target. That one point cannot be the head. While it inflicts no additional damage, it can be situationally applied.

Hindering Shot

(-4 to-Hit, Short & Medium Range only)

This targets the legs of the opponent. Each successful shot reduces the Land Speed of the target by 2, +1 more for each 5 damage inflicted. This lasts for the Combat, and then 1 Passing, +1 more Passing for each additional 5 damage inflicted on a single shot.

None bipedal targets are unaffected.

Weak Point Aiming

(No modifier, Short & Medium Range only)

Character takes extra special care to aim at the weak points in the armor of the target. This reduces the Armor By-Pass number, if any, by 2, to a minimum of 2. Modifiers from Mastery Styles can reduce this even more, to a minimum of 0.

Careful Aim

(No modifier, Medium and Long Range only)

The character fires no shot this Round. Instead, they receive a +10 to their Initiative Roll for next Round and receive a +4 to-Hit for a single shot only. Mastery Styles can increase this bonus.

Extra Long Shot

(-3 to-Hit, Long Range only)

The character gets a little extra range out of the weapon. It incurs an additional -3 to-Hit to the normal Range modifiers. The missile gains an extra 20% range.

Snap Shot

(-5 to-Hit, Short Range only)

If an opponent moves into melee with the character, they may take a single shot that Round before their opponent closes. This shot is done right before the opponent gets within 1 Hex away. In order for this to be done, the opponent closing must have been the character's Focus. This maneuver happens even if the character goes after the opponent in Round order and ignores minimal ranges of weapons.