

Generic Outlandishly Big Spacefleets!

Science Fantasy Combat on a Grand Scale

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“And if you... *study*... hard and apply yourselves, you too may one day have the greatest job a being can... *hope* ... to have— the job of starship captain!”

The assembled cadets broke into thundering applause, heads and antennae raised in awe towards the dashing man in the bright gold shirt, his smile— more of a smirk, really— accepting their applause almost as his due.

But for one lone cadet in the back of the hall the clapping was more polite than awed. He gazed towards the distant captain with an almost equal smirk. *Captain?* he snorted to himself, *Not good enough for me, pal. I’m going to be an Admiral!* He too surveyed the hundreds of cheering cadets. *And then all of your fine young captains will work for me...*

Come on. Admit it. Being a starship captain is pretty cool— but why settle for the command of a single starship when you can command an entire *fleet*? Yeah, that’s what you really want— for starships of all shapes and sizes to obey your word; to control great galaxy-spanning fleets of spaceships, ready to crush all opposition at your command.

Well, it ain’t gonna happen, bub. But you can enjoy the next best thing— **G.O.B.S.!**

Generic Outlandishly Big Spacefleets! is the game where you control vast fleets of vessels of all shapes and sizes, from nimble little fighters to moon-sized planetsmashers. Move your ships. Fire your weapons. Launch your torpedoes. And watch your enemies explode into brilliant flashes of molten metal! Everything a budding megalomaniac... err, defender of the galaxy... could want!

G.O.B.S.! is designed to allow you to build big, custom spacefleets and fight quick, explosive battles with simple rules and little or no record keeping. Just move, shoot, and (probably) explode. What could be more fun? Best of all, you can use **G.O.B.S.!** with any spaceship miniatures you like, from those expensive metal jobs to cheap plastic toys to scratch-built wonders made from household items. (Yours truly is contemplating a fleet made from seashells.)

So grab your spaceships, a load of dice, find a convenient table (or floor), and go at it!

And may the galaxy blaze with the glory of your forces!

G.O.B.S.! I

Items Needed (*or*, Every Admiral's Shopping List)

To play **G.O.B.S.!**, you will need:

Lots of spaceship figures (you can mount them or not; it's up to you.)

Lots of dice (20-siders, 12-siders, 10-siders, 8-siders, 6-siders and 4-siders.)

Something to use as a measuring standard; a ruler or a gridded map (your choice)

A supply of torpedoes (they need to be smaller than the ships, but anything will do.)

Paper and pencil to record your ships' configuration

An opponent (or more than one)

A healthy disregard for the laws of physical science, and a love for space opera.

Order of Play (*or*, Now What?)

G.O.B.S.! is divided into turns. All players will take action in each turn; the order of this is determined by phases and die rolls.

Turn Order:

1. **Initiative Phase:** Roll initiative (see *Who Moves When*).
2. **Movement Phase:** All players move their ships in order of speed class and initiative.
3. **Torpedo Launch & Movement Phase:** All players launch and move torpedoes.
4. **Combat Phase:** All players attack (See *Combat*.)
5. **Damage Phase:** All players apply damage. Torpedoes explode after all other attacks!
6. **Damage Control Phase:** Attempt repairs (all players). (See *Damage Control*.)

About the Ships

In **G.O.B.S.!**, a ship's speed and combat worthiness are determined by the size and apparent purpose of the miniature (or whatever the manufacturer happens to call the thing). Players may then customize the armament to reflect their preferences (see *How To Build Ships*).

Big ships are slow, clumsy, and easy to hit. They also carry lots and lots of weapons and are both very dangerous and hard to destroy.

Smaller ships are fast and nimble, and very hard to hit. However, they carry few weapons and are very easy to destroy.

The movement and combat systems of **G.O.B.S.!** are designed to reflect these general principles.

Ship Classification (or Wow, Sparky, What Does *Jane's Spacefleets* Call That One?)

Ships are classified as follows, from largest to smallest:

Planetsmashers	Size Class: -3
Superdreadnoughts	Size Class: -2
Carriers*	Size Class: -2 (0 for damage)
Dreadnoughts	Size Class: -1
Battleships/Battlecruisers	Size Class: -1
Heavy Cruisers	Size Class: 0
Light Cruisers/Heavy Frigates	Size Class: 0
Frigates	Size Class: 1
Patrol ships (including Corvettes, etc.)	Size Class: 1
Gunboats (including Pinnaces, Cutters, etc.)	Size Class: 2
Shuttles (including Gigs, Dropships, etc.)	Size Class: 2
Fighters	Size Class: 3
Torpedoes	Size Class: 4

* Note that while carriers are larger than many capital ships (i.e. big battleships), carriers are much weaker in combat, relying on their fighter complements rather than lots of weapons.

If your figure manufacturer uses a term you're not familiar with to describe a vessel, compare its relative size to other vessels, or assign it a classification. Just be certain you and your opponent agree on what class each vessel is.

Who Moves When

Geez, I don't know. Everybody move at the same time. Would that work? Guess not, huh? Okay, just kidding. The order of movement is determined by the relative speeds of the ships and by an initiative die roll between the players. At the beginning of each turn, all players roll a d6* (re-roll ties). The player with the highest roll has won the initiative (more on this in a moment).

All ships of all players are moved in order of class speed (see *Movement*), with the *lowest* class moving first and the *highest* class moving last. So, for example, all Superdreadnoughts move before Carriers, Carriers move before Dreadnoughts, Dreadnoughts move before Battleships, and so on. Fighters, of course, move last.

The initiative die determines the order each *player* moves their vessels. The player with the *lowest* roll moves all of his ships within the current class first; the next lowest player moves all his ships of that class second, and so on. The highest rolling player is the last player to move all his ships of the class being moved. Once all ships in a class are moved, the next class of ships is moved, and so on.

Uh, Why Do the Slow Ships Move First? Ships which move last will have an advantage in choosing a move that either allows them to avoid combat or pick better targets. That's why faster ships (and the initiative winner) move last.

**A word about dice: If you're not familiar with the conventions of wargaming, the letter "d" followed by a number indicates the type of die to be rolled. So a d20 is a*

twenty-sided die, a d6 is a six-sided die, and so on. If a mathematical operator (+ or -) is listed after the die, the number after the operator is added to or subtracted from the result as indicated. So, d20-2 means roll a twenty-sided die and subtract 2 from the result. d12+1 means roll a twelve-sided die and add 1 to the result. If a number is listed before the d, this is the number of dice to roll. So 6d6 means roll six six-sided dice and add the results together. Got it?

Movement (or Dang, Sparky, This Sure Beats NASCAR!)

In a nod to reality, the more massive a ship is, the harder it is to move it or make it change directions. (And that’s about as much of a nod as we’re going to give to reality. So don’t get used to it.)

Planetsmashers move very, very, slowly. In most battles this movement will be imperceptible. They have no ability to maneuver— at least, that would amount to anything in terms of battle action.

Superdreadnoughts and Carriers move at the same speeds, which isn’t much (for a spaceship, that is.). However, Carriers are not as resilient as even Battleships, as they are made vulnerable by their large, lightly shielded fighter bays. (When you build big holes into a ship, you’re asking for trouble.)

Dreadnoughts are only slightly faster (or *less slow and clumsy*, really) than Superdreadnoughts, and so on. You get the idea. So let’s quantify it with a chart. (Ooh! A chart! I love charts!)

MOVEMENT TABLE

<u>SHIP CLASS</u>	<u>THRUST</u>	<u>MANEUVER</u>
Planetsmashers	1/4 (1 unit every 4 turns)	0
Superdreadnoughts	2	1
Carriers	2	1
Dreadnoughts	3	1
Battleships/Battlecruisers	3	2
Heavy Cruisers	4	2
Light Cruisers/Heavy Frigates	4	3
Frigates	5	3
Patrol ships	5	4
Gunboats & Shuttles	6	4
Fighters	8	6*
Torpedo	8	(3, for combat calculation)

*Note that a 180° turn is only a 4 point turn. Fighters can conduct *two* changes in movement— a “jink” movement— in a turn. This accounts for the higher value. Jinking fighters split movement in half; i.e. turn, move half, turn again, and move the remainder.

About Thrust and Maneuver

Thrust is the number of units a ship may move in a straight line each turn. Maneuver is the number of “compass points” (i.e., 45° angles) the ship may change that movement to. Ships maneuver before moving. The amount of change is subtracted from the ship’s thrust, and the result is the distance the ship can move in its new heading.

About Units

What’s a unit? Whatever you want it to be. If you like tape measures, a unit can be an inch, a centimeter, ten centimeters, whatever. If you like grids, it can be a hex or a square. If you like bases (and all your bases are the same length), it can be the length of a base. A unit can even be the thickness of your big toe (but I won’t play with you unless your feet are really, really clean). Just make sure all the players agree beforehand!

Hey, That’s Not What “Thrust” Means! I Want to Do Vector Movement!

Fine and dandy. Use the same values as above, except the ship must continue its movement from the previous turn. For example, the frigate *Getoutamawai* is travelling at a speed of 6 units per turn. The frigate makes a radical 3 point turn (total 135°) subtracts this turn cost from its thrust (5-3=2). The ship then moves its full original speed (6), then moves towards its heading with the remaining thrust (2). The line from its starting point to its current location is its new vector (speed and direction of movement) for the next turn.

Note: this line is considered to be the ship’s actual movement for the turn, for purposes of determining collisions, rams, etc.

If you’re confused by that, go back to the unrealistic movement system.

Measuring Movement

Movement is generally measured from the front tip of the vessel. So a 3 unit move would mean the tip of the vessel moves 3 units forward (naturally, the rest of the vessel follows). You don’t *have* to measure from the front; you could measure from the center or the rear, so long as you consistently use the same measuring point throughout the battle.

What about 3D?

You want 3D? Put on some polarized glasses. I haven’t got time for it. It’s a free game, dude.

Collisions and Rams

Whenever two (or more) objects contact each other, a collision may occur. Both objects roll one d6. If *both* roll more than their respective maneuver ratings, a collision occurs. If *one* rolls less than its maneuver rating and the other rolls more, the ship that rolled less than its maneuver rating may choose to ram the other vessel or avoid the collision. If both ships roll less than their respective maneuver ratings, no collision occurs (not even a ram)— well, maybe the paint gets scratched, but that’s for the insurance companies to argue over.

Carriers & Fighters

Carriers can carry up to 12 fighters. Fighters may be launched singularly, or in groups of up to 3. They are launched before any movement is made. When launched, they are placed as close as possible to their carrier before moving.

Planetsmashers also act as carriers, and can hold up to 20 fighters, launched in groups of up to 5.

Hey, what about gravity? And planets and black holes and what not?

No problemo. Planets, black holes, and “what not” have extensive gravitational pulls, ranging from 1 to 10. (1 to 10 what? Uhm... I don't know... “gravinons.” Yeah, that's it.) These pulls extend outward a number of units from the surface of the planet, equal in distance to the strength of the pull. (So for a planet with 1 gravinon, the distance is 1 unit above the planet's surface.) Any vessel or object that enters this distance must have a thrust greater than the gravinons for that distance, or it will crash into the planet, black hole, or what not. (Oops.) The gravinons go down with distance from the source. So, for a black hole (which has a 10 gravinon pull), the pull is 1 gravinon at a distance of 10 units, 2 gravinons at 9 units, 3 gravinons at 8 units, and so on. The pulls are listed below:

GRAVITY CHART

<u>OBJECT</u>	<u>GRAVINON PULL</u>
Moon	1
Small planet (Mars type)	2
Earth/Earthlike planet	3
Big planet	4
Bigger planet	5
Gas giant	6
Star	8(10)
Neutron star	8 (1)
Black hole	10 (0)

Ships with thrusts greater than the highest gravinon for an object may land on the object and take off again after one turn. Ships that land cannot be targeted, nor can they attack or launch torpedoes. If they rejoin the battle, they enter from the same spot in which they landed.

Yes, Planets are Bigger Than Ships

The radius (in units) of a planet or other object is the same as the gravinon number for the object, or the number in parentheses (if shown). This assumes that a unit is at least equal to or greater than the longest dimension of the largest vessel in a battle (or a planetsmasher, whichever is bigger). So, for example, a moon would be the twice the size of a planetsmasher, a small planet would be four times as big and so on (remember, the chart shows *radii*, not diameter). (Yeah, I know. The chart's still all out of scale. Remember my comment about realism?)

If you decide that you want a planetsmasher to be larger than a single unit in diameter, just scale the planets up appropriately. You can scale the gravinons ranges too.

Map Size (or How Much Space Is There in Space, Sparky?)

G.O.B.S.! can be played in an area anywhere from 20 units x 20 units and up; though anything over 40 x 40 is probably overkill. 30x30 is probably about right.

A unit does not really correspond to any actual scale of real distance, so feel free to improvise on scale. However, no more than two planets or one black hole or one star and maybe one planet should be on the map for any battle, and they should be as far apart as possible. An exception might be a gas giant system with orbiting moons. (A cool battlefield situation, if you think about it.) Okay, a black hole that's sucking down a companion star might also be a cool battlefield. So ignore me, and do what you like.

Setting Up a Battle (or, Let's You and Him Fight!)

Fleets should enter from opposite sides of the map, or, if you prefer, one fleet may set up in a defensive position (say around a planet or spacestation), while the other enters from off the map.

Fighters must enter in the same turn as their supporting capital ships, or in the bays of a carrier or planetsmasher. Ships must enter during their class's movement period, and are subject to the initiative roll. A player may choose to wait to hold a ship back and enter it on any turn, but it can only enter during it's class's move phase. If all of a player's ships on the map are destroyed, and a third or less are left off the map, the battle is lost and these ships may not enter. (*Reserve? Who needs a reserve?*)

COMBAT

Yeehah! That's the whole point, isn't it?

There are two aspects of combat: Shooting and Damage. First you roll to see if you hit, then you roll to see if you hurt the target.

Ships have a number of attacks, determined by type:

NUMBER OF ATTACKS CHART

<u>SHIP CLASS</u>	<u>No. OF ATTACKS</u>
Planetsmashers	12
Superdreadnoughts	10
Carriers	4
Dreadnoughts	8
Battleships/Battlecruisers	7
Heavy Cruisers	6
Light Cruisers/Heavy Frigates	5
Frigates	4
Patrol ships	3
Gunboats	2
Shuttles	1
Fighters	2*

*One target only

Coincidentally, the number of attacks is also the number of weapons a ship can carry. (Funny how that works out...)

Except for fighters, a ship may divide its attacks among multiple targets. Fighters must concentrate both attacks on a single target.

The possibility of an attack hitting is based on the weapon used, range, target defenses and maneuverability and other factors.

Weapons

There are three basic classes of weapons: Energy Weapons (lasers, etc.), Mass Weapons (big slugs, rocks, shells, etc.), and Torpedoes.

The Energy Weapons are:

Lasers: These almost always hit their target, have essentially unlimited range, but are limited in the damage they do.

Phasers: Slightly less accurate and with a more limited range than lasers, but do more damage.

Disruptors: Poor accuracy and range, but man, do they pack a wallop!

Plasma Cannons: Short range only, but the accuracy is okay, and the damage... dang, that smarts!

Grav Beams: These short range weapons manipulate the gravometric fields of objects, altering density, gravitational attraction, and Social Security numbers to devastating effect. How devastating? Well, when the bulkhead of your ship contracts into a space the size of a marble and tears off into space along with most of your internal atmosphere (and leaving no forwarding address), you might feel just a tad devastated.

The Mass Weapons are:

Cannon: Blammo. Your great-granddaddy might recognize these futuristic descendants of his beloved artillery pieces. They have barrels, they shoot shells... but the booms are waaaay bigger, if you could hear them... which in space, you can't. Unless one explodes in your bridge... Decent accuracy, limited damage.

Coil Guns: All these suckers do is throw rocks. But they're *really* big rocks. They'll put a major dent in your day. Accurate? Well, kinda. How accurate do you want with a rock?

FAST Guns (Full-Auto Slug Throwers): Brrrrrraaaaaaapppppp. (Okay, yeah, I know, you can't hear that either. You're really being picky.) Good for what ails ya'... especially if what ails ya' is incoming fighters or torps. Not much good against capital ships. These babies throw out a cloud of fast-moving superdensified slugs that will rip fighters and torps to shreds... if they hit (which can be a little iffy).

Torpedoes:

Torpedoes are independently targeted, self-powered, self-guided little cans of serious hurt. If they hit you, you're probably toast. Better jam, jink and duck for all you're worth.

Torps can be quantum torps (expensive, but worth it), photon torps, fusion torps and jammer torps. Jammer torps don't do damage as such, but they disrupt certain targeting systems... useful when you want to get away!

Each weapon is assigned an attack die and a damage die, as follows:

WEAPONS CHART

<u>WEAPON</u>	<u>ATTACK DIE</u>	<u>DAMAGE DIE</u>	<u>RANGE</u>	<u>BLAST RADIUS</u>
Laser	d20	d4	20 units	
Phaser	d20-2	d6	18 units	
Disruptor	d12	d8	12 units	
Plasma Cannon	d12	d10	12 units	
Grav Beam	d10	d20	10 units	
Cannon	d12	d6	12 units	
Coil Gun	d10	d8	10 units	
FAST Gun	d10	d4 or d10*	10 units	
*d10 against fighters and torps				
Quantum torpedoes	NA	4d6	10 units	5 units
Photon torpedoes	NA	3d6	10 units	5 units
Fusion torpedoes	NA	2d6	10 units	3 units
Jammer torpedoes	NA	NA	10 units	6 units

Armor

Okay, that's a lot of hurtin' to put on a poor defenseless ship. Except the ships in **G.O.B.S.!** aren't defenseless. A ship has a choice of shields, deflectors, or densifiers.

Shields: are negative energy force fields surrounding the ship. They absorb or disrupt energy weapons fire fairly well, but have limited effect against other attacks.

Deflectors: are gravity-based systems that alter the inertial path of incoming matter. They can cause minor deflections of energy weapons as well. They're not great, but they're versatile... and way better than nothing.

Densifiers: are hull-mounted armor systems that can alter their density and tensile strength in nearly instantaneous response to impacts or explosions, absorbing or deflecting such damage away from the vessel. Against energy weapons they have very limited effect.

And if none of these works, the ship might just be able to dodge. (But it better try that first!)

Each armor type has a potential level of effectiveness against the various weapons classes:

ARMOR CHART

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>ENERGY DIE</u>	<u>MASS DIE</u>	<u>EXPLOSION DIE</u>
Shields	d10	d4	d4
Deflector	d4	d10	d6
Densifier	d6	d8	d8

How to Conduct Attacks (*or Shoot Fast, Sparky, They're At Light Speed!*)

1. Choose Attacker & Target. The initiative winner attacks first, but all combat is considered to be simultaneous, so this isn't an advantage, just a convenience. The attacking player works out attacks in any order he likes, completing all the attacks for one ship before moving to the next. A ship may attack as many targets as it has weapons, or make multiple attacks against one or more targets. In any case, each weapon may only shoot once per turn. A player does not have to attack with all of the ships which can do so (although why you would hold back, I can't imagine). Once one player completes all his attacks, the next player does his, and so on.

2. Check line of sight. This is a straight line between any point on the attacker and any point on the potential target. (You can eyeball this or use a straightedge or taut string.) If any object other than a fighter is in the way, line of sight is blocked and the attacker cannot select that target. Remember, only fighters do not block line of sight! (They're just too dang small.)

3. Fire weapons: Each weapon fires one at a time. Roll the weapon's attack die and subtract 1 from the roll for every unit of distance between the closest point of the target and the closest point on the attacking vessel. (Yes, fins and wings count. If two players disagree on the range, roll a d6. 1-3, the target is in the range the attacker claims. 4-6, it's the range the defender claims. If you don't like that option, play chess.)

If the target *maneuvered* in the movement phase, subtract the number of points it changed headings from the attack roll. (If the target is a fighter and moved twice, the total points change is used.) Simply moving forward is *not* the same as maneuvering.

If the target did not move at all, add 1d6 to the attack roll.

4. Armor effects: The target rolls for its defenses, but only once. The result is subtracted from each of the attackers' die rolls, regardless of the number of ships or weapons attacking.

5. Determining hits: If the final attack roll for a weapon, after range and armor modifiers, is more than the target's Size Class value, the weapon hits the target. You may want to use a die to mark the number of hits for each weapon type made on the target.

6. Determining Damage: After all attacks are made, all hits are added up, and the damage dice for each successful hit are rolled. Each damage die is modified by the target's Size Class. (So, for example, a dreadnought gets to subtract 1 from each damage die rolled against it, while a fighter must add 3 to each damage die rolled against it.). Yes, this modifier is applied to each die; if an attack rolls multiple dice (for example, a torpedo), each individual die is modified by the size class. Total all damage from all weapons inflicted on a target and compare to the following chart:

DAMAGE RESULT CHART

<u>TARGET IS:</u>	<u>NE</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>WD</u>	<u>ID/FB</u>	<u>MD</u>	<u>TD</u>	<u>BOOM</u>
Planetsmasher	<12	12+	16+	18+	NA	24+	36+
Superdreadnought	<10	10+	12+	16+	18+	20+	24+
Dreadnought	<8	8+	10+	12+	16+	18+	20+
Battleship/Battlecruiser	<6	6+	8+	10+	12+	16+	18+
Heavy Cruiser	<4	4+	6+	8+	10+	12+	18+
Carrier	<4	4+	6+	8+	8+	10+	16+
Light Cruiser/Heavy Frigate	<4	4+	5+	8+	6+	8+	16+
Frigate	<4	4+	5+	6+	8+	10+	14+
Patrol ship	<4	4+	5+	6+	7+	8+	12+
Gunboat	<3	3+	4+	5+	6+	8+	10+
Shuttle	<2	2+	3+	4+	5+	6+	8+
Fighter	<2	2+	3+	4+	5+	6+	7+
Torpedo	<6	-	-	-	-	-	6+

What the Chart Results Mean:

NE: No effect. Just what it says. Basically, you vaporized a cargo bay, or the ship's bar, or the cute little yeoman's cabin (but not her). So, the enemy may be a little steamed at you (particularly if you hit the bar) or grateful (depending on who the yeoman gets bunked with), but that's about all.

SD: Shield damage (well, defense damage). In movies and shows, these always seem to go down first, so... they go down first. The defensive systems (regardless of type) are now at half strength (divide the defense die roll by 2, rounding up). If damaged again, they're gone... permanent like.

WD: Weapons damage. The ship doesn't shoot so well anymore. Each time the ship attacks, roll a d4. The result is subtracted from the attack roll for each weapon. Weapons damage only happens once. Hey, the game wouldn't be fun if you couldn't shoot!

Important: Weapons damage also affects a ship's torpedoes. If a ship still has unlaunched torpedoes, a weapons damage result destroys half of each type of torpedo on board, rounded up. (So, for example, if a ship has only 1 quantum torpedo left, that torpedo is destroyed.) This applies to Planetsmashers as well.

ID: Jammer damaged. The ship can no longer jam torpedoes. Uh-oh.

FB: Fighter Bay. At the attacker's option, this damage is applied to a carrier or planetsmasher's fighter bays. The target can launch no more fighters until the damage is repaired.

MD: Maneuver damaged. The ship's maneuvering ability is reduced by half, rounding down. (Yes, it can be zero.) If already damaged, maneuvering ability is lost completely.

ID: Thrust (engine) damage. You need more power! The ship's speed is reduced by half, rounding down. If speed is 1/2, this means it can only move every other turn. If the engines are already damaged, the engines are destroyed. The ship drifts at the last speed it had, in the same direction of its last move. (Hope you're headed home.) **Important:** If a ship leaves the map for any reason, it is considered to have abandoned the battle, and is lost.

Boom: The ship explodes in a glorious burst of pyrotechnics and inexplicably audible noise. All players are required to say, "Oooh," and "Aahhh," and "Frickin' Awesome!" or similarly appropriate comments. If the target is a Planetsmasher, you might want to host a barbecue with some Ewoks... or better yet, barbecue some Ewoks. They're tasty with horseradish.

All damage effects are cumulative; for example, if an attacker rolls high enough to damage a ship's jammer, then that target's defensive systems and weapons are also damaged, and so on.

IMPORTANT: You do *not* keep track of the total amount of hits from turn to turn. Only the damage effects are important. So a dreadnought could take 12 hits each turn and still keep fighting, no matter how many hits it took in a previous turn. Of course, if it takes 20 or more hits in a single turn, it's toast!

What About Torpedoes? You Keep Mentioning Torpedoes...

Keep your red shirt on! (Please!)

Any vessel may carry torpedoes. They may carry as many torpedoes as the number of attacks for that vessel. (See *Number of Attacks Chart*). These torpedoes are in addition to the weapons; you do not have to give up weapons to carry torpedoes, but you do have to *pay* for the torpedoes (see *How to Build Ships*). Up to half of these torpedoes may be launched each turn, however a ship cannot launch torpedoes and fire other weapons in the same turn.

Important Exceptions: *Planetsmashers have unlimited torpedoes! (Well, except for the cost, that is. Basically, you can arm a Planetsmasher with as many torpedoes as you can afford.) Planetsmashers may launch as many as 8 torpedoes a turn, and fire their weapons at the same time. Yes, that's not fair. Evil despots who build planetsmashers are not generally known for being fair.*

Launching and Moving Torpedoes

Torpedoes are launched and/or moved after all other objects move (except planetsmashers), but before combat. Once a torpedo is launched, it is not replaced; so, for example, a Heavy Cruiser can carry 6 torpedoes, but once they're launched, it has no more torpedoes. Yeah, you'll need to keep track of this.

All torpedoes have a speed of 8. Yes, that's fast. They can move 8 units in any direction, at any angle from their current location. No, that's not realistic. (Geez, nothing about this game is realistic! Why should I start now?) A torpedo moves for three turns, then goes inactive and is lost.

Torpedoes & Combat

If a torpedo reaches a target (and isn't shot down), it either blows up or gets jammed, if the target has active jammers (see *Jamming*). If the torpedo blows up, everything within its blast radius is hit (even friendly ships) if the torpedo rolls more than 1 on a d12. Yes, defensive systems are subtracted from this, as is range. No, maneuver is not subtracted. Sorry. Explosion damage is applied as usual. If the torpedo's target has been attacked by other ships or torpedoes, the explosive damage is added to the total damage for the turn. (YIPE!)

Torpedoes may be targeted, but only by lasers and FAST guns. Torpedoes do not have defensive systems. They have an effective maneuver of 3 when calculating attacks against them. (In other words, 3 is subtracted from all attacks on torpedoes.) This applies whether the torpedo has turned or not.

IMPORTANT: Torpedoes explode *after* all other combat... so it's possible to shoot a torpedo before it explodes, even if it reaches its target. It's not all that *likely*, but it is possible.

Jamming

A ship with an active jamming system may attempt to jam a torpedo that collides with it. The ship rolls a d6. On a 5 or 6, the torpedo is jammed, and must select a new target on its next move (if it has one left). (No collision is considered to have occurred; the idea is that the jamming signal causes the torpedo to swerve aside in favor of a new target.)

Jammer Torps

Jammer torpedoes do not cause damage except to a ship's jammer and targeting systems. When a jammer torpedo explodes, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6, all ships and torpedoes within the blast radius (friendly or not) are jammed. Weapons systems are damaged as per the standard damage rules; jammer systems are also damaged. Torpedoes in the blast radius (including torpedoes not yet launched!) are *permanently* jammed, and go off-line. (They are lost.) No other damage takes place, and no damage is added to other attacks. Everyone affected should exclaim, "Dang* that torpedo! Full speed ahead."

(*Yeah, I know the actual quote. It's a family-friendly game.)

Damage from Collisions and Rams.

If two or more ships collide, for whatever reason, use the following chart:

COLLISION DAMAGE CHART

<u>SHIP TYPE</u>	<u>DAMAGE</u>
Planetsmashers	10d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Superdreadnoughts	8d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Carriers	5d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Dreadnoughts	6d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Battleships/Battlecruisers	5d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Heavy Cruisers	4d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Light Cruisers/Heavy Frigates	3d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Frigates	2d6 + Target Size Class (per die)
Patrol ships	d8 + Target Size Class
Gunboats	d6 + Target Size Class
Shuttles	d6 + Target Size Class
Fighters	d4 + Target Size Class

The damage shown is the amount done to the other vessel (the "target") by the colliding vessel listed. So, a Carrier does 5d6 worth of damage to anything it collides with (modified according to the target's Size Class). Defensive systems will *not* prevent this damage. Like torpedo damage, it is added to any other damage done to the ship in the same turn (at the end of combat).

HOW TO BUILD SHIPS (or, Hand Me that Plasma-Coil Spanner, Sparky.)

G.O.B.S. ships can be custom designed. Every element costs megacredits; add up the megacredits, and you have the cost of the ship. Add up the cost of your ships, and you have the cost of your fleet. Simple, ain't it?

You start with the basic cost for the ship you want, as follows:

SHIP BASE COST CHART

<u>SHIP CLASS</u>	<u>COST</u>
Planetsmashers	5000
Superdreadnoughts	500
Carriers	250
Dreadnoughts	200
Battleships/Battlecruisers	150
Heavy Cruisers	100
Light Cruisers/Heavy Frigates	80
Frigates	70
Patrol ships	60
Gunboats	50
Shuttles	10
Fighters	25

Then add in the weapons cost, up to the number of attacks for the ship. *You must fully arm the ship to its full weapons compliment.*

WEAPONS COST CHART

<u>WEAPON</u>	<u>COST</u>
Lasers	10
Phasers	25
Disruptors	30
Plasma Cannons	40
Grav Beams	50
Cannons	5
Coil guns	10
FAST guns	20
Quantum Torpedoes	50 each
Photon Torpedoes	30 each
Fusion Torpedoes	20 each
Jammer Torpedoes	100 each

Add any one defensive system:

ARMOR COST CHART

<u>ARMOR</u>	<u>COST</u>
Shields	25
Deflectors	15
Densifiers (fighters cannot have these)	20

(Begins to add up, doesn't it?)

Record each ship as follows:

Name (gotta have a name), Type (P, Sd, Cr, D, B, HC, LC, Fr, Ps, G, Sh, Fi), Defensive system (S, Df, Dn), Weapons and number (L#, Ph #, D#, PC#, GB#, Cn#, Clg#, FAST#, QT#, PT#, FT#, JT#)

Example: *SS Screaming Meanie* HC Df L2 Ph2 GB1 FAST2 QT2 PT2 FT1 JT1

(Side note: the above ship has a cost of 755 megacredits. How's that for sticker shock?)

To have a battle, choose the megacredits available for each side, build ships, and go at it.

Megacredit costs for battles are:

Yowza, that's a battle: 10,000 megacredits.

Real Donnybrook: 8,000 megacredits

Major scrap: 5,000 megacredits

Slugfest: 3,000 megacredits

Rumble: 2,500 megacredits

Minor to do: 1,500 megacredits.

Fleet Restrictions:

Each side must have at least one capital ship. (A capital ship is anything of Heavy Cruiser status or larger.) No side may have more than one planetsmasher.

Fighters don't generally travel outside the company of capital ships. Each capital ship in a fleet can support up to 3 fighters. Dreadnoughts can support 4 fighters, Superdreadnoughts can support 5. Carriers can support 12 fighters, and Planetsmashers can support 20 fighters. The maximum number of fighters available is determined by the number of supporting capital ships. (This prevents someone from spending every megacredit on fighters.)

Damage Control (or, Looks Like I'll Need That Spanner Again, Sparky.)

Next to a good crew, fuel, and a cute little yeoman, every starship relies on one thing to survive a battle: A good supply of spare parts. (Okay, that's several things. Cut me some slack.) After all combat is complete for both (or all) sides, each ship may attempt to repair damaged systems. The player chooses a single damaged system on the ship and rolls a d6. On a 5 or 6 the damage is repaired. You can do this as often as you like. Of course, once a ship goes "boom," crashes, or drifts off the map, the ship is lost and cannot be repaired. Also, if a system is lost (because it has been damaged twice), it cannot be repaired. Tough luck, Sparky.

Any Questions?

What about capturing enemy ships?

Evil Galactic Overlords don't capture enemy ships (unless attractive defiant princesses are aboard). Neither do outnumbered Plucky Rebel Heroes. If causing huge explosions are good enough for them, they're good enough for you. (Okay, I'm too lazy to design this into the system. If you have a good solution, go for it.)

What about planetsmashers? Are they the same as Death St...

Shhh!!!! No, no, uhm, of course not. They're, uhm, totally original to the game. Really.

Can they blow up planets?

Yes. If a planetsmasher is within 8 units of a planet (or any big stationary object), it may blow the planet up. The planetsmasher can take no other action when doing this, including launching fighters, torpedoes, or firing weapons. All ships in the area suffer a single d12 attack from the debris and shockwave of the obnoxious rebel... err, poor defenseless planet. Defensive systems will affect this as usual, (it's a mass attack), as will range from the planet. If the debris hits, it does 4d6 of damage.

No, there is no way to prevent a planetsmasher from firing once it is in range, except to blow it up before the attack phase. So you'd better do that, or find a good intergalactic real estate agent.

Planetsmashers: The Fatal Flaw

Planetsmashers are nasty and tough to destroy. So here's the fatal flaw rule. As per the regulations for Evil Galactic Overlords, section 17, paragraph B, all planetsmashers have a significant weakness to one specific weapon type (i.e., laser, FAST gun, fusion torpedo, whatever). It must be a weapon type possessed by the enemy. Any player who controls a planetsmasher must select this weapon type and write it down in secret on a piece of paper, along with the roll result from the weapon's damage die. This paper is set upside down so the weapon type cannot be viewed by the opponent. If at any point the planetsmasher is attacked by this type of weapon, the paper is revealed. The planetsmasher's defensive systems do not impede this attack in any way. If any damage roll for *any* weapon of this type attacking the planetsmasher is *less* than or equal to the roll

result on the piece of paper, the planetsmasher is destroyed in a glorious blast of stars... and it's Ewok barbecue time! (Don't forget the horseradish!)

What about planetary defenses?

There aren't any. The fleets are the defenses. So do your job, admiral!

None?

Nope. Suck it up.

Races and Special Abilities

Boneheads: Disruptors and Plasma Cannons cost half as much. All defensive systems except densifiers cost double. Boneheads may re-roll one attack die per ship per turn. Boneheads are aggressive; whenever an enemy ship, of any size, is in range of a bonehead's weapons, the bonehead must attack the ship.

Thinkers: Grav beams & Jammer torps cost half as much. All other torpedoes cost double. Mass weapons cost double. Densifiers cost double. Thinkers may re-roll their initiative, but must take the second roll.

Mean Thinkers: Disruptors & Quantum torpedoes cost half as much. Mass weapons cost double. Shields cost double. Mean thinkers may call off any one combat situation and shift a targeted vessel of their choice to a new location no more than half its thrust away. This vessel cannot attack on the same turn it shifts.

Redneccers: All mass weapons cost half as much. Energy weapons cost double. Explosive torpedoes cost half as much, but jammer torpedoes cost double. Redneccer vessels may only have densifiers. Yes, this means Redneccer fighters have no armor. However, redneccers supe up their fighters to speed 10. Redneccers may roll an additional damage die for any explosion attack. "Dang, Clem! That blowed up real good!"

Tyrant Lackeys: Must have at least one Dreadnought or better class ship in every battle. Fighters cost half as much, but must subtract 1 from all attack rolls. (Tyrant lackeys are notoriously bad shots.) Tyrant lackeys may re-roll any one die of any type, once per turn.

Freedom Fighters: May not have Dreadnought or larger ships. (Carriers are allowed.) Plasma Cannons and Grav Beams cost double. Freedom fighters may add one to every attack die roll. They may also re-roll any one die of any type, once per turn.

Do-Gooders: All costs remain the same. Do-Gooders may make two damage control attempts per damaged ship, per turn. Do-Gooders may not build planetsmashers.

Slackers: Slackers must subtract 1 from all initiative rolls. Slackers may not build ships larger than a Heavy Cruiser, except for Carriers. Slackers love Carriers. And cutters. (You

see where I'm going with this, don't you?) Slackers buy defensive systems at half price. Slackers may force an opponent to re-roll any one attack die on each Slacker vessel targeted by that opponent.

Traders: They're conniving, they're devious, and they're too savvy for anyone's good. Traders can swap one die result per ship with their opponent. This can be during initiative, during attacks, whatever, so long as both the trader and the opponent are supposed to roll. So the trader could swap initiative rolls, or swap an attack die roll for a defense die roll (even if they're not the same die!), or vice versa. Note that if only one player is rolling, no swap can occur. (So you can't swap damage dice— except in a collision— or damage control dice, or jam attempts, etc.) Yes, a trader may swap a smaller die for a larger one, even if the larger one technically doesn't apply. (For example, a trader might swap a densifier roll result against a laser with the laser's attack roll!) Traders are poor fighters, and must subtract 2 from all attack rolls, but the penalty does not trade, or apply to the die traded for. Traders don't build planetsmashers (you can't trade with an exploded planet!). Traders also may purchase *everything*— even ships— at 25% off! (Round cost up.)

Drones: Drones are efficient— too efficient sometimes. For each vessel, drones roll only one attack die for each type of weapon on the vessel. The result applies to **all** weapons of that type. Drones are very good at adapting to enemy attacks. Drones may add 1 to all defensive system rolls, and may re-roll any one defensive roll per combat phase.

Suggested Races (Experiment with their abilities yourself.)

Kittycats

Rovers

Monkeyboys

Bugs

Lizards

Mollusks

Raptors

Cetaceans (Whales & Dolphins)

Biotechs

Elephants

Bruisers (related to Boneheads, only dumber)

More Races (Suggested by Hundvig of The Miniatures Page)

Willies: While most people build their ships out of metal, plastic, and ceramics, the Willies just have to be different and *grow* their ships. The actual appearance of these vessels varies widely... some look like giant insects or sea creatures, some like a spacegoing Gray's Anatomy illustration, some even look like... well, you don't want to have to explain it to the kids... but they all give you the willies to look at. In game terms, Willies pay double for Densifiers (they're usually kind of squishy, but some have hard crusty shells) and receive a +1 to repair damage (representing limited tissue regrowth, backup organs, or just the difficulty in identifying a vital spot to shoot). They also tend to make a sort of splattery sound when they're destroyed, which is nowhere near as satisfying as a nice Boom!

Clowns: Crazy color schemes on all their ships, annoying calliope music broadcast on all channels, and pie-shaped torpedoes...they're Clowns, all right. Any fleet fighting against Clowns suffers a -2 to Initiative, because no one takes them seriously. Clown Carrier hulls cost 500 rather than 250, but use secret hyperspace technology that allows them to support and carry any number of fighters. Their launch rate is still just 3 per turn, though. (And yes, Clowns do have to pay for all the fighters. Hey, it takes a lot of pre-k birthday parties to support a good Clown!)

Try fightin' those, Clem...

Designer's Notes

Why **G.O.B.S.!**? This all started on The Miniatures Page (theminaturespage.com) when someone posted a link to some very cheap plastic spaceships at U.S. Toy (ustoy.com). Although I mostly play fantasy and medieval historicals, I have designed a hard sci-fi, near future space combat game. These ships, however, are not hard sci-fi, but very much "science fantasy" or space opera type ships. And they were cheap. So the idea of writing rules for them started gelling in my mind.

About that same time, other TMPers started requesting recommendations for space combat rules that could handle large fleets of ships. My hard sci-fi rules are good (if I say so myself), but if you go much over 10-12 ships per side, the game is going to slow down with record keeping and the like. This is true of a number of otherwise excellent space combat games. So I wanted to create a game that eliminated the record keeping, would accommodate "gobs" of starships (hence the name), and be both fun and amusing to play, while offering a lot of diversity in fleet and ship design. I also wanted to create an unusual (and random) movement system that kept all players involved throughout the game, with no boring lulls while Jimmy over there moves his seventeenth out of thirty-two ships.

I wrote this game over a period of two days. As of February 8, 2005 it is completely *unplaytested*— even I haven't tried it out. So it may have major holes (probably in combat...) You're getting it for free. So here's the deal: You read it, try it out, and post on The Miniatures Page to tell me what works and what doesn't. If you want to share it with friends, that's fine, but you cannot charge for it, and please don't alter the text. Oh, and ask your friends to post their comments as well. Also, I formally request and require that my name and copyright notice be included with all copies. Thank you, and enjoy playing **G.O.B.S.!**

--- Howard Shirley, aka Parzival on TMP

Update 2/12/05

Thanks to Hundvig & Oerjan of TMP, the game has gone through its first update. (My, that was quick.) Certain rules have been clarified and others streamlined to make the game speedier and combat more balanced. Holes probably still exist, so keep posting on TMP!

--- Howard

Update 3/3/05

A perusal of the rules turned up a few artifacts from the original that needed cleaning up, as well as some minor clarifications. No major changes are involved; if you had a pretty good idea of what was going on, you probably won't need more than a cursory glance to familiarize yourself with things.

For the latest updates, tips, new races and more visit <http://members.aol.com/thegobspage/>