

The basical logic of Space Crusade and its connections with Wh40k

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Terms used in this book:

1w – one white die (or light weapon die)
2w – two white dice
1R – one red die (or heavy weapon die)
2R+2w – 2 red and 2 white dice
AV – armour value
h/h – hand-to-hand combat
LP – life point
SC – Space Crusade
WD – White Dwarf
WH40k – Warhammer 40.000

1. SC and WH40k

SC can be considered the little brother of WH40k because it concerns the same universe (alien species, factions, weapons, ...) but the in-game mechanics are different, simplified¹ and easy to learn.

The following paragraphs allow, on the one hand to understand the basic logic of SC, and on the other hand to introduce new miniatures, weapons or equipments, respecting the principles and the balances of the game.

2. Armour value (AV)

AV is a trait of SC models, used mainly during ranged attack.

It's about a set of components that, working together, increase the chances of survival.

Synthetically, the AV is related to the abilities of the race and the armour worn (or simply, protection). In other words it is represented by the endurance (race and protection) and the agility of a miniature.

AV can be expressed by this equation:

AV = Ability of the race + Protections or

AV = Endurance + Agility

Now, it is possible to understand why genestealers have an AV of 3 (AV=3) even if their armour (carapace) isn't necessarily more tough than the android's or marines' one (AV=2): in fact, it's also important to consider the agility of the genestealer, able to cling and jump from wall to wall.

Same remarks for the eldar AV (AV=2), whose armour (mesh armour) is less tough than the marine's one.

It's obvious that sometimes a heavy armour can reduce the agility of a miniature.

AV can be increased by special equipment (i.e. force field) or armours (i.e. Terminator armour), but it's also possible to consider the improvement of the agility (i.e. drugs or cybernetic implants) or the cover provided by a specific stuff in the battlefield.²

3. Life points (LP)

Life points represent the resistance of a miniature to battle wounds. They are related to the creature physiology, the experience in battle, the will-power and the chance to use drugs that reduce pain.

Usually a model has only one LP, but there are two exceptions:

- miniatures with more than one LP (that can be recovered or not): space marines commanders have 6 LP, so their chance to survive is increased, but they are quite a lot if compared with LPs in WH40k!³
- miniatures that lose their abilities when they lose LP: dreadnought (3 or 5 LP) and eldar exarch. The first one loses its weapons, the second his powers.

¹ In SC there aren't elaborate rules related to morale, experience, rapid fire weapons, jamming, overwatch, range, etc.

² In WH40k, a miniature behind an object that offers a good protection (i.e. low wall, sand bags) can fire and also gains a protection bonus (AV bonus) during ranged attacks. It's possible to assume a +1 bonus on AV even in SC (i.e. the AV of a marine behind a sturdy metal crate is increased from 2 to 3).

³ Hypothesis: commander's LPs can be increased only every rank promotion, like the eldar exarch. A sergeant has 3 LP and the last two ranks permit 6 LP. Moreover, veteran marines can have 2 LP.

4. Combat dice and hand-to-hand combat (h/h)

The h/h rule is probably the most simplified one in SC because it doesn't consider the AV or combat abilities like "parry" or "disarm the enemy".

The winner of a melee combat is simply the one that has obtained the highest points rolling his dice. The number and type of combat dice used in h/h, if compared with the opponent dice, represent the probability to kill this one.

Unfortunately, there isn't a rule that explains if a figure is unable to kill another one (i.e. can a gretchin destroy a dreadnought?).

But, are we able to create a rule to assign dice to miniatures? Probably, for human and humanoids, it depends on the h/h weapon used, so a bayonet is less powerful than an energy weapon (glove, sword or axe). Implicitly it is related to strength, armour (only if it reduce movement), agility, combat abilities and experience. So, a very strong figure, with a good h/h experience but without an appropriate weapon can easily perish in a melee combat.

In short:

Number of h/h dice = Strength + Other abilities – armour

It's possible to create a hierarchy of humanoids related to the strength (more powerful at top):

- Androids
- Orks⁴ and Space marines (genetically modified humans)
- Humans and Eldar
- Gretchin

Depending on the number and type of rolled dice, there are:

1 white die (1w) [max points 2]: used for very weak figures such as gretchins.

2 white dice (2w) [max points 4]: standard combination for powerful trained miniatures that use basic melee weapons (knives, bayonets or other blades) such as orks and marines.

2 red dice (2R) [max points 6]: used for figures specialised in melee combats (i.e. genestealers and androids)⁵.

2 red dice and 2 white ones (2R+2w) [max points 10]: that's the highest h/h point that we can find in the SC rules. It's used only by extremely dangerous miniatures (i.e. dreadnought and space marine commander with power sword and power glove).

5. Combat dice and ranged weapons types

Wh40k ranged combat rules consider the probability to strike, the probability to wound and the armour saves. SC rules, instead, compare the ranged weapon dice with the target's AV.

Weapon's combat dice can't be modified because they aren't affected by strength and agility of the miniature that use it⁶. Only h/h weapons are strictly connected to these model characteristics!

Instead, the number and maximum points of dice are closely related to the target's AV. So, there are light weapons (anti-infantry), heavy and extra-heavy weapons (or anti-tank) because there

⁴ Orks have very different sizes but, on the average, they are considered equal to space marines. Big orks (i.e. Nobz or Warboss) have a strength superior to the average ones.

⁵ A particular situation is represented by the eldar exarch. He can roll 3w, so he's less powerful than a model that roll 2R: they can obtain the same maximum points (6) but the probability to obtain them is lower for those who use white dice.

⁶ Eldar exarch represents an exception: his agility and rapid movements permit to fire twice.

are lightly protected targets (i.e. infantry, max AV=3), light armoured enemies (i.e. dreadnought and other targets with max AV=5) and heavy armoured vehicles (i.e. tanks, not considered in SC). This not explicit hierarchy is related to the same data that we can find in our reality. So:

- a) anti-infantry weapons (i.e. bolter) can kill only infantry miniatures. They are ineffective against (light and heavy) armoured enemies (i.e. dreadnought) because their maximum damage is 4 (roll of 2w), equivalent to an enemy with a maximum AV=3. Bolter hasn't the strength to penetrate dreadnought's protection;
- b) heavy weapons allow to roll 2R. They are more effective against infantry than the previous weapons and can kill light armoured enemies like dreadnought;
- c) anti-tank weapons (or extra-heavy weapons) can easily destroy every enemy because of the roll of 3R. In fact, in WH40k rules, the las-cannon and the fusion gun (or multi-melta) are the typically anti-tank weapons.

Another classification is related to the size of the weapon.

For every weapon type (bullet, plasma, laser ...) SC and WH40k rules suggest a standard two-hands version, a small version (pistol, with same power) and a large version with a big caliber and/or power (heavy and extra-heavy weapons).

A (decreasing) hierarchy of the more powerful weapons⁷, based on the technology level:

- light weapons: melta (fusion gun), plasma, bullet (bolter) and laser;
- heavy (and extra-heavy) weapons: laser, plasma, melta and bullet.

6. The logic behind the re-roll of a die

In special circumstances the combat ability of a miniature can be positively modified.

In these cases SC in-game logic allow the re-roll of a die to try to increase the score:

- physical upgrades that increase some traits like strenght⁸ or perception (i.e. equipment cards "bionic eye" and "bionic arm");
- weapons upgrades, that make them more efficient (not more devastating!), increasing their probability to hit (i.e. equipment card "targeter"). In WH40k they are also called "master-crafted weapons"⁹.

In SC rules there are also some exceptions related to the marine's equipment (i.e. close assault blades or order "photon grenades") that reduce the h/h ability of an enemy and permit particular combat tactics (i.e. diagonal attack).

7. Movement

Movement is related to specific race features (speed and endurance) and their modifiers (heavy weapons, armours, genetic alterations, etc). For example, there's remarkable difference between genetically modified space marines, and eldar: the first ones can move to 6 squares even if they wear a heavy protection (they have an high endurance), but their ability is reduced to 4 squares if

⁷ This hierarchy is related to weapon's characteristics (strenght and penetration power) found on WH40k books and on SC rules.

⁸ In this case an increasing of the marine strenght do not allow the roll of one more die, but the re-roll of one of it. Probably, only one bionic arm in an organic body doesn't allow to advance to the next strength class (i.e. androids).

⁹ Combi-weapons aren't part of this category.

they carry another heavy weight¹⁰; eldar can move to 7 squares¹¹, reduced to 3 squares when they carry a heavy weapon.

So, orks can be treated as marines and gretchin as eldar. Instead chaos androids may carry extra weight without a movement reduction (hypothesis).

8. Stealth movement

In SC every alien is detected by scanners except the genestealer (alien event card).

This rule can be explained by this creature's ability to hide itself and by its carapace that can absorb the scanner signal. Only with the alien event card "genestealer" it can be revealed¹².

This principle can be used if an alien player wants to introduce new stealth units in the game.

Another alien event card, similar to genestealer, is "re-deploy": some alien miniatures can be quickly moved (without the scanner detection of this movement) from a board onto another one, trying to move around marines defences. Obviously, the marine players can see where they are placed (blip tokens), but it's important to underline this in-game mechanic used to catch marine players unawares.

9. The height of a miniature and the line of fire (hypothesis)

SC rules doesn't take into account very height miniatures that can fire behind a comrade, such as the dreadnought.

In this case, marines can fire this enemy that is, now, in the line of fire!

¹⁰ Usually this extra-weight is a heavy (or extra-heavy) weapon, but it can also be an alien equipment or a wounded friend (hypothesis).

¹¹ Eldar mesh armour is light but tough so it doesn't affect the movement ability.

¹² SC manual doesn't assign a value for killing this creature. This is illogic because it's an enemy that the marine players can find in a boarded space hulk. Maybe it can give 10 points, if killed, without unbalancing the game (hypothesis).

Reference:

Codex 4th edition - Warhammer 40k
Space Crusade rules
Space Hulk rules
White Dwarf 134
White Dwarf 145

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