

Federation Commander Fighter/Carrier Rules

By Judd Vance

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Components

Fighter Counter: Unlike Star Fleet Battles, a fighter counter does not represent a single attack shuttle. It represents a full or reduced squadron of attack shuttles. Each counter is double-sided, representing a full squadron on one side and a reduced squadron on the other. Fighters will often be referenced as a number of "steps." A full strength fighter counter is 2-steps and a reduced strength fighter counter is 1-step. The squadron is an abstracted combination of heavy "bomber" style shuttles, firing torpedoes or drones, as well as escort "fighter" style shuttles. Each counter has two values on each side representing "Attack" and "Defense" values. The user can either create counters and write these values on the counter, or write them on a table.

Combat Values: For the easiest use, give all fighter squadrons the same attack and defense values. However, you may want to customize. You could use your Star Fleet Battles SSDs for carriers and if you want to use Star Fleet Battles fighters, not all of them are the same. The attack and defense value allows you to customize the fighters.

	Attack / Defense
Full Strength	10 / 7
Reduced Strength	3 / 3

SSDs: Each carrier houses standard administrative shuttles, as per the rules (and those rules are not affected by this document). These remaining shuttle boxes are dedicated to steps of fighter squadrons. Each box represents a step of fighter strength.

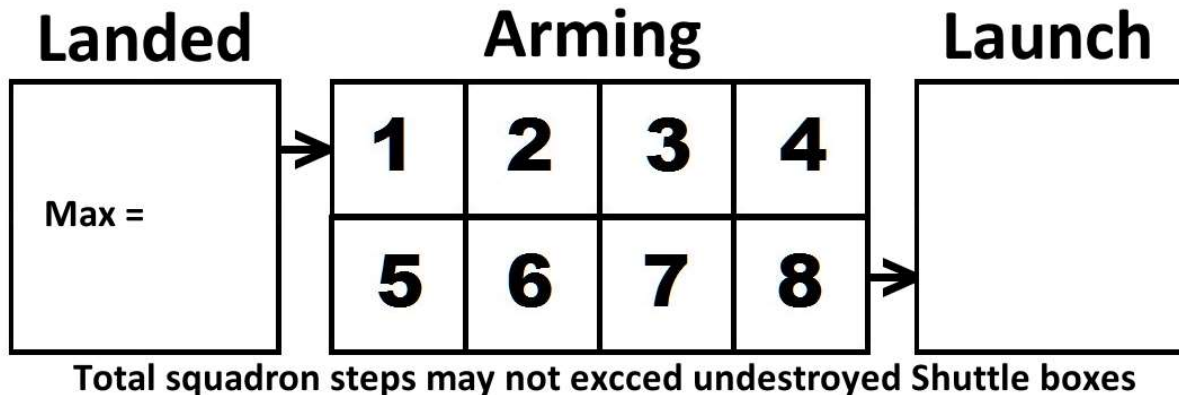
Example: The Gorn Mobile Carrier SSD in Communiqué #128 has 9 shuttle boxes on its squadron-scale side. It has one administrative shuttle. The remaining 8 boxes represent 8 steps of fighters, or 4 full-strength squadrons. The fleet-scale has 5 shuttle boxes. Again, it has one administrative shuttle, so the remaining 4 shuttle boxes represent 4 step points, or 2 full-strength shuttle squadrons.

The number of steps onboard a carrier may never exceed the number of undamaged "Shuttle" boxes. If a carrier receives a "Shuttle" hit, causing it to have more steps of fighters than it has undamaged "Shuttle" boxes on its launch track (next section), the owning player must reduce full-strength counters and/or eliminate reduce-strength counters (owner's choice) until the number of steps no longer exceeds the number of undamaged shuttle boxes.

Launch Track: Each carrier has a launch track. The track has 10 boxes: one for "Landing," eight for "Arming" and one for "Launching". Any counters on this track are onboard the carrier. Therefore, the number of steps on this track may never exceed the number of undamaged shuttle boxes. The boxes are defined as such:

- **Launch:** Ships in this box are fully armed and may launch during the Launch Phase during the next impulse. Note: Launching comes before Landing in regards to the maximum number of steps allowed on the Launch Track.
- **Arming:** There are 8 "Arming" boxes, numbered 1-8, representing 8 impulses that it takes to arm a step of fighters. During the Launch Shuttles Phase of an impulse, any ships in an "Arming" box are moved to the box with the next higher number. If it is in the #8 box, it is moved to the "Launch" box, and if it is in the "Landed" box, it is moved to the #1 box.
- **Landed:** During the Launch Shuttles phase in an impulse, after the carrier has launched fighter squadrons, and the steps have been moved on the tracks, fighter squadrons that began the phase in the same space as the carrier may land. Those counters are placed here. The maximum number of steps that may be placed in this box is equal to the value in the "Landed" box, as the carrier may not be able to land all fighters at once. (This value is blank, allowing the player to fill in the value based on the ship). See 6.0 for more details about landing.

If a scenario notes that the fighters are armed, put the squadrons in the "Launch" box. If they are not armed, put them in the #1 "Arming" box. Note: this track does not receive damage from combat. Fighter steps on this track are considered inside their respective shuttle boxes. This track is just an easy way to track arming status.



Procedures

1.0 Launching fighters. Fighters may only be launched during the "Launch Phase" of an impulse. Only full strength (two step) counters may be launched unless the carrier is down to its last step (one shuttle box remaining). If you have two reduced-strength counters, combine them into a full strength squadron by flipping one of the counters to its full strength side and removing the other. Once per game, a carrier

may flip a half strength counter over to a full strength for free. This represents filling the ranks with the reserves. These reserves may not be launched by themselves, but only used to flip a single reduced strength squadron counter to full strength (you cannot create a new counter to represent them). If not used, these reserves are lost when the final shuttle box is destroyed. Note: only ships with the "Carrier" designation have these reserves, not Hydran non-carriers.

Any number of counters in the "Launch" box may be launched, but to do so, they must pass through an open shield: either one that was destroyed or one that the carrier voluntarily lowered. Place the launched fighter counters on top of the carrier. For each counter, this begins its "sortie" which continues until it lands.

2.0 Movement: Fighter counters have a movement of 16, a turn mode of 1, and can make 1 high energy turn for free during each sortie.

3.0 Ships attacking squadrons: Ships may fire at fighter squadrons at ranges 0-3 only. Follow the normal procedure, but select the specific fighter counter that you are firing at before rolling the dice. Roll the dice and determine the number of damage points. If you did not inflict enough damage to meet the defense rating of the targeted counter, there is no effect because you did not inflict enough to affect squadron effectiveness. Even if you inflicted enough damage to meet the defense rating of a different counter in the hex, there is no effect. If the damage meets or exceeds the defense number of targeted counter, it is reduced by one step only. (Flip a full strength counter to its reduced side or remove it if it was already reduced). Any excess damage may be distributed to other counters in the hex as the attacking player wishes, reducing other counters by one step if the remaining damage meets their respective defense numbers. However, any full strength squadrons may only be reduced by one step in a volley. If you still have excess damage points after applying one step loss of damage to every counter in the stack, any excess damage is lost.

Example: Four squadron counters are in a hex. Two full strength squadrons, each with 7 points of defense and two reduced strength squadron of 3 points of defense are fired on by a Federation cruiser. The Federation ship designates a target, rolls the dice, and calculates the damage. Let's look at various possibilities:

5 points: If the designated target was a full strength squadron, there is no effect. You cannot switch targets just because you rolled poorly. If the designated target was the reduced strength squadron, the 5 points of damage exceed the defense rating of 3, so that reduced squadron is removed from the game. The remaining two points are not enough to exceed any remaining squadron's defense rating, so the remaining points are wasted.

6 points: If the designated target was a full strength squadron, there is no effect. If the designated target was the reduced strength squadron, the 6 points of damage exceed the defense rating of 3, so that reduced squadron is removed from the game. The remaining three points are ineffective against the full strength squadrons, but can be applied to the other reduced strength squadron, removing it, also.

10 points: If the designated target was a full strength squadron, it is reduced. The remaining three points could be applied to one of the OTHER reduced strength squadrons, and remove it as well. If the designated target was one of the reduced squadron, it is removed and the remaining 7 points could be applied to any other squadron, reducing it by one step (either flip a full strength squadron or eliminate the other reduced squadron and waste the remaining 4 points of damage).

24 points: No matter the target, you will apply one step loss to each squadron in the hex (20 points), eliminating the reduced squadrons and flipping both of the full strength squadrons. The remaining 4 points are lost even though there are two ships with 3 defense, because no squadron can take more than one step loss per volley.

Note: Firing phasers at fighter squadrons is somewhat abstracted. Instead of a powerful prolonged burst -- the kind that rips through shields and bulkheads on starships, this is a series of lower energy pulse shots firing at a lot of targets. One prolonged burst would easily tear through a shuttle, but would not reduce the squadron effectiveness. The short bursts are taking out a number of fighters in the squadron, reducing the overall squadron effectiveness with each hit.

3.1 Attacking squadrons with an ESG: A ship with ESG may ram fighter squadrons. Follow the procedure for attacking with ESGs. After the damage is distributed to each squadron at a given range, if the damage equals the defense value, the squadron takes a step loss. If a 2-step squadron counter takes a step loss and there is enough remaining damage to meet or exceed the defense of the reduced squadron, then the squadron is removed. In other words, it is possible for a counter to receive two steps of damage from an ESG attack (phasers sometimes miss, whereas ESGs do not).

Example: There is a full strength enemy squadron (defense = 7) and reduced strength squadron (defense = 3) at range 1. There is another full strength squadron at range 2. The Lyran player expends 4 points (16 damage) in the ESG to attack the squadrons. The first 6 points are distributed alternately between the two squadrons at range 1. This destroys the reduced squadron. The next 4 points are applied to the full strength squadron, giving it 7 total and causing it to reduce. The next 3 points are applied to the now reduced counter, destroying it. That is 13 points total. With all of the targets at range 0 and 1 destroyed, the energy sphere now moves out to range 2, where the remaining 3 points are applied to the full strength counter. This is not enough to meet its 7 defense, so it has no effect.

4.0 Squadrons attacking a ship: Fighters may only attack at range 3 or less at ships in its FA firing arc. Each squadron counter may attack twice per sortie, but not in the same impulse. They fire during the Launch phase (all fighter functions besides movement are conducted during this phase). Roll a number of dice equal to the steps of the counter (2 for full strength, 1 for reduced strength) and add the attack value. This is the total damage inflicted by that squadron. Place a marker (penny, counter, etc) under the counter to show that it fired during this sortie. If a squadron has attacked twice this sortie, it may not attack another ship or initiate a dogfight until it has been re-armed on the carrier and sent out on another sortie. Note: evasive maneuvers are ineffective against a fighter attack.

3.1 Defending with an ESG against a fighter attack: If a ship with ESG is attacked by fighters, after the damage has been calculated, that ship may reduce up to half (rounded up) some of the total damage by applying the required energy to the ESG. The amount is based on the weapons of the fighters:

- 0% if none of the fighters are armed with drones or hellbores.
- 25% (rounded up) if some but not all of the fighters are armed with drones or hellbores.
- 50% (rounded up) if all of the fighters are armed with drones or hellbores.

Example: a Lyran ship is attacked by Kzinti squadrons. All of the Kzinti fighters are armed with drones. The Kzintis do 37 points of damage. The Lyran could reduce 19 points of damage, by spending 5 points of stored ESG energy to create a 20-point ESG field (the 20th point is wasted).

5.0 Dogfighting: If opposing squadrons occupy the same hex, there is an opportunity for a dogfight. A squadron may initiate a dogfight once per sortie. Dogfights occur during the Launch Shuttles phase of an impulse. If all squadrons in a hex have engaged in a dogfight during this sortie, then a dogfight does not take place (the fighters are out of dogfighting drones). Otherwise, mark the hex and move the squadrons off of the board. Line your squadrons up in two rows: those that have not engaged in a dogfight in the front row and those that have engaged in a dogfight in the second row. Each player rolls a die for each ship. A "5" or "6" is needed to score a hit. If the ship has already engaged in a dogfight this sortie, subtract one from the die roll. If the ship has not engaged in a dogfight this sortie and is full strength, add 1 to the die roll. Add up the number of hits. Each hit inflicts one step loss, defender's choice. Every ship that has not engaged in a dogfight is now marked as having been engaged in one.

Note: There are a lot of markers going on: one for dogfight and one for each attack on a ship. Rather than place 1-3 markers under each squadron, I recommend using coins: a penny represents one attack. Replace the penny with a dime for the second half. If the penny is on the "heads" side, it has not engaged in a dogfight. If it is on the "tails" side, it has engaged in a dogfight.

6.0 Landing: During the "Launch Shuttles Phase," after shuttles have been launched and squadron steps adjusted on the Launch Track, if one or more squadron counters began the phase in the same hex as a friendly carrier of the same empire, they may land on the carrier, even if it was not the one they launched from. *Example: fighters from a Federation Carrier may land on another Federation Carrier, but not an allied Gorn carrier.* In order to land on a carrier, the fighters must pass through an open shield: either one that was destroyed or one that the carrier voluntarily lowered. Fighters are placed on the "Landed" box of the Launch Track. The number of steps that may land are limited to the number written on the track and also by the available steps the carrier may have on the track (the total number of steps on the track may not exceed the number of undestroyed shuttle boxes).