

# Mephit's Guide to Being Effective in *Star Trek Ship Combat*

Ideally, every interaction with alien civilizations goes peacefully and opens up new, rewarding relationships for the Federation. Sometimes, though, things don't go as well and people are just jerks. In those cases, it's time to charge up the phaser banks... but how can you maintain the reputation of Starfleet in these tense situations? Here are a few tips to not looking like it's your first time out of Spacedock.

## Know the Basics

The first step to not being awful at this is having an idea of what you're doing in the first place. To avoid having the rest of the bridge crew yelling at you to do something, remember these basic steps and keep your book open to pages 218-233 for more information.

- 1. First the attacking ship makes a roll.** Pick your weapon system first as they function differently. Normally this is between energy weapons and torpedoes but some ships have lots of different weapon systems. The attacker makes a Control + Security roll assisted by the ship's Weapons + Security and the Difficulty depends on the type of weapon: 2 for energy, 3 for torpedoes. See "Tactical Choices" below for some additional modifiers.
- 2. Deal some damage.** Your weapons deal damage just like your personal weapons but they're more likely to be modified by something. Check to make sure you're getting all the dice you're entitled to before rolling and remember Effects (discussed more below).
- 3. Roll Resistance.** While it's uncommon for characters to have Resistance, ship's almost always do. The target will roll Resistance to negate incoming damage and remember the advice above: there are things that modify your Resistance so make sure you're getting all the dice you're entitled to before rolling.
- 4. Damage to Shields.** A starship's equivalent to Stress is their Shields and these are reduced by the incoming damage. If the ship loses all its Shields then things get really serious so don't let this get too low.
- 5. Check for Breaches.** There are three reasons that a ship might take Breaches: if it took 5+ damage from one attack (after Resistance), if it has 0 Shields after the attack, and if it was already at 0 Shields and the attack deals at least one damage. These are cumulative, and they can really add up.

## Tactical Choices

Just like with personal weapons there are choices to make with starship weapons. There are some uses for Damage Effects (see below) but just picking which weapon and what to target deserves some attention.

- **Target a Subsystem:** Bashing an enemy ship until it can't move is all well and good but you can actually deal damage in a purposeful way. Consider what you want to stop the enemy from doing and target the System that helps with that: the Difficulty of your attack will be +1 but if you can disable the enemy weapons or shut down their engines then it might be worth it.
- **Close to the Right Distance:** Starship weapons have different optimal ranges: cannons are Close, banks are Medium, and arrays and torpedoes are Long. Attacks outside of the weapon's optimal range increase the Difficulty by +1 per band.
- **Choose the Right Weapon:** You don't often have a choice between different energy weapons but if you do (like the *Defiant* class) then figure out which is going to work best in the situation. Most ships do have both energy weapons and torpedoes, though. Energy weapons are easier to hit with but usually don't do as much damage, whereas torpedoes are harder to target but deal more damage. Starfleet ships, though, typically have phasers which have Versatile 2. The extra two Momentum from this Quality allows the attack to be... well, versatile.

## Use Momentum and Effects!

Phasers don't have any use for Effects but torpedoes do if they are fired as a salvo (increases Threat but adds the Spread Effect). The main resource to make use of in starship combat is Momentum which can be spent in all the ways seen on the chart on page 232. In particular, using Momentum to give your attacks Penetration or to make them Devastating Attacks will increase the number of Breaches that the target suffers. Use these along with targeting a specific enemy System will reduce the ship's capabilities to little floating motes of debris and can bring the fight to a close quickly.

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## Work As a Team

The whole bridge crew should be involved in starship combat, not just the tactical officer firing weapons. Remember that you get two actions every turn (a Standard Action and a Minor Action) and in some situations it will be critical to use your Minor Actions. If there's something else happening on the bridge you can use your Minor Action normally but you can also **Change Position** (if someone is down or needs help), **Raise/Lower Shields** (to start or finish a battle), or **Restore** a system that's been messed up by Breaches.

To figure out what you should be doing in a battle, find your position below to see your options in combat.

- **Commanding Officer (p. 221-222):** You're the axis around which the battle is rotating. Every round you should either Create Advantage (such as calling out an attack pattern or some other pre-established plan) or you should be generating Momentum (you can Direct if you have someone in particular in mind or Rally if you want to help everyone out generally).
- **Helm (p. 222):** Unsurprisingly, your primary role in a battle is to keep the ship moving and out of danger. You can use Maneuver, Impulse, or Warp (Picard Maneuver!) to move the ship to a better zone such as one with Cover and Concealment (p. 226) or one at the right range for what the tactical officer has planned (ask them). If you like the zone you're in, try Evasive Action to boost the ship's defense or Attack Pattern to boost its attacks. Ramming Speed is, of course, a last-ditch option.
- **Navigator (p. 222):** On 24<sup>th</sup> century ships this position is combined with Helm but there are also secondary stations up front. Sometimes the helm officer will need help Plotting a Course to the zone they want but usually you're just around to assist the helm officer. Consider moving to a more critical station and let an NPC jump into this position.
- **Sensor Operations (p. 222-223):** Making a Sensor Sweep or Launching a Probe might be important in some battles but typically the main function of this position will be to Scan for Weaknesses. This Task boosts the next attack your ship makes against the enemy and can be really intense. Do it every round if you can. You also Restore Breaches to the Sensors System.
- **Security Oversight (p. 223):** This is another station best suited for an NPC so if you're here, really just change position to apply your impressive skills elsewhere. Of course, if there are enemy boarding parties this station becomes pretty important...
- **Tactical (p. 223):** This is your moment. Every round you should be Firing a Weapon (most of the time) or Modulating Shields (if going defensive). Sometimes you might be engaging the Tractor Beam. Remember, though, that you're on a team so *communicate what you're doing each round* so that your friends can support you with their actions. Oh yeah, and also Restore Breaches to the Weapons with your Minor Actions.
- **Communications (p. 223-224):** If people are shooting weapons, communications have probably broken down. You can coordinate with allied ships but the best use of this station is to run Damage Reports. This makes repairs easier and affect one Task at a time so try it every round if you can. You also need to Restore the Comms when they get busted up.
- **Internal Systems (p. 224):** While the tactical officer is doling out damage, you're fixing it. Every round you should be Regenerating Shields (if you don't have many Breaches) or Damage Control (if you have lots of Breaches). You also need to be running Power Management to make sure that the tactical officer and helm officer have the Power they need to do their stuff. You're also in charge of Restoring Breaches to the Computers and Engines Systems... you know, in your free time.
- **Main Engineering (p. 224-225):** You need to be helping with that damage control, fixing all the Breaches that are cropping up. The internal systems officer will be handling a whole lot so you fix the more complicated stuff.
- **Shuttlebay (p. 225):** If you're in the shuttlebay and your ship is launching small craft to harry the enemy then you're coordinating. If your ship isn't doing that, go somewhere more useful.
- **Sickbay (p. 225):** The chief medical officer can feel useless during a battle but they can actually really help with injuries. Check out page 225 for a full discussion but you can boost a Department that someone else is planning on using by getting injured crew members back on their feet.
- **Transporter Rooms (p. 225):** Similar to the shuttlebay you will be doing any transporter needs the ship has, but these will need shields to be down. You should probably get somewhere more useful.