

Jedi Counseling 115

Dry Docks and Hangar Bays

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Welcome to the 115th installment of "Jedi Counseling," our column in which we answer your rules questions about the **Star Wars Miniatures Game** and the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game**.



Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: I've run into some issues with the starship design rules in *Starships of the Galaxy*. It seems that you can't make any existing starships using these rules and starting with a stock starship. Am I doing something wrong?

A: Probably not. A vast number of individual starships have been created over the last few decades since *A New Hope* came out, and at no point was there a cohesive starship design system to guide authors of fiction or gaming products. As such, it is effectively impossible to reverse-engineer a design system that covers all these varied examples—or, at least, any such system would be so complex that it wouldn't be easy to use in a game.

Given that, we designed the system from the point of the typical hero who might be interested in modifying an existing starship or scratch-building a new one. This hero doesn't have the benefit of vast numbers of the best engineers and test pilots in the galaxy (like at the Corellian Engineering Corporation), nor does this hero have an entire star system dedicated to the building of city-sized starships with mass-production facilities to match (like at Kuat Drive Yards).

This hero, instead, is relegated to building "a typical new starship from a typical production facility," as noted at the bottom of Table 3–8: Stock Ship Types (page 52, *Starships of the Galaxy*). The stock starships are designed to reflect that, making it possible to make something decent and functional, but not something that would easily outshine the big name starships.

For example, a hero could build a decent light freighter, something comparable to a YT-1300 in stats and price. The biggest difference? The YT-1300 would have a lot of extra emplacement points left over—and that's precisely what the Corellian Engineering Corporation is known for. Think about it: If any yahoo on a backwater planet could build a freighter that's just as good, why would the YT-series freighters sell so well throughout the galaxy?

Since most heroes won't ever control a galaxy-spanning corporate giant and be able to use these resources, it seems a little silly to spend page space exploring the ins and outs of galactic-scale mass production. Similarly, we might give broad outlines of supply and demand by listing a planet's major exports and imports, but we won't be creating rules that account for macroeconomic cycles, unemployment, inflation, and so forth. (Let's face it: Most of us are just here to shoot stormtroopers.)

Now, if you as the GM want to build starships beyond what the stock starships can manage, there's really not a reason for you to hamstring yourself with those rules: Just write up stats that seem like a good challenge for your players, using similar starships as benchmarks for things like price, appropriate game statistics for that type of ship, and so forth.

And if you and your players really want more comprehensive rules that go beyond those in the book, by all means do so! You might look at Gear Templates (page 76, *Knights of the Old Republic Sourcebook*) to get some inspiration for coming up with appropriate special benefits and restrictions for different manufacturers. Alternatively, you might allow manufacturers to come up with "proprietary" stock starships that are better than the typical ones listed in the book. For example, Kuat Drive Yards might have a really good "stock Star Destroyer" and Corellian Engineering Corporation might have an outstanding "stock YT-series," and they use these as the baseline for producing several similar starship designs.

Q: When building a new design from a stock starship, can you remove or replace existing systems that come with the stock ship? For example, could I take those high-performance engines off a stock interceptor and use the cash to buy other systems?

A: You can, but it's not very efficient. You get only 1/4 the listed value of any system you remove from a starship, even a stock starship.

Stock starships usually get their starting systems at a substantial discount because they are so well integrated into the baseline design. Removing them requires a lot of inefficient workarounds, resulting in a lower price

comparable to selling a used starship component.

Q: Passenger conversion says that it creates room for a number of passengers equal to the ship's size modifier. Wouldn't the size modifier be -10 for ships that big? Or does it refer to some other size modifier (such as the one used for grappling)?

A: It is an error, so consider this to be errata: Passenger conversion has sufficient space for a number of passengers equal to the ship's cost modifier, not size modifier.

Q: Can you gain emplacement points by converting the cargo space provided by a cargo pod?

A: No. A starship can only convert its own internal cargo space into emplacement points.

Q: Do nonflying carried vehicles require hangar space? If so, it seems like the Imperial-class Star Destroyer uses more hangar space for AT-ATs and AT-STs than it does for TIE fighters and shuttles.

A: Hangar space is required only for vehicles that are meant to launch directly from the starship, such as airspeeders, starfighters, and space transports. If the vehicle is meant to be kept in storage until deployed planetside—as in the case of AT-ATs and the like—then the vehicle can be carried as cargo. The real difference is that a hangar-deployed vehicle is ready to fight when launched, but a vehicle carried as cargo needs a little help to become combat ready (usually about 1 minute of continuous work, assuming the vehicle's entire crew assists).

Vehicles stored in this way are still quite bulky (meaning they take up more cargo space than their mass would otherwise suggest). Nevertheless, this is considerably more efficient than allocating hangar space for the vehicle, which includes enough room for maintenance, repair, takeoff, landing, and maneuvering. The precise amount of cargo space required is ultimately up to the GM, but a good baseline is that a vehicle requires about 100 tons of cargo space—roughly 50 cubic meters—for every unit of hangar space it would normally require. (As a comparison, this is about 1/4 as much room as the same vehicle would require if you converted that cargo space into a hangar bay.)

Q: My players have discovered that they can make very good warships by modifying freighters, turning all that extra cargo space into emplacement points. I can't find anything wrong with it in the rules, but it looks like a converted freighter could overpower a Star Destroyer! Am I missing something, or is this intentional?

A: You are missing something. Under Nonstandard Modifications (page 39, *Starships of the Galaxy*), you'll find this little catch-all rule: "The GM is the final arbiter of what systems are sufficiently dissimilar to qualify as nonstandard, and particularly unusual combinations may be forbidden altogether."

In other words, no modification is legal unless you specifically say it is.

What you're describing—turning a freighter into a big pile of emplacement points to hold high-end capital-ship weaponry—skids right past nonstandard ("sufficiently dissimilar" systems) and smacks right into the middle of forbidden ("particularly unusual combinations"). The rules as written not only empower you to veto such an absurd design, they expect you to do so.

If your players object, tell them that they have to prove that the proposed modification is not "particularly unusual" by providing a few examples of similar cases. If they can't find any such example ... well, "unique" is pretty unusual, isn't it? We've certainly seen freighters with extensive modifications (*Millennium Falcon*, *Outrider*, *Wild Karrde*, *Ebon Hawk*), but none have had anything remotely approaching what you describe. In fact, the Gallofree GR-75 medium transport is specifically described as being frequently modified for many different functions, but the idea of turning it into a "pocket battleship" never seems to have crossed the Rebels' minds.

You can use the following guidelines to help you adjudicate these sorts of unusual cases, but keep in mind that guidelines are just that: guidelines. They aren't hard-and-fast limits, and they aren't substitutes for good GM judgment and common sense. Very generally speaking, if any of the following are true, the modification is probably nonstandard. If two or more are true, the modification is probably not possible at all (unless there are counterexamples that show otherwise, of course).

- The starship does not have any similar system in its stock version, or if the system is specifically described as nonstandard for that type of starship (such as a hyperdrive on a starfighter).
- The modification would increase the starship's speed, hit points, or shield rating by more than 50% or the number of weapons, passengers, or carried vehicles (measured in hangar space) by more than 100% compared to the starship's stock version.
- If the starship has gained emplacement points equal to or greater than its cost modifier by converting cargo space, all further modifications are nonstandard except for volume-heavy modifications such as cryogenic chambers, escape pods, extended range, hangar bays, medical suites, passenger conversion,

and smuggler's compartments.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: Can an adjacent character use targeted abilities against a character with Invisibility? Or can the adjacent character use only attacks?

A: Both attacks and targeted abilities may be used against a character with Invisibility, if adjacent.

Q: If a character has Invisibility, does it grant cover to a target behind it? If so, why should an invisible character make it harder to see and hit a target?

A: Cover works as it does for any other character. As for your follow-up question, you need not be able to see something for it to make your attack more difficult; rather than obscuring the target, it partially protects it from being hit.

Even if this weren't the case, keep in mind that the **Star Wars Miniatures** rules are written as a competitive tabletop game above all else, so at times you will encounter rules that are balanced for playability but that don't quite mesh with the "reality" of the *Star Wars* universe. It's a necessary constraint of the competitive gaming framework.

Q: Let's say a character moves into a square that's adjacent to two different characters with Mines. Does the character have to make two saves, potentially taking damage twice if both fail?

A: No, because multiple instances of the same ability do not stack unless the rules specifically say otherwise.

Conceptually, think of it like this: Mines aren't actual attacks made by the character in question, so a character that moves adjacent isn't being attacked by both characters. Instead, imagine that Mines creates a temporary sort of terrain—a "minefield"—adjacent to such characters. Putting down more mines doesn't give you a "double minefield": Either you have a minefield or you don't, just as having cover from multiple sources doesn't stack to create "double cover."

Q: If a character of Large or greater size enters two or more squares affected by Mines at the same time, does it have to make more than one save against Mines?

A: No. Mines is triggered by moving adjacent to the character with Mines, and that can only occur once during any given square of movement.

Q: What if a character enters an adjacent square without actually moving into it, such as by Grand Admiral Thrawn's commander effect, disembarking a transport, or being subject to Force Push? Would the character still trigger Mines?

A: No. None of these examples are technically "movement," so they don't fit the criteria necessary to trigger Mines.

Q: Force Bubble says it works "when this character takes damage," but does that mean it lasts for the entire skirmish? Just that turn? Just for a single attack or ability?

A: It applies to a single instance of taking damage (hence, "when this character takes damage"). At that time, the character is eligible to activate the Force power by spending a Force point.

Q: How does Force Bubble interact with Force Immunity? Can you use it against an attack from such a character?

A: No. Force Immunity prevents using Force powers to respond to an attack from that character. Since Force Bubble can be activated only after taking damage from the attack, that would count as "responding" to the attack, and it therefore is not allowed.

About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance editor, developer, and designer whose credits include the *Saga Edition* core rulebook, *Clone Wars Campaign Guide*, *Scum & Villainy*, and the *Dawn of Defiance* adventure path. When not making games, he operates his store, GMSarli Games (a shop specializing in nonrandom miniatures packs designed for the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game** and **Dungeons & Dragons**).

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