

Anaxis

Tactical Space Combat

Version 1.8

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Introduction

Anaxis is a game of tactical space combat. It is a wargame, involving hex-grids, dice, and paper, with a space operatic setting. It is in the same milieu as Starfleet Battles, Full Thrust (both produced by Task Force Games) and Babylon Five Wars by Agents of Gaming.

Anaxis is a light game with a few, easy to learn rules. The philosophy behind the design has been to maintain a fast rate of play with rules that are tight but still sophisticated enough to provide variety and tactical interest. A good-sized engagement can be played out in a little over an hour. I hope you enjoy it.

The Basics

All ships in Anaxis are defined by several numerical ratings that describe their use in play. These are: size (hull), speed, maneuver, armour, initiative, and sensors. A ship's weapons are divided into primary and secondary banks which have ratings of their own: power, penetration, tracking and firing arc.

All of these are listed on control cards. The only thing that needs to be recorded during play is a ship's remaining hull points (or how much damage it's taken already) and its evasive maneuvers. A single sheet is generally adequate to keep track of all of these values for an entire fleet.

Sequence of Play

Gameplay in Anaxis occurs in turns. Each turn is further broken down into two phases: movement and firing. In each phase, ships take their turn at performing actions until all the ships on the board have gone. The order of action in either phase is determined by the initiative rating. This is heavily influenced by size, so that large ships will tend to both move and fire before other ships. Moving first is a

disadvantage because it allows other ships to respond to you. Conversely, shooting first is preferable because if a ship is destroyed before its turn to shoot, it can never return fire. Larger ships tend to have higher initiative ratings but there is also variation within a given size class.

At the beginning of the movement phase, each player should announce his highest initiative. Whichever player has the highest rating should move the corresponding ship. Once one player goes, the ship with the next highest rating goes, until all the ships are worked through. Repeat the process in the firing phase. Once all ships in the firing phase have finished shooting, the round ends and the next movement phase begins.

If two or more ships from different sides are tied for initiative, the ship with the greatest *remaining* hull goes first. If ships on the same side tie, their owner may decide what order they go in (and may change the order between the two phases).

Movement

Each ship has both a speed and a maneuver rating. Speed is a measure of how many hexes a ship can cover during its movement phase. A ship expends its by-round allotment of speed points by moving forward. There is no momentum in Anaxis: ships do not drift, and need to expend energy every turn to remain in motion. A ship can also choose to move backward, of an amount equal to its *reverse speed* (or simply *reverse*) rating. A ship can move backward or forward in a round but not both.

In order to change direction, a ship must spend maneuver points, which are also refreshed every round. Each maneuver point spent allows the ship to rotate one hex facing (60 degrees). Rotations can be made at any time during the a ship's movement: before, after, or in between forward (or rearward) movements. Ships cannot collide:

they may freely move into the same hex as one another since they are considered to be quite large.

Evasive Maneuvers

In addition to allowing a ship to change it's position, maneuvering can be used in a more directly combative way. Firstly, a ship that is on a wild, unpredictable course will be more difficult to hit. This is called *evasive maneuvering* or simply *evasion*.

A ship must declare that it is performing evasive maneuvers as soon as it can be moved. By doing so, it uses up most or all of its ability to rotate for that turn (consult the following table, first column). A ship with a turn rating of 1 or 2 cannot perform maneuvers.

Normal Turn	Remaining Turn	Penalty
3	0	1
4	0	2
5	1	2
6	2	3

(In the ship listings, the "Man." heading repeats this information. The remaining turn is listed first, followed by a slash, then the firing penalty.)

An evading ship can't be standing still in space but must move forward an amount at least equal to its maneuver rating. It can intersperse whatever turns it has with that forward movement as usual.

An evading ship has a penalty applied whenever it is fired upon, equal to the ship's maneuver rating. However, because of its erratic movements, its own firing is also penalized. How these penalties work are described in the firing section under Effects of Maneuvering.

In addition to evasive maneuvering, there is a more offensive form of maneuvering called *pursuit*. Pursuit represents an effort by one craft to closely follow another and is a direct counter to an evasion. It works just like evasion mechanically, except that a single ship must be targeted (whereas evasion is general and works against all attackers). The two are also mutually exclusive: pursuit and evasion cannot be performed together on the same turn. The effects of pursuit are also described more fully in the shooting section.

Shooting

All ships are equipped with weapons with which to attack their enemies. These are grouped into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary guns usually fire directly forward and are quite powerful. Secondary guns have a wider firing arc but are not very good at penetrating armor. Not all ships have secondary weapons. When it's a ship's turn to shoot, each set of weapons is fired separately.

The first thing to do when firing is to designate a target: this can be any ship that is within the *firing arc* of the weapon set being considered. Most primary weapons have relatively narrow arcs and thus the craft must be carefully maneuvered in order for them to be brought to bear. Most secondary guns have much wider firing arcs and can thus hit a wider number of targets. See the following table for a description of the arcs. Note that with a Narrow arc, the ship cannot fire into its own hex.



1. Narrow 2. Forward 3. 180° 4. Extended 5. 360°

Difficulty of the Shot

Calculating the effects of shooting is done in two parts: the first consists of the actual firing while the second is the interplay between the weapon fire and the ship being hit. The central focus of the former half of firing is calculating the difficulty, which determines the likelihood of a hit.

The difficulty is based mainly on the range between the two craft and the sensors of the attacker. Greater range decreases the likelihood of a hit, while sensors counter this effect. Count the number of hexes between the two ships involved. Include the hex with the target in it, but not the attacker's own hex. Then divide this number by the attacker's sensor rating: this is the base difficulty. Always round up when counting range. The base difficulty can be further modified if either ship is performing any evasive maneuvers.

Effects of Evasion

Evasive maneuvering consists of rapid jinking and dodging, and harms the ability of other ships to target the evading vessel. When a ship is performing evasive maneuvers, the difficulty of any shots directed against it goes up by the listed penalty (see table in Maneuvers section). The evading ship also harms its own ability to fire so that every firing roll it makes suffers a +1 difficulty.

There are counters to evasion, however. First, all armaments have a tracking rating that indicates how easily fire can be redirected at a moving target. Secondary weapons, which often consist of turrets, are generally good at this. Tracking directly reduces the evasive maneuver penalty suffered by an attacker when firing with that armament.

An attacking ship can also choose to more actively counter an evasion attempt by closely pursuing the enemy craft, a.k.a. offensive maneuvering. Pursuit functions much like evasion and the same table is consulted (using the pursuer's turn rating). The indicated "penalty"

directly reduces the evasion penalty for firing. The standard self-penalty of 1 is applied to the pursuing vessel only if it attempts to fire on a ship which it is *not* pursuing (since its own guns are being trained specifically on the evading target).

As with defensive maneuvering, pursuers also suffer a reduced ability to turn. There is still a speed requirement for pursuit, but modified: the pursuer must travel either as fast as his maneuver rating or as fast as the ship he is pursuing, whichever is least (but he may go faster if he wishes). Offensive maneuvers must be declared during movement, just like evasion, and one particular target must be identified. Write this on your control sheet.

With both types of maneuvering (evasion and pursuit) tracking will function to counter the self-penalty for firing. However, all the penalties due to maneuvering should be added up before tracking works against them. That is, tracking works against the sum of all firing penalties, not each penalty individually. (Thus, if a ship is firing on an evading target and is also itself evading, the penalties against it may be severe, and a high tracking is desirable.)

Rolling to Hit

Once the final difficulty has been calculated – taking into effect range, size, sensors, and maneuvers – the success of the shot can actually be determined. Whenever a ship fires at another, in theory it is letting loose a whole volley of fire. Only some of these individual shots will hit the target, depending on the range and other factors. The firepower rating of each armament represents the destructive potential of a turn's worth of shooting. This fire may or may not strike the target, and it may not strike it in full. The attacking player rolls a number of six sided dice equal to his ship's firepower. Every die that comes up higher than the difficulty (but not equal to it) counts as a successful shot – that part of the volley has hit its mark.

Damage & Armor

The second half of the shooting calculation determines how effective the attacker's weapon hits are against the defender's armor. Every hit can theoretically do a substantial amount of damage to the target. Armor can help to block the effects of incoming fire, potentially to nil, but is itself countered with the penetration rating of the attacker's weapons.

First, what is called the *cut-off point* must be calculated: this represents the maximum damage that each individual shot can do. Take the defender's armor rating and from it subtract the penetration of attacker's armament. If the result is less than zero, make it zero instead: this represents the fact that the ship's armor is ineffectual.

Once the cut-off having is calculated, the attacking player rolls however many six sided dice were successful hits (had face-values above the difficulty) on the previous roll. To see what damage is done, count those dice with values above the cut-off (that is, discard any die whose value is equal to or less than the cut-off: this fire was stopped by armor).

Sum the face values of the dice being counted. This is the total damage done to the target, and it immediately loses an equal number of hull points. When a ship has no more hull points, it is destroyed immediately (it does not remain until the end of the round and will not necessarily have a chance to retaliate).

The shooting calculation process can be summed up as follows:

$$\text{Range / Sensors} + (\text{Evasion} - \text{Pursuit}) = \text{Difficulty}$$

$$[\text{Firepower}]d6 > \text{Difficulty} = \text{Hits}$$

$$\text{Sum} ([\text{Hits}]d6 > (\text{Armor} - \text{Penetration})) = \text{Damage}$$

Special Ship Rules

Each of the six sides you can play in Anaxis has a ship with some kind of special ability. Their use is described below.

Ardoni: Phoenix Electronic Support Vessel

Scan and Uplink: High powered sensor scan one enemy vessel within a forward arc. Sensor data is then uplinked to one friendly vessel; giving it an effective sensor rating of seven when firing against the scanned craft. Maximum range on the uplink is fifteen hexes. Whether the uplink is used or not, the ship's own weapons fire as though it had a sensor rating of three against that same craft.

The scan *can* be used against the Assassin destroyer (below) and the fifteen hex range limit is not affected by its stealth. The Phoenix is also immune to the effects of jamming.

Pelloda: Monsoon Interdictor

Interdiction: An energy damping field can weaken a target ship's engines. The field can be directed at one craft within a narrow firing arc, at a distance no greater than ten. The field has two points of power that can be distributed between the target's speed, reverse speed and maneuver ratings as desired. Each point of interdiction effectively reduces the chosen attribute by one. A roll needs to be made to interdict a craft that is evading: roll higher than the ship's maneuver rating in order to affect it.

Interdiction is performed during the firing phase and takes effect in the next movement phase (ships will never be interdicted in the first movement phase of the game).

A ship whose maneuver score is being interdicted has an effectively lowered rating for all purposes, including performing evasive maneuvers.

Teggeri: Inferno Destroyer

Energy Pulse: As a secondary weapon, an energy shock wave is generated, designed to damage smaller craft. The pulse hits all craft within two hexes automatically; no roll is required. Affected craft at a range of one hex suffer a power 1, penetration 1 hit; craft at range two suffer a power 1, penetration 2 hit; and ships in the same hex (range zero) experience power 1, penetration 3. Damage resolution proceeds normally (as though a hit had just been rolled for and one die counting). Armor works as usual.

Sildosi: Intrepid Electronic Attack Craft

Sensor Jamming: A powerful signal generator disrupts enemy sensors with false images and raw static. One hex is targeted: it must be within a forward firing arc and no more than twelve hexes distant. If the target hex lies within six hexes of the Intrepid, any ship in the target hex has its sensor rating effectively decreased by 2; if the target hex is seven to twelve hexes distant from the Intrepid, the target has its sensor rating reduced by 1.

A ship with a sensor rating normally *higher than 1* cannot have its rating pushed below 1. If its normal rating is exactly 1, it can be lowered to one-half (that is, -2 penalty every hex) but no lower.

Jamming is announced during the movement phase – when the ship itself moves – and takes effect during the firing phase of the same turn. Jamming completely interferes with the Ardoni Phoenix's uplink capability: if either the Phoenix or the uplinked ship hexes are targeted, the uplink is disrupted and the +7 sensor bonus is cancelled; the Phoenix still gains its effective sensor rating of 3 against a targeted craft though.

Nelluran: Pulsar Adaptive Shield Support Vessel

Adaptive Energy Shield: A shield can envelop friendly ships and protect them from incoming fire. The shield can be extended to affect one friendly ship anywhere within a two-hex radius. If the shielded ship is fired upon, three dice are rolled: each negative value that appears increases the ship’s effective armor rating by one. The shield affects all incoming fire, including energy pulses from the Inferno.

The Pulsar can center the shield around itself and thereby gains its full effect. Even when it is protecting other ships though, the shield partially protects the Pulsar: shots fired at it are influenced by one die worth of shields (that is, potentially one more point of armor).

The use of the shield is declared when the Pulsar moves and has its effect during the firing phase of the same turn. (If no use is declared, it should be assumed that the Pulsar is protecting itself.)

Kelterik: Assassin Destroyer

Stealth: A high-tech hull coating and energy screens hide the assassin from enemy sensors. During the movement phase it must determine whether it is going to use its stealth at full or partial power. When fully cloaked, the Assassin is effectively made six hexes farther away to all enemy ships – that is, when firing on it, the distance is counted as six more than it really is. However, when in this mode, the assassin itself cannot shoot because that would disrupt the cloak. If only in partially cloaked mode, the ship can shoot but is made to appear only three hexes farther away instead of six. The added distance counts for any purpose where chance (die rolling) is involved – i.e. shooting – but not for calculating other ranges, like the maximum range of interdiction or the Inferno’s blast.

Cinema Points

Anaxis aims to recreate epic space battles from all kinds of space opera science-fiction stories. Thus, in addition to just regular rules and actions, there is a more cinematic element as well, and this is achieved through Cinema Points. CPs represent the valiant and super-human efforts of a ship’s crew to pull off some impossible maneuver, target an enemy craft with deadly accuracy, evade enemy fire, and so on.

CPs are bought at the beginning of the game, along with ships, using regular ship-purchasing points: one regular point buys two CPs. Buying CPs is a good way to round out a fleet and use up unspent points. But purchasing very many is generally not cost effective: an equivalent value of actual ships is more useful.

CPs can be spent at any time in a battle. Their use should be announced as they are spent. Consult the following table. Each bonus is bought for a single ship, for one turn, for the listed cost. Multiple types of bonus can be applied at once to the same ship. However, each type of bonus can only be applied to a ship once on a given turn (i.e. you cannot “stack” bonuses), with a few exceptions.

Bonus Type	Cost	Effect
Command	1	-5 initiative
Engineering	1	+1 speed or reverse
Piloting	1	+1 turn
Fire control	1	+1 sensor
Gunnery	1	+2 tracking
Damage control	1	ignore 4 pts. of damage
Weapons Systems	2	+1 power
	2	+1 penetration
	1	exchange 1 power for 1 penetration or vice-versa

Command

A command bonus can apply to the movement or firing phase, or both, though in that case it must be purchased twice. In the movement phase, the bonus must be announced when the ship would otherwise have been moving, that is when it's number is called. (If a player forgets to announce the bonus at the right time, you can still allow him to use it, unless you're playing a serious game). In the firing phase, the bonus should be announced when the ship's *new* imitative is called, that is when it will actually be firing.

Engineering & Piloting

An engineering or piloting bonus needs to be announced exactly as the extra speed, reverse or turn is needed and used; no advance warning is necessary.

Fire Control

A fire control bonus must be applied to either the primary or secondary armaments, or both if the price is paid twice. It should be announced when the ship fires. The Wyvern gunboat, which normally has a sensor rating of two-thirds, upgrades to 2 with the bonus (obviously, this is a good deal).

Gunnery

A gunnery bonus can only be applied to secondary armaments. It should be announced when the ship fired.

Damage Control

Damage control must be used immediately after an armor roll. It allows new damage to be ignored, but doesn't restore hull that was

lost earlier. It can be purchased multiple times in a turn but only once per armor roll.

Weapons Systems

There are three different kinds of weapons system bonus but only one can be used at a time. The bonus must also be applied to either primary or secondary weapons, or both with double the cost.

Scenarios

Here are a few scenarios you can use for some interesting battles. They are not necessarily balanced, meaning that one force may be substantially larger than the opposition, or have a more challenging goal. The fun comes from trying to beat a superior opponent, and not lose to an inferior one. For competitive play, where you'd like to know which player is better, play the scenario twice, switching sides.

When not using these scenarios, simply choose a number of points for both players to buy ships with: 30-40 for a small engagement, 50-70 for a mid-sized one, and 80-100 for a large one. Then deploy on opposite edges of the game board and have at it!

Nelluran Ambassador

A Nelluran ambassador is bound on a ship to meet with one of the other races. A third race decides this must be stopped.

Nelluran Player: You have 1 Nova Heavy Cruiser escorted by 2 Pulsar ASSVs, and 2 Comet Heavy Frigates. Also take 10 CP. Choose one ship to secretly carry the ambassador and write it down. Begin 20 hexes away from one edge of the board near the center of the board.

Other Player: Choose a race and 60 pts. worth of ships (and CP). Deploy on any edge of the board excluding the one the Nelluran player is moving towards.

Victory Conditions: If the ship bearing the diplomat reaches the edge of the board (the edge initially aimed for), the Nelluran player wins – other losses do not count. If the ambassador's ship is destroyed, the other player wins. If the ambassador flees off some other edge, the game is a draw unless the Nelluran Nova has been destroyed, in which case the non-Nelluran player wins.

Surgical Strike

A Kelterik fleet and a Sildosi fleet are preparing for a major battle. Just before it, a small Kelterik force locates the enemy command group and attempts a daring hit-and-run strike.

Sildosi Player: You have 1 Victory, 1 Adept, 2 Dauntless, 1 Intrepid, and 2 Honors. Deploy within 10 hexes of one edge. Protect your Victory!

Kelterik Player: You have 2 Assassin Destroyers and 5 Scout Gunboats. You must destroy the enemy command carrier, a Victory Battlecruiser. Deploy 20 hexes away from the nearest enemy ship.

Both players: Take 15 CP.

Victory Conditions: The Kelterik player wins if he destroys the Victory, otherwise the Sildosi win.

Border Skirmish

A Pelloda taskforce is attempting to sneak into Nelluran territory, but a border-patrol spots it and engages. The taskforce must destroy the patrol in order to remain secret.

Pelloda Player: You have 1 Tempest Destroyer, 2 Cyclone Corvettes and 1 Hurricane Escort. Also take 5 CP.

Nelluran Player: You have 2 Aurora Corvettes and 3 Comet Frigates. Also take 10 CP.

Victory Conditions: Both sides must eliminate the other in order to win.

Mine Field

The Teggeri have established a mine field around a secret military research base. The Ardoni have discovered it before the field is fully operational and decide to strike at the base immediately.

Ardoni Player: Begin with 1 Leviathan, 2 Typhons, 1 Phoenix and 2 Wyverns. Deploy within 10 hexes of one table edge. Also take 10 CP.

Teggeri Player: Place your research base on a hex somewhere within 30 hexes of the edge the other player starts on. You begin with 1 Hailstorm Cruiser, 1 Firebrand, 2 Infernos and 4 Scorchers. Place everything but the Scorchers within 6 hexes of the research base. The scorchers can go anywhere on the game board as long as it is 10 hexes away from any enemy ship. Also take 20 CP.

Special Rules: Whenever an Ardoni ship finishes moving, a d6 is rolled because of the mine field. On a 6, the ship takes 2 points of

damage (no armor roll). The research base has armor of 4 and 25 hull points but no weaponry and it cannot move.

Victory Conditions: The Ardoni player must destroy the base to win. If he brings it to 5 hull points or less, the game is a draw; otherwise the Teggeri player wins.

Face Off

The Ardoni and Kelterik face off in a major engagement. Their forces are approximately equal.

Ardoni Player: You have 3 Leviathan Battleships, 2 Chimera Battlecruisers, 5 Typhon Frigates, 3 Phoenix ESVs and 6 Wyvern Gunboats.

Kelterik Player: You have 2 Emperor Dreadnaughts, 5 Guardian Cruisers, 3 Assassin Destroyers and 13 Scout Gunboats.

Both Players: Take 20 CP.

Victory Conditions: Both sides must eliminate the other in order to win.