

CATACLYSM

Cataclysm is an unofficial framework for team battles in Games Workshop's *Warhammer 40,000*. Most of it is loose guidelines for team organization, deployment zones, scheduling, and other logistical concerns external to the game. Alongside that are a few game rules and clarifications for matches of multiple players and teams, and a default mission. The framework is intended to serve as a basis for games ranging from a couple players fielding skirmish squads, up to megabattles with many more players and massive armies.

ALLIANCE

Each player is associated with an alliance, more or less working together as a team. The standard allies matrix and rules indicate how players' armies interact within an alliance. The number of players in each alliance should be balanced but may vary slightly.

Each player nominates a warlord from their army as usual. In addition, each alliance must designate one of their warlords as their warmaster. These are simultaneously declared by the alliances immediately after warlord traits are determined.

For large matches, a player from each alliance should act as commander to lead and coordinate it. Their primary tasks are communicating logistics, rules, and the scenario to their team in advance, making pre-game decisions such as allocating extra points or strategy cards; and helping their team stay on time in the game itself. Communication and organization skills are more important for this role than tactical prowess. In large battles or when the alliance is trying to enact a cohesive strategy, it may be helpful for the commander to release some of their points to teammates and play a smaller army themselves.

ARMY SELECTION

Cataclysm army lists are selected according to the standard rules and any external constraints imposed by the organizer(s), such as campaign requirements. If alliances can coordinate in advance, unique units and wargear might be required to be unique across an alliance's entire combined force. For pick-up style events, however, unique items should be simply either banned entirely or permitted without restriction.

To keep planning simple, each player should be granted an equal number of points rather than trying



Come the apocalypse on our wings!

to divide a fixed amount per alliance. Alliances with fewer players than the largest should allocate additional points among their players, in any fashion they wish, to match that greater total. With large armies players may also be allocated more points to cover for those with fewer models. Players should bring extra models to enable these balancing additions. For large games the commanders should coordinate this in advance as best as possible, but the teams and organizer(s) should always be prepared for no-shows.

In this framework the following shorthand is used to roughly classify matches by the points per player:

Mini	500+ points
Classic	1000+ points
Apocalyptic	2000+ points

SCHEDULE

For larger and more organized events it is important to fully utilize the available time, as well as to not run over time or have to end the battle prematurely. Keeping a large number of players on track in-game can also be a significant challenge. Cataclysm missions should therefore run for a fixed 5 or 6 turns, determined in advance. Based on the number of turns, the organizer(s) should establish and enforce a detailed schedule. Schedules should incorporate setup and cleanup, food and other breaks, deployment, and a breakdown by turn. Notably, later turns generally play faster and can be assigned less time as players find their rhythm and have fewer models left.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES

Mini or Classic, 3 Alliances, 5 Turns

30 min	Set up tables & terrain
45 min	Deployment (up to 15 min each)
45 min	Turn 1 (15 min per alliance)
45 min	Turn 2
45 min	Turn 3
30 min	Turn 4 (10 min per alliance)
30 min	Turn 5
30 min	Pack up

5 hours total

Apocalyptic, 2 Alliances, 6 Turns

60 min	Unpack, set up tables & terrain
60 min	Deployment (up to 30 min each)
110 min	Turn 1 (55 min per side)
30 min	Lunch
110 min	Turn 2
100 min	Turn 3 (50 min per side)
100 min	Turn 4
30 min	Dinner
90 min	Turn 5 (45 min per side)
90 min	Turn 6
60 min	Pack up and clean up

14 hours total (!)

TABLES AND DEPLOYMENT ZONES

Tables should be 4–6' across on the short axis, proportional to army sizes. Any smaller and assumptions about first turn assaults and other game aspects begin to break down. Any larger and many armies will struggle to make contact, in addition to being physically difficult to reach across. Generally long axis table edges should be 2–4' per player in an alliance, or roughly equivalently 1' per 750–1500 points on a side. Additional room is needed for the players to move around, as well as supporting table space depending on the size of the armies. An extended article on table sizes for large games is available here:

<http://bit.ly/15PRQRX>

Deployment zone geometry necessarily varies with the number of alliances, players, army sizes, and available table space. These must be planned in advance by the organizer(s). Zones should all be equally sized, with roughly 2 square feet per 1000 points in the alliances, and roughly the same shape. With four alliances it might not be practical for zones to all be adjacent to each other. Critically though, each zone should be as close to 24" from its neighbors as is feasible to preserve a number of fundamental assumptions about assault, shooting, and mobility ranges. A specific table edge or segment of an edge should be identified for each alliance for purposes of reserves, falling back, and other mechanics.

STARTUP AND TURN ORDER

The match begins by players determining warlord traits, psychic powers, and other pre-game effects.

Each alliance then simultaneously makes a bid for deployment time and turn order, given as a whole number of minutes up to a maximum by game size:

Mini	10 minutes
Classic	20 minutes
Apocalyptic	30 minutes

Each alliance is given as many minutes to deploy as they bid. Any units or models not deployed when time runs out automatically go into Strategic Reserve.

The order of bids from lowest to highest is the order by which deployment zone selection, placement of objective markers, deployment, and game turns are respectively performed, in that sequence. Note that this is not the standard *Warhammer 40,000* 7th edition startup order. Ties on bids are broken with a roll-off. Seize the Initiative is not applied.

TURNS

Each player in an alliance simultaneously takes actions as usual in its turn, with any order of activated units. Alliance turns are player turns in all ways.

In game terms, players in an alliance conduct all their actions within a phase simultaneously and then move on to the next phase together synchronously. However, in practice, players with no more actions to take in a phase should carefully proceed to the subsequent phase, provided there is no effect on another player's remaining actions in the current phase.

Importantly, time must be specifically reserved in each alliance turn for ongoing combats. Otherwise assault oriented armies and units are short-changed by not having these fights play out as often as they should, penalizing their damage output and mobility. The organizer(s) and commanders must monitor whether or not this is necessary in each turn and enforce the following minimum assault phase if so:

Mini	5 minutes
Classic	10 minutes
Apocalyptic	15 minutes

Teammates already finished their turn should help resolve ongoing combats if a player with units engaged in combat is still moving or shooting. Otherwise the engaged player must move on to assault with their other phases left unfinished.

Any actions not completed within turn time limits are simply forfeited. Once in the course of the game an alliance can extend their current turn by 5 minutes.

SCOPE LIMITS

Special rules that affect all units, all enemy units, or the entire table are not applied. Specific examples include the Chaos Daemons' Warp Storm table, the Lord of the Storm rules for the Necron's Imotekh the Stormlord, and the Necron Solar Pulse, none of which take effect. This does not include Cataclysm effects imposed by the mission or organizer(s).

Army-wide buffs apply only to that detachment of that player's forces, as in a usual game, regardless of other factions that may be present their alliance. For example, nominating Vulkan He'stan as a warlord makes only that player's Melta weapons in Vulkan's detachment Mastercrafted and does not affect any other detachments or players in their alliance, including other Salamanders Space Marines.

PSYCHIC PHASE

A single D6 is rolled by the current alliance in the psychic phase to determine the base warp charge to be used by all players, who otherwise follow the standard rules to generate their own distinct warp charge pools. Each alliance with fewer players than the

largest alliance receives an additional base amount of charge for each player fewer on their team, allocated to their players however they wish.

Players may only cast and deny powers using their own warp charge. The single player from any opposing alliance with any model within 48" of a psyker casting a power and willing to use the most warp charge to attempt denying a successful spell may do so. If multiple players want to attempt denying, select one randomly. Note that players may attempt to deny spells targeted at models other than their own.

SHOOTING PHASE

Players may shoot into ongoing close combats that do not include any units from their alliance, targeting the combat as a whole. Blast templates scatter as usual and hits are allocated to units for each model under the template. Other hits are allocated to the closest model in sequence as usual, which may mean that multiple units are hurt as models are removed.

After resolving wounds, the units in combat are assumed to be still locked in that combat unless all the models of an alliance have been eliminated, even if the units are no longer in physical contact due to removed casualties. Consolidation moves are not made if an alliance is eliminated. Units shot at in combat do not take morale checks at the end of shooting.



Firing solution on coordinates alpha alpha nine six four!

THE GREATER GOOD

Shas'ui Ke'ssai crouched low behind the crude rubble barricade. His hooves trembled with the clamorous approach of the humans' ugly, stinking, smoking vehicles. In that moment, he realized he hated them. He hated them for their violence, and he hated them for what they'd done to his world. But most of all, he hated them for teaching him to hate.



ASSAULT PHASE

In the assault phase, the alliances alternate selecting combats to be resolved beginning with the currently active team. This ensures the current team cannot solely resolve their preferred combats before time runs out for the turn. In game terms, assaults are resolved in order one-by-one, as usual. In practice, assaults that cannot affect each other should be resolved simultaneously as possible.

Units may charge as usual into ongoing close combats including units from multiple other alliances. Combats are resolved in the assault phase of each alliance with engaged units, making combats with more than two alliances particularly deadly!

APOCALYPTIC RESERVES

In apocalyptic games, units placed into Strategic Reserve arrive according to the following schedule rather than rolling each turn as per the standard rules:

- Turn 1 Zooming flyers & deep striking units
- Turn 2 Any unit capable of moving 12" or more in a single movement phase, e.g., beasts and vehicles, including transports with embarked units
- Turn 3 All other units

Once per game any unit, wargear, fortification, or other special rule that can manipulate reserve rolls may be used to shift the scheduled arrival of a unit by one turn. This may be applied to friendly or enemy units and may shift them up or down as appropriate to the original ability's rules and modifiers. No unit may be affected in such a way more than once per game, and no unit may be delayed past Turn 3.

For example, an Astra Militarum Fleet Officer could delay the arrival of an opposing Heldrake until Turn 2. That Fleet Officer cannot then delay or advance another unit for the remainder of the game. A second Fleet Officer or another unit also could not delay that same Heldrake again to Turn 3.

CATACLYSM MISSION: HOLD AND REPEL

This is a good default mission template for Cataclysm games that works well for any number of alliances.

TABLE SETUP

After determining deployment zones, place primary objective markers. First, each alliance in turn order places one home objective in its deployment zone. Each then in turn places one target objective in the adjacent deployment zone clockwise around the table. Finally, each alliance in turn then places one neutral objective in no alliance's deployment zone. Objective marker placement follows all standard rules.

GAME LENGTH

Settle beforehand on 5 or 6 turns and a schedule.

MISSION SPECIFIC RULES

Reserves. As on page 135 of the main rulebook and modified by Cataclysm rules for apocalyptic matches.

Nightfighting. On a D6 of 4+ before the first alliance begins its first turn, all units have Stealth for Turn 1.

SCORING

Primary Objectives. Control of primary objective markers is cumulatively scored at several points based on the predetermined game length:

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 5 turns | After the 1st, 3rd, and 5th turns |
| 6 turns | After the 2nd, 4th, and 6th turns |

The value of each marker varies by its location relative to the alliance controlling it:

- Primary objectives in the next enemy deployment zone clockwise around the table are worth +3 victory points each.
- Primary objectives in the alliance's own deployment zone are worth +2 victory points each.
- All other primary objectives are worth +1 victory point each.

Secondary Objectives. The following secondary objectives award additional victory points to each alliance at the end of the game:

- +2 for each enemy warmaster directly forced to be removed as a casualty by the alliance;
- +1 for each enemy warlord directly forced to be removed as a casualty by the alliance, not including warmasters;
- +1 for each enemy deployment zone in which the alliance has a scoring unit;
- +1 if there are no enemy models, scoring or otherwise, in the alliance's own deployment zone.

The alliance with the most victory points emerges triumphant from the Cataclysm!

DISCLAIMER

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