

Aeonisk Tactical Addendum Clarifications (v1.2)

Integrating the Aeonisk Tactical Layer with YAGS Core

This document clarifies and summarizes the key rules introduced by the Aeonisk Tactical Addendum to the YAGS Core system, based on v1.2 and subsequent refinements discussed in the source material.

Introduction for New Players (or Players New to Tactical Aeonisk)

Welcome! If you're used to tabletop RPGs like D&D, you'll find a lot that's familiar here: you still roll a d20 + your character's skills and stats, aim for a target number, track damage and defense, and work together to overcome challenges.

What Aeonisk Tactical does is offer a specific, structured way to handle combat encounters that moves away from counting squares on a grid. Instead, we use simple **Range Bands** (Engaged, Near, Far, Extreme) to handle distances – think of them as zones or areas on the battlefield. Movement becomes shifting between these zones, which is much faster than measuring.

We also add **Tactical Tokens** – physical markers on the table that represent key pieces of terrain or positional advantages (like good Cover or High Ground). You'll actively "claim" these and then "spend" them for a temporary bonus, making the environment a dynamic tool you can use.

The **Action Economy** (what you can do on your turn) uses familiar concepts like Major and Minor actions, similar to Action and Bonus actions in other games. Initiative still determines turn order, but we add phases for declaring actions *before* resolving them, adding a layer of tactical planning and reaction.

Finally, there's a unique **Defence Token** system. Instead of just having a static defense value, you'll actively choose *one* enemy each round to focus your defence against, gaining a specific bonus if they attack you. This adds a simple but meaningful tactical choice every round.

This system is designed to make tactical combat flow quickly, emphasize narrative positioning, and provide clear, impactful choices without getting bogged down in precise measurements. Dive into the rules below, and don't hesitate to ask questions as we play!

Quick-Start Cheat-Sheet

This sheet is a brief overview. Detailed explanations follow.

Core Task Roll * Formula: Attribute × Skill + d20 * **Difficulty:** 10 (easy) | 20 (moderate) | 30 (challenging) * **Success Levels:** Every +10 over target =

+1 success tier

Initiative & Tempo 1. **Roll once at start:** $\text{Agility} \times 4 + \text{d20}$ (Nat 1 INIT 0) 2. **Speed bands:** Fast \rightarrow Normal \rightarrow Slow 3. **Declare in \uparrow INIT**, resolve in \downarrow INIT (within speed bands) 4. **Shock reduces INIT**, can reroll by forfeit turn (halved at INIT 0)

Round Structure 1. **Declare** (ascending INIT): State Major, Minor, Free actions, **Allocate Defence Token**. 2. **Fast** actions (descending INIT) 3. **Normal** actions (descending INIT) 4. **Slow** actions (descending INIT) 5. **Cleanup** (morale, effects, recovery)

Actions per Turn	Type	Count	Notes
			Major 1 Big moves: attacks, two-band shifts
			Minor 1 Small but meaningful: one-band shift, Disengage, draw/reload/item swap, Guard, Claim a token
			Free Unlimited Flavor narrations only: shout orders, drop an item (after you swapped it), quick emotive beats
			Reaction 1 Interrupts: Parry, Overwatch, Token spend, Bonded Defence

Damage & Recovery * **Damage Roll:** $\text{Strength} + \text{Weapon Bonus} + \text{d20}$ * **Soak:** Subtract from damage * **Wounds/Stun:** Every 5 damage = 1 Wound (serious) or 1 Stun (non-lethal) * **Fatal:** > 5 Wounds \rightarrow health check or die

1. Initiative, Tempo, and Round Structure

- **Rolling Initiative:** At combat start, roll $(\text{Agility} \times 4) + \text{d20}$. Natural 1 = Initiative 0 (Halves skill checks, all actions Slow for the round, unless Fatigue is taken). Initiative score is generally kept for the encounter.
- **Shock:** Reduces current Initiative. Can forfeit turn to re-roll Initiative $(\text{Agility} \times 4 + \text{d20})$, halved if current Initiative is 0.
- **Round Order:**
 1. **Declare Phase:** Characters (lowest to highest Initiative) declare their Major, Minor, and significant Free actions. They also allocate their Defence Token (see Section 4). Actions are committed.
 2. **Action Resolution Phase:** Actions are resolved (highest to lowest Initiative) within Speed Bands:
 - **Fast Actions** (e.g., Reactions like Parry, Token Spend) resolve first.
 - **Normal Actions** (e.g., Minor Actions like 1-band shift, Item Swap, Guard) resolve next.
 - **Slow Actions** (e.g., Major Actions like Attack, 2-band shift, Rituals) resolve last.
 - *Note:* Higher Initiative always resolves first within its Speed Band.

3. **Cleanup Phase:** Resolve lingering effects, check Wounds/Stun, make morale checks.

Tactical Interaction Example The Initiative order within the Declare and Resolution phases is crucial, especially when multiple actors want to interact with the same resource or target.

- **Scenario:** Two characters attempt to claim the same Cover Tactical Token in the Declare Phase.
- **Actors:**
 - Goblin: Initiative 12
 - Alice: Initiative 28
- **Declare Phase (Ascending Initiative):**
 1. Goblin (Init 12) declares: “I will claim Cover.”
 2. Alice (Init 28) declares: “I will claim Cover.”
- **Action Resolution Phase (Descending Initiative):**
 - Claiming a token is a Minor Action (Normal Speed).
 - Normal Speed Actions resolve in descending Initiative order.
 - 1. Alice’s Normal Action (Claim Cover) resolves first because she has higher Initiative (28 vs 12). Alice successfully claims the Cover token.
 - 2. The Goblin’s Normal Action (Claim Cover) resolves next. Since the token has already been claimed by Alice, the Goblin’s action fails to secure *that specific token*. The Goblin player must either narrate an alternate outcome (e.g., trying to find *different* cover, or realizing it was taken) or their action is simply ineffective for that token this round.

This example demonstrates how higher Initiative provides a tactical advantage by allowing actions to resolve sooner, potentially preventing slower actors from achieving their declared goals.

2. Action Economy

Each round, characters typically have:

- **Major Action (1):** Complex actions (Attack, Shift 2 Bands, Ritual).
- **Minor Action (1):** Moderate actions (Shift 1 Band, Aim, **Draw/Reload/Item Swap**, Guard, Claim Tactical Token, Disengage).
- **Free Action (Unlimited within reason):** Simple, narrative actions (Shout, Drop item already swapped).
- **Reaction (1):** Interrupts (Parry, Overwatch fire, Spend Tactical Token, Bonded Defence). Refreshes at start of your turn.

3. Range-Band Zones & Movement

Combat occurs across four abstract Range Bands, relative to a character’s position.

Band	Scope	Range Mod (to Attack)	Typical Actions
Engaged	0–2 m	0	Melee attacks, Tackle
Near	>2m–15 m	–2	Short-range gunfire, Dash
Far	>15m–50 m	–4	Long-range attacks, Snipe
Extreme	>50 m	–6	Very long-range, Artillery

- **Movement:**

- **Minor Action:** Shift 1 Range Band (e.g., Near to Engaged, Far to Near).
- **Major Action:** Shift 2 Range Bands (e.g., Far to Engaged) or enter Difficult Terrain within the current or an adjacent band.
- **Disengage (Minor Action):** If Engaged, make an Athletics check (vs. Difficulty 20, example) to safely shift 1 band away (e.g., Engaged to Near) without provoking a Breakaway.
- **Breakaway:** If you move out of the Engaged band *without* using the Disengage action, any foes you were Engaged with may make an immediate free strike (Reaction) against you.

- **Range Modifiers:** The Range Mod penalty applies to attack rolls made into a band or to a more distant band.
- **Flat Modifiers Ladder:** Many situational modifiers use consistent steps of ± 2 , ± 4 , or ± 6 .

4. Defences & The Aeonisk Defence Token

Aeonisk Tactical introduces a single **Defence Token** that represents your focused situational awareness.

- **Gaining & Refreshing**
 - You start each combat round with **one (1) Defence Token**.
 - It refreshes automatically at the beginning of the next round.
- **Allocating**
 - During the **Declare Phase** you allocate your token to **one visible foe**.
 - The allocation is fixed until the round ends (you may re-allocate next round).
- **Benefit vs Allocated Foe**
 - While the token is on that foe, they suffer **–2 to any roll that targets you directly** (attacks, aimed rituals, grapples).

- The -2 is a **Minor** rung modifier and stacks normally with other situational bonuses/penalties, but it counts toward the roll's overall $\pm 2/\pm 4/\pm 6$ cap.
- **Consequence vs Un-allocated Foes**
 - Attacks from foes **not** holding your token count as **Flanking**: you take -2 to your own Defence roll (or, if you use static Defence, the attacker gains $+2$).
 - This mirrors the existing Flanking rule and keeps risk-reward balanced.
- **Evade Reaction (optional heroic burn)**
 - **Once per battle** you may **burn** your Defence Token *after* you become the declared target of an attack.
 - That single attack suffers -4 instead of -2 (Major rung).
 - The token is expended for the rest of the battle and will not refresh until combat ends.
- **Interaction with Standard YAGS Defences**
 - You still choose which incoming attacks to actively defend against per the core YAGS rules.
 - The Defence Token's modifier applies **before** you decide whether to split, full-defend, or take it on the chin.
 - If you full-defend against your allocated foe, both the full-defence bonus **and** the token's -2 (or -4 if Evade) apply—subject to the normal ± 6 maximum.
- **One-Token-Per-PC Rule**
 - A character can never hold more than one active Defence Token.
 - If a rule, item, or power would grant an additional token, treat it as upgrading the existing one (still capped at -2 / -4 per above).

5. Tactical Tokens (Terrain & Positioning)

Tokens represent temporary advantages from terrain or position.

- **Lifecycle:**
 1. **Claim (Free/Minor Action):** Narrate securing the position (e.g., diving behind cover). Place token on your sheet.
 2. **Spend (Reaction):** Flip token before a relevant roll/effect to gain its benefit.
 3. **Discard:** Token is removed after use.
- **Cap:** Only one (1) Tactical Token can be active per PC at a time.
- **Synergy Cap:** Bonuses from Tactical Tokens (and other sources) cap at $+2$ per roll where Synergy applies.

Token	Claim Trigger (Narrative)	Spend Effect (Mechanical)
Cover	Reach a solid object	Grant +2 Soak against a single incoming attack.
High-Ground	Climb to an elevation	Gain +2 to an attack roll & ignore the Near band's range penalty for that attack.
Ley-Node	Enter a glowing sigil	Gain +2 to a Dreamwork or Ritual roll.
Void Slick	Step on an oily shimmer	Target an enemy moving through it with an Agility save (DC 20) or they fall prone; may cause +1 Void splash to those in it.
Sprint Lane	Find/clear a dash path	Immediately make an extra Minor action band shift.

6. Combat Modifiers

Situational modifiers apply as simple flat bonuses or penalties.

Situation	Modifier	Notes
Flanking an enemy in Engaged	+2	To attack rolls by both flanking characters.
Attacking with High-Ground token	+2	To that attack roll.
Attacking Prone target (melee)	+2	To melee attack rolls against them.
Attacking Prone target (ranged)	-4	To ranged attack rolls against them.
Running while shooting	-2	To the shooter's attack roll.

7. New Tactical Actions

Action	Cost	Requirement	Effect
Suppress	Major	Weapon with Rate of Fire (RoF) 3	On a successful hit: the target must choose to either Dive (immediately shift 1 band & lose Cover token if held) OR Hunker Down (suffer -4 to all their attack and defense rolls until their next turn).

Action	Cost	Requirement	Effect
Charge	Major	Must start in Near or Far band	Shift directly into the Engaged band with a chosen foe. Gain +2 to your first melee damage roll against that foe this turn, but you suffer -2 to your own defenses until your next turn.
Overwatch	Minor to set up, uses Reaction to fire	Declare a 90° arc you are watching.	Make an immediate ranged attack (as a Reaction) against the first foe to enter or act significantly within that declared arc.
Disengage	Minor	Must currently be Engaged	Make an Athletics check (e.g., vs Difficulty 20) to shift 1 band away safely without provoking a Breakaway free strike.

8. Bond & Void Tactical Hooks

Special abilities leveraging core Aeonisk concepts.

Hook	Cost	Effect
Bonded Defence	Reaction	When a Bonded ally is attacked, you can grant them +2 to their defense for that attack; however, you suffer -2 to your own defense against the next hit you take.
Bond Rally	Minor action	Target a Bonded ally. Make an Empathy × Charm check (e.g., vs. Difficulty 20). If successful, you can pull 1 Stun from that ally onto yourself (you take the Stun, they heal it).
Void Surge	Free Action (declare before an attack roll)	Gain +4 to your damage roll for the current attack and it automatically causes Shock to the target on a hit. However, you immediately suffer 1 Stun from the spiritual backlash. Unlimited usage allowed while Void 7; locked at Void 8.

Bonded Defence – play snippet

A gunner on the catwalk opens fire at Kaelia. Nyx uses their Reaction, projecting calm: Kaelia rolls defence with +2 Bonded Defence. — Roll: Kaelia Defence $d20 + Will \times Agility + 2 = 14 + 2 = 16$ vs Attack 18 → miss

A moment later, Nyx leans on their Bond... Next time Nyx defends: they roll with -2 to that defence roll as the backlash penalty.

9. Character Sheet Integration

Minimal additions are needed: * **Stance:** A field to note character's current combat stance (normal / aggressive / defensive). (*Specific mechanical effects of stances were noted as a design decision needed in the source material.*) * **Cover_Mod:** A temporary tracker for the +2 Soak granted by a Cover token. * No new persistent resource pools beyond core YAGS (Wounds, Soak, Void, etc.).

Appendix A: Printable Token Sheet

(To be provided: SVG/PDF assets for the Tactical Tokens like Cover, High-Ground, Ley-Node, Void Slick, Sprint Lane, plus blank backs for custom terrain).

Appendix B: Quick-Ref Tables

(To be compiled: Summary tables for Range Bands & Modifiers, Action Economy, Flat Modifiers, New Tactical Actions, Tactical Token benefits).

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Yet Another Game System

By Samuel Penn (sam@glendale.org.uk) and Aeonisk customization completed by Three Rivers AI Nexus.

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