

GRAY SQUADRON ORIENTATION V3.0

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Gray Squadron! This document is every Gray's guide to understanding the squadron's organization and general approach to winning Fleet Battles. After reading it, every pilot should be able to easily join up with other members and start flying with the same basic game plan.



Figure 1: The Gray Squadron Logo

GRAY SQUADRON ORGANIZATION

Ranks

Members will quickly notice that Gray Squadron uses a ranking system. Do not worry! These ranks are only an indication of contribution in the Squadron, and do not directly reflect piloting skill, in-game rank, or any special authority above the average Discord mod and admin positions. Members with high rank have displayed dedication to helping other members.

Citizen

Citizens are merely visitors to Gray Squadron. They have no rank but are still welcome to play and discuss on the server. Known members of other clans or Discords are limited to this rank.

Cadet (Cdt)

Cadets are members who have recently joined Gray Squadron proper. They can choose to take a Class role to display their favored ships to fly. They are also assigned a mentor from High Command to help answer questions about the Squadron. The Cadet rank is awarded by the secretary droid, GR-AY, to Citizens who have posted in the #introductions channel.

Flight Officer (FO)

Flight Officers are members whose teamwork and attitude meets Gray Squadron's standards. Flight Officers and above may claim any unclaimed Callsign number up to 99. These Callsigns represent the active core of Gray Squadron, and inactivity will cause the Callsign to be removed (the rank will not be removed). Apart from this membership, Callsigns are purely cosmetic; the number does not indicate seniority or ability. The Flight Officer rank is awarded by Lieutenants to Cadets who have demonstrated a willingness to learn and overall sportsmanship while playing.

Lieutenant (Lt)

Lieutenants are members who have shown leadership ability. Members of this rank or higher are considered part of Gray High Command and have access to the #occifers chat. High Command represents the governing body of the Squadron, weighing in on issues such as disputes, internal development, external policies, etc. They are also assigned as mentors to new Cadets and are an open source of information for all other members of Gray Squadron. The Lieutenant rank is awarded to Flight Officers with recommendations from at least two Captains. Other Captains may vote against the promotion, each canceling out one other recommendation.

Captain (Cpt)

Captains are members who are responsible for maintaining the quality of the server as moderators and implementors of larger improvements. Captains also have access to #captains chat, where major decisions regarding server events and disciplinary actions are voted on. The rank of Captain is currently only available via direct promotion from the Commander.

Commander (Cdr)

The rank of Commander is reserved for the server owner and leader of Gray Squadron. In addition to the Captain's duties, they also administrate the overall development of the Squadron and its relations to the rest of the game's community.

Ace Pilot

This flex role is purely to distinguish hardcore pilots from other members. It is awarded to members who have achieve the following:

- .65+ win ratio in Fleet Battles
- 6+ hours of Fleet Battles Playtime
- Flight Officer rank or higher in the Squadron

Post a screenshot of your in-game career page in #ace-pilot-stats. Earning the role will make your name appear pink on the server if not on a team. The role will not be revoked if your win ratio falls below the requirements.

Teams

Gray Squadron also hosts several Teams. These Teams serve to facilitate groups of members who want to play together on a regular basis and create their own community within the framework of Gray Squadron. Each one is self-governed and represented to Gray High Command via an internally elected Team leader. Team member's names will be colored in the server, while non-Team member's names will be gray (or pink for Ace Pilots). Each Team's availabilities and scheduled practices are pinned in the #looking-for-players channel.

FLEET BATTLE OVERVIEW

The start of a Fleet Battle is very similar to Dogfight mode. After the toss up, what each pilot should be doing and what the team needs to be aware of changes as the tide of battle ebbs and flows. These “phases” are nebulous, but can generally be summarized as the following:

- Defense
- Neutralizing Shields on Frigates
- Destroying Frigates
- Neutralizing Shields on the Flagship
- Destroying Power System
- Finishing Off the Flagship



Figure 2: Battlefield awareness is the most important skill for a warrior to develop.

Defense

Defending capital ships is often more difficult than attacking them for most pilots. Being on defense means losing major control over the game and trying to match the pace the enemy sets. Earning 100 morale to flip momentum is the ultimate way to stem the enemy's onslaught.

Previously, destroying large groups of AI, or “morale farming” was the best solution. After the latest changes, the morale value of each AI ship has been reduced to 3, less than a third for killing an enemy player (+10). This crippled the viability of killing AI, as it cannot adequately compensate for deaths while on defense (-5) and doesn't prevent damage to capital ships. With this option mostly obsolete, priority should be on survival first and killing enemy players second. Intercept the enemy in mid field, so that they aren't already on top of the objective when they meet resistance.

The enemy Corvette is a considerable threat, dealing persistent damage and sponging most of the fire from the capital ships. Taking it out is important to reducing overall effectiveness of an enemy assault and is worth +20 morale. However, the high time to kill (TTK) is very long compared to players and it cannot be forced to retreat.

Torpedoes, especially Ion, are devastating weapons when allowed to hit. Make a habit of screening for them with the “Target Missiles” hotkey and ping them for interception. Always be vigilant for wayward ships or projectiles, as there is a short window of opportunity between the morale flipping and the Danger Zone activating.

Neutralizing Shields on Frigates – 25,000 HP

Frigate shields don't regenerate and are essentially a second health bar that takes full damage from Ion weapons. With the option to inflict huge amounts of damage, each use of non-Ion weaponry against the shields is wasted damage potential. Wait until after the shields are down to use conventional heavy ordnance. Passive damage from AI and stray shots from dogfights will also contribute without shields in the way, creating offensive pressure even when no one is on the objective.

Pilots with Ion capability should target the same frigate the friendly Corvette is heading to. Callout which one that is, and the team will generally split up between the Frigates to conceal which is the target of an ionic strike. Callout again when a Frigate's shields are stripped, so the team can focus fire on that one. Ion torpedoes deal about 90-95% damage to a Frigate's shields. Neutralizing shields this way can cut the TTK on capital ships down to half.

Destroying Frigates – 55,500 HP

Once the shields are down on one or more of the Frigates, each pilot should endeavor to put some damage on it. Slaying each Frigate earns +15 morale, greatly extending the offensive phase. Pilots in enemy territory should monitor their ship status and retreat for resupply once energy stores or hull strength run low. A pilot out of boost, weapon power, or aux ammo is easy pickings for the enemy players and Frigates. Take on the objective as a group to increase survivability, reduce morale loss, and save more time to assault the enemy. "Mosquitoing" or staying on one spot on the capital ship's hull while attacking, is NOT a viable tactic for attacking Frigates.



Figure 3: A Corvette represents great opportunity for its allies and is devastating when left unchecked.

The allied Corvette offers incredible advantage to offensive while on the field, passively dealing damage and attracting enemy fire. Its death marks the beginning of the end of the offensive, and more caution is needed when pushing against the enemy afterward.

Anti-Starfighter pilots can use it as bait; enemy players attacking it will be easy prey. Ion Anti-Capital Ship pilots should eliminate the shields on its target to enable direct damage. Communicate with the team when deciding to take on the other frigate or reinforce the Corvette.

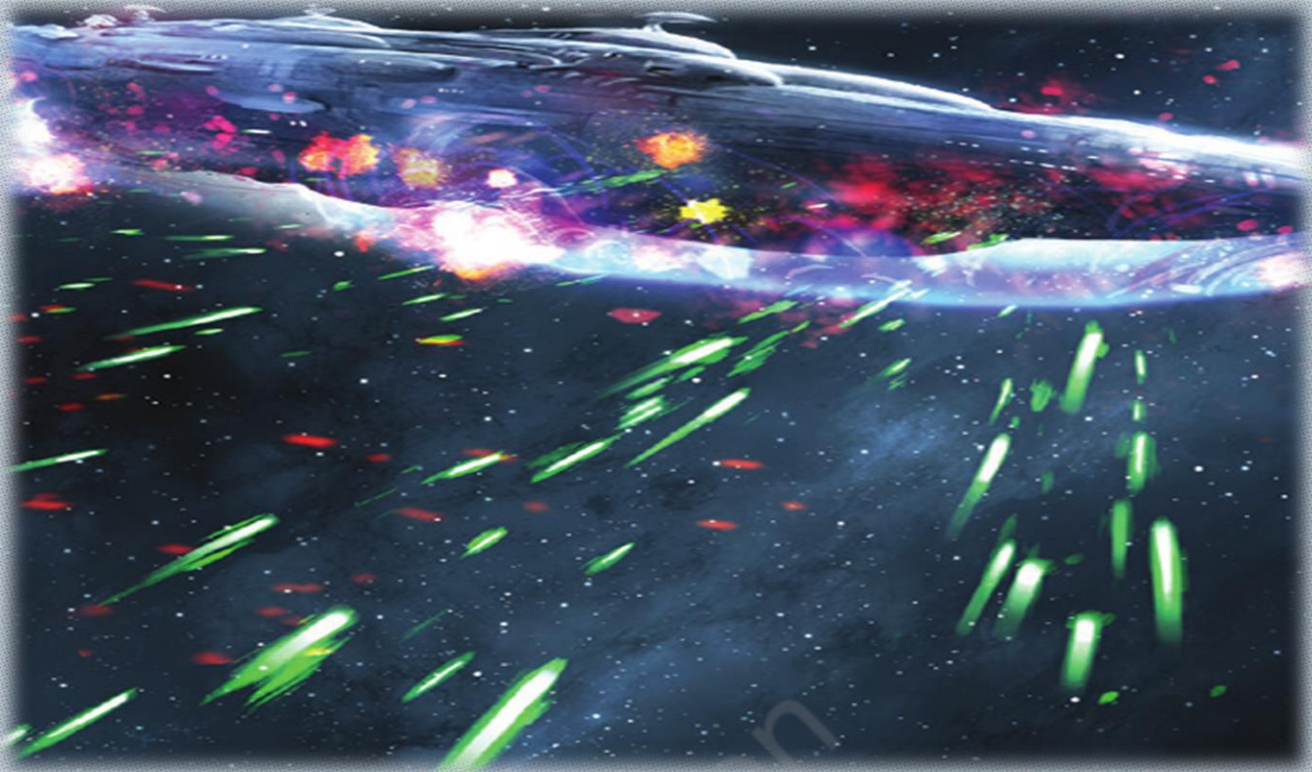


Figure 4: A Flagship's shields are all that stand in the way of its doom.

Neutralizing Shields on the Flagship

The shields on Flagships are more difficult to overcome. In addition to being twice the strength of a Frigate's shields, they also partially regenerate a short time after they are depleted or back to maximum when morale flips. A team needs to consistently bypass or remove the shields to deal lasting damage to the Flagship.

The most effective method is destroying the shield generators themselves. Each generator destroyed reduces the maximum shield recharge by 50%. Getting both will permanently expose the hull and all the subsystems to passive and long-range attacks, starting a countdown to the Flagship's demise and the team's victory.

Communicate to the team which generator to focus on, so damage isn't unnecessarily split between the two. Closely timed assaults on the same target will bring it down quickly and is more difficult to defend against. Be sure to communicate the health of recently attacked subsystems and the status of the Flagship's shields, so others may follow up and secure the kill later. If substantially behind the enemy in Flagship HP, it may be better to settle on destroying one shield generator and moving on to the Power System.

Destroying the Power System

The Power System is the most vulnerable subsystem, and its destruction causes 5 weak spots to appear. While it has a low health pool, it also receives full Ion damage. An Ion Torpedo can one-shot the subsystem. An Ion missile can do the same if Targeting Beacons are in effect.

Attacking this subsystem is best done when the shields are disabled or completely gone. Given the chance, and if one or more generators are already destroyed/heavily damaged, a pilot should attack the Power System.

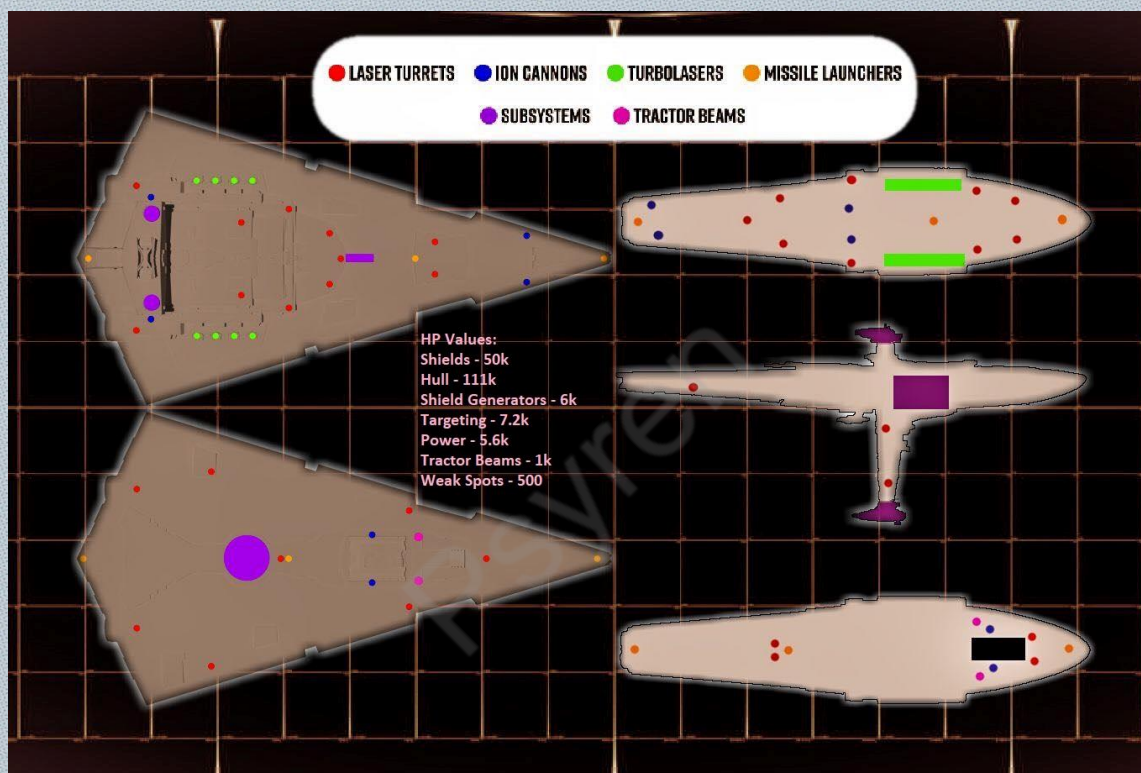


Figure 5: This information is critical in determining what methods are best suited for attacking each objective. Try to memorize all of it, since it won't be pasted on the inside of the cockpit!

Finishing Off the Flagship

Once both shield generators and the Power System are destroyed, it's only a matter of finishing off what little remains of the Flagship's health, usually below 50% at this point. Make callouts on the ship's remaining HP and any visible weak spots. Weak spots can appear in any damaged sections while the total HP of the Flagship is below 50%. Destroying each of these reduces the ship's HP by 7%. After a continuous wild assault, the game will quickly be over.

TEAM COMPOSITION AND ROLES

A team needs to have pilots dedicated to certain kinds of tasks as well as a good mix of them. Pilots without direction are ineffective and teams without balance are easily countered. This is not to say that team members should be railroaded into only playing a single way, but a focus on specific skills will make the path to victory more straightforward.



Figure 6: Ships are often modified to fit certain niches. Observe common builds and devise appropriate counters.

Many pilots fall into the assumption that effective roles are identified by the class of ships: fighter, bomber, interceptor, support. Although ship-role stereotypes hold mostly true, it is not always a correct assessment. No longer can the Bombers be assumed to be the main assault force. Fighters, Interceptors, and even Supports can be just as threatening to capital ships and players alike. Therefore, roles should be categorized independently of ship classes, each having its own group of ships and loadout combinations attributed to it.

Anti-Capital Ship (Anti-Cap), 1-2 members

With the win condition of Fleet Battles being the destruction of the enemy Flagship, dedicated Anti-Capital Ship pilots are a must. On offense, these pilots will be coordinating attack runs and communicating who and where major threats are. This should be timed with the Anti-Player pilots so that the enemy must split its attention when the team makes attack runs. On defense, they will be the second line of defense, screening against persistent attackers and Torpedoes. The need to inflict hull damage and the existence of shields impeding that goal necessitates two sub roles, Ion and DPS.

Ion Anti-Capital Ship

Some Anti-Capital Ship pilots should run an Ion auxiliary, the number depending how heavy the ordnance is. Quickly removing shields from Corvettes and capital ships enables attack to be more successful in destroying objectives. Switch to DPS builds once shields are gone from any relevant target. It is recommended to only switch upon death unless you are close to base when the morale flips. Pilots with Ions should also be on the lookout for opportunities to attack the Power System.

DPS Anti-Capital Ship

Bombers are the obvious pick to deal heavy, indefensible damage in a single run. The low mobility necessitates some cover fire or diversionary tactics to get a Bomber into position, but once close a properly outfitted Bomber can wipe out a subsystem with little difficulty. Auxiliaries are up to personal preferences, with there being many opinions on which is better. Be aware of each's power and positioning requirements and consider switching up mid match to foil the enemy's attempts to counter.

Other craft filling an Anti-Cap role favor hit and run tactics, chipping away at the capital ships, and baiting the enemy to compromise defensive positioning or ignore the allied Corvette. This is very effective when done with multiple teammates. Harassment builds should be highly maneuverable to survive the approach and line up shots on subsystems and weak spots.

Anti-Starfighter (Anti-Player), 2-3 members

The Anti-Starfighter role has two objectives: seize air superiority and, upon achieving that, assist Anti-Capital Ship pilots in attacking the objective. A faction with "Air superiority" has control over a space to conduct operations without much interference. In Squadrons, this means preventing enemy players from operating effectively around the objective. This isn't Dogfight mode; don't abandon position to finish a kill. Simply crippling or routing the enemy will ensure control of the game. Focus on targets that are most immediately threatening to allied forces.



Figure 7: Against skilled enemies, a tailing ship may be as vulnerable as the one it is following.

The incredible mobility of Interceptors makes them great for this role, especially on offense. Other ships can be equipped for various playstyles (Ex. a Fighter with Reinforced hull can punish frequent jousters or bait bloodthirsty players). Anti-player pilots are tasked with hunting the most dangerous prey in Fleet Battles, so skill in a preferred loadout is often more important than the loadout itself. A pair or triplet of Anti-player pilots working together can burn down any target with little resistance. After team flight groups, advanced drift tech, weapons accuracy, and battlefield awareness are the best tools at their disposal.

Support, 0-1 members

This unique role is not required for success in fleet battles, but good use of it means winning games in record time. The goal of the Support is to amplify the effectiveness of teammates and reduce morale loss. On offense, Support pilots should be observing the battle from relative safety. From here the Support should be in heavy communication with the team, relaying openings in the enemy's defense, properly timing the use of buffs and debuffs, and helping retreating allies in their escape. Defensively, Targeting Beacons are essential to assisting the team in repelling the enemy. Make sure to callout which targets are marked, as it only lasts a short time. The Support should focus on targets with low TTK, such as AI, or assist other teammates in finishing kills.



Figure 8: Concise communication between pilots will extend everyone's awareness and allows a team to take advantage of the enemy's mistakes.

This role suffers the most from component slot limitations, only able to serve certain functions at a time. The 1.3x damage multiplier of Targeting Beacons is very powerful. It can be applied to both capital ships and players and can turn around games if coordinated well. Supply Droids and Over Shields perform similar purposes in rescuing allies but can be blocked by solid objects. The shields offer higher range and ammo capacity while Supply Droids can substitute for a Frigate's resupply. The Squadron Mask is useful in its ability to affect multiple allies and skillful application can manipulate the opponent. Again, make sure allies know what abilities are equipped and communicate when and how they are going to be used. This teamwork is what determines whether the Support is a wasted team slot or the most valuable one.

CREDITS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Gray Squadron Contributors

- Psuedo-nine
- Nax
- Cheese
- Vapor

Image Sources

Figure 1:

SeaFishelle. "Gray Squadron Logo". Gray Squadron Discord, 29 Sep. 2020, https://cdn.discordapp.com/attachments/759977905416699945/760701769541746688/gray_squadron_logo.png . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 2:

Laird, Kate. Admiral Thrawn in his Star Destroyer watching a holographic display of a space battle studying the ship movements and weapon attacks. Wookieepedia, 26 Feb. 2018, https://starwars.fandom.com/wiki/Mitth%27raw%27nuruodo?file=Grand_Admiral_Thrawn_DoR.png . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 3:

Devine, Anthony. A Raider I-class corvette engaged in battle with Rebel forces. Wookieepedia, 8 Apr. 2019, https://starwars.fandom.com/wiki/Raider-class_corvette/Legends?file=Raider_I-class_Corvette_2016_SWA_Store_Championship_alt_card.png . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 4:

A Mon Calamari Star Cruiser with reinforced deflector shields. Wookieepedia, Oct. 2016, https://starwars.fandom.com/wiki/Deflector_shield/Legends?file=Reinforced_Deflectors_XWM.png . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 5:

Feliciano, Alexander. "Squadrons Flagship Layout." 2020. JPEG file.

Figure 6:

Casacop, JB. Heralds of Hope Squadron Pack box art. 31 Jul. 2020, https://starwars.fandom.com/wiki/Heralds_of_Hope_Squadron_Pack?file=HeraldsOfHopeBoxArt.png . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 7:

Card art extracted from Supernatural Reflexes card appearing in X-Wing Second Edition Core set. 13 Sep. 2018, https://static.wikia.nocookie.net/xwing-miniatures-second-edition/images/b/b0/Supernatural_Reflexes.png/revision/latest?cb=20180604183259 . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020.

Figure 8:

Johnson, Paul, animator. *TIE Fighter – short film*. YouTube, uploaded by Otaking77077, 24 Mar. 2015, https://youtu.be/PN_CP4SuoTU?t=293 . Accessed 12 Dec. 2020

Additional Resources

The following links contain even more useful information penned by prominent players in the community. Be aware that all the data may not be up to date or reflect the current state of the game.

Bruna's Advanced Drifting Videos

<https://youtu.be/V7mg0IbKwGc>

Macklunky's Klunky Guide to New Components

https://www.reddit.com/r/CompetitiveSquadrons/comments/k0zvxi/macklunkys_klunky_guide_to_new_components/

Rhifox's Guide to Drifting in Star Wars Squadrons v2.1

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wIYcXxzsnsSRZ6-mMbDN_GWRcxhhSefKj/view?usp=sharing

Scalpwakka's Fleet Battle Strategy Guide

https://www.reddit.com/r/StarWarsSquadrons/comments/jtlbzs/fleet_battles_strategy_guide/

The Complete Fleet Support Guide by nop

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZoD5gz5auS_poCSltvwVlz_qUmPhkRnWvGPrz1dI8JI/edit?usp=sharing

Squadrons Community Knowledge Compendium (This contains several sources not used for this guide)

https://www.reddit.com/r/StarWarsSquadrons/comments/k64kf6/squadrons_community_knowledge_compendium/

Revision History

1.0 First Draft

2.0

- Added Section on Gray Squadron Organization
- Reworked Support Subsection
- Added various images and background
- Renamed Gray Squadron Orientation

2.1

- Reworked grammar and sentence composition for better reading
- Made changes to Roles section based on pilot feedback

3.0

- Added Credits and Additional Information section, sourcing external information and images
- Revised defense subsection to account for balance changes
- Major rewrites of Roles section to present less prescriptive strategy
- Additional Images, including a new infographic on Flagship Specs

Psyren