

CHASES & VEHICLES

One of the most thrilling staples of adventure film, television, and fiction is the chase. This simple twist on the regular combat rules lets you race muscle cars over blasted deserts, track freestyle runners across concrete jungles, and even recreate desperate dogfights in the sky or the depths of space.

When to Use These Rules: Use the Quick Encounter rules if you just want to find out if the heroes catch a fleeing foe. If you want more detail, use these rules for highly mobile pursuits too large for the tabletop. You'll also find rules for resolving damage against vehicles, and what effect it has on their drivers in this section.

The Basics: Participants vie for position using "Chase Cards" to track relative distance.

MANEUVERING SKILLS

The following rules often call for *maneuvering* skill rolls. Exactly what skill that is depends on whether the character is on foot, mounted, or in a vehicle of some sort:

- **AIRPLANE OR SPACESHIP:** Piloting
- **FOOT OR BIKE:** Athletics
- **MOUNT OR WAGON:** Riding
- **VEHICLE:** Driving
- **WATERCRAFT:** Boating

Critical Failure: The standard results for Critically Failing a maneuvering roll are listed below, but the GM can always create her own result appropriate to the situation as well:

- **Mounted:** Roll a d6. 1–2: the rider loses his turn; 3–4: his mount suffers Fatigue (this applies to the animal's rolls *and* the rider's Riding rolls); 5–6: the rider suffers Fatigue from a bad bounce, low-hanging obstacle, or overexertion trying to control his animal.
- **Vehicle:** The operator must roll on the **Out of Control** table (page 119).
- **Walking/Running:** Roll a die. Even, he loses the rest of his turn as he stumbles, negotiates an obstacle, or takes a wrong turn. Odd, he suffers Fatigue.

SETUP

To start a chase, shuffle an extra deck of Action Cards and deal them out in a row on the table (nine is a good number for most chases, add more as needed).

Now break all the participants into each group that will move and act independently. Everyone in the same ship, boat, or vehicle, for example, is one group. In a foot chase, each player character acts independently because they move independently. The horde of Extras chasing them can be broken up into groups as the GM decides.





Red and Gabe pursue a ninja in a foot chase (a 5" Range Increment).
Gabe is four cards from the ninja so he's 20" (40 yards) away.
Red is two cards from the ninja so she's 10" (20 yards) away.

The rear-most character or vehicle should be at the rear — on the far left card or “Card 1.” Everyone else should be placed to his right as fits the circumstances. Add more cards to either end of the row if someone falls behind or surges ahead.

The Range is the number of Chase Cards between participants (not counting the attacker’s card) times the Range Increment, which varies for the type of chase:

RANGE INCREMENTS

TYPE	INCREMENT
Foot, Mounted, or Vehicular	5
Airplane or Sailing Ship	25
Jets or Starships	50

These are *suggested* ranges based on the weapons typically used in that type of chase. The goal is to give most ranged weapons the ability to fire at a few cards distance and give an advantage to those with longer ranged weapons. Increase or decrease the Range Increment as makes sense for the particular scenario. In a tank battle, for instance, you might want to change the Range Increment to 100, even though it’s a “vehicular” fight.

CHASE ROUNDS

Once all the participants are placed, deal each independent character or group an Action Card at the start of each round as usual. They then act in whatever order they choose as their Action Card comes up. This is important so passengers can Support their driver before he has to make a critical roll, Test a foe to make him Vulnerable, attack *before* their vehicle changes distance (*or after*) to take maximum advantage of their weapons, and so on.

The participants can move along the track using the **Change Position** maneuver (page 115), closing on foes, running from them, or attempting to reach some objective.

The length of each round is up to the GM, but is usually a combat round in a foot or car chase. Battles in space might represent many minutes per round until the action zooms in on a fast-paced dogfight.

Boarders: Characters in or on an *enemy* vehicle get their own Action Card (as a group).

Minimum Speed: The Game Master must decide who’s allowed to participate in a chase. A kid on a bike might be able to chase bandits in a car if the streets are very congested, but is left behind after a round on the open road.

Ending the Chase: A chase ends when one side gets away (disabling all pursuers, the Flee maneuver, etc.) or is forced to stop. Participants can always choose to stop if they want, either dropping out or stopping to engage their enemies.

A chase might also end after a certain number of rounds or as one or more of those involved reach a certain card along the track. In a *Weird War Two* bombing run, for example, the bombers might need to reach the last card on the track to drop their payload. The fighters scrambling after them must try to stop them before they reach their target.

CHASE ACTIONS

Characters in a chase can do most anything they’d normally do, such as Test, Support, use powers, or make attacks. The GM decides how close a character has to be to try a particular action. A defender must be able to see or hear a Taunt for it to be effective, for example. If the attacker and defender are connected via

GROUPS

Make Group rolls for Extras who move and act together. If they have a Wild Card leader, use his skill to make maneuvering rolls and assume his leadership keeps the group together.

This means Shaken members of a group are dragged along with the rest, and individual Wounds or other conditions are ignored unless that specific member is targeted, or *all* the members of the group share the same condition.

audio or video feeds, of course, distance probably won't matter.

Nonplayer character crews of ships, starships, and other large vehicles are assumed to be doing their jobs already and shouldn't roll Support or Tests. Those special actions are the domain of the player characters or named Extras and Wild Cards — including those on the opposing side!

Held Actions: A character on Hold may attempt to interrupt enemy actions as usual. In personal combat (including foot chases), the two make opposed Athletics rolls. When mounted, it's opposed Riding rolls. In vehicle chases, the GM must decide which skills are most appropriate (Athletics vs. maneuvering to interrupt the driver, for example).

If trying to act before an entire vehicle, ship, or group with multiple characters takes its action, the opposed roll should be made against the driver or leader.

MANEUVERS

Below are a number of special maneuvers characters can attempt during a chase. Maneuvers may also be part of a Multi-Action. A driver can Change Position and fire his weapon, for example, or say he attempts a Force if he gets close enough.

■ BOARD (Action): Sailing ships use grappling hooks and planks to pull their prey close and board. Starships might use breaching tubes or assault pods.

To board, the attacker and defender must be on the same Chase Card. The two then make opposed maneuvering rolls. If the attacker is successful, the two vessels are joined and his crew may board the enemy craft.

If defenders have been designated to repel boarders and weren't being used for other purposes (such as sailing or crewing stations on a starship), they start on Hold unless the attacker won the boarding roll with a raise.

Once a boarding action begins, the commander of the boarded vessel can only attempt to Change Position, which is made at -4 if grappling lines, tractor beams, or other restraints are involved. If she's successful, her vessel is no longer grappled (though some of the boarders may still be on her ship!). With a raise, she breaks free

and may move one Chase Card in either direction.

■ CHANGE POSITION (Action or Free Action):

A character or driver may change his position by making a maneuvering roll as a free action. Success allows him to move up or down one Chase Card, and up to two with a raise. The character may also Change Position as an action, adding +2 to her roll. Either way, this maneuver may only be used once per turn.

Speed Bonus: If a rider, runner, ship, or vehicle's Top Speed is faster than the fastest of his rivals, he adds +1 to his maneuvering roll to Change Position, or +2 if he's twice as fast.

Dropping Back: In a linear chase, a character may drop "back" one or two Chase Cards without making a maneuvering roll. He may not Change Position further, either as an action or a free action.

■ EVADE (Action or Free Action): The character or driver zigzags through terrain, maximizes cover, or otherwise concentrates on not getting hit. Melee and ranged attacks against him, his vehicle, or anyone on it suffer a -2 penalty until the *start* of that vehicle's next turn. The character and any occupants on his mount or in his vehicle also take the penalty to their attacks as the erratic movement or obstacles affect their targeting and aim as well. If the character performs this maneuver as an action, the penalty increases to -4 (in both directions). Evade may not be taken more than once per round (it does not stack).

■ **FLEE (Action):** A character or vehicle may escape the chase if there are at least four Chase Cards between himself and the closest foe. If so, he makes a maneuvering roll at -4 and escapes if successful. The penalty is reduced to -2 if there are at least five cards between them, and 0 if there are six or more.

■ **FORCE (Action):** The attacker attempts to force a rival away from his vehicle or into an obstacle. To do so, both must be on the same Chase Card and make opposed maneuvering rolls. If the attacker wins, he **Bumps** (see below) his foe. A raise is treated as if the defender rolled a Critical Failure on a maneuvering roll (see **Maneuvering Skills**, page 113).

The GM may also allow characters to use other skills, such as Shooting, to put obstacles in the foe's path. Critical Failure means the attempt backfires on the attacker!

■ **HOLD STEADY (Free Action):** The character, driver, or pilot holds steady to line up a better shot. They ignore the Unstable Platform and Running penalties, but attacks against the vehicle and all its occupants are made at +2 until the beginning of their next turn (this does *not* stack with Vulnerable).

BUMP

Several circumstances result in a character or group being "Bumped." The foe who caused the Bump may move the defender one Chase Card in any direction. She may do this at any time during her turn as she chooses (to resolve other attacks first, for example).

When a target is Bumped by an indirect action (such as a Complication), the opposing side chooses the direction.

An attacker can't Bump a particular target more than one space each turn regardless of the source (multiple attacks, the Force maneuver, etc.). Other attackers, even those sharing the same Action Card, may Bump the target separately, however.

Groups always stay together in a chase, so they're only moved if their driver or leader is Bumped, or the GM feels it's narratively appropriate.

Bumps are only used in chases. Ignore them on the tabletop.

■ **RAM (Action):** An attacker can Ram a defender if they're on the same Chase Card by making opposed maneuvering rolls. If successful, *both* participants cause the following damage to the other:

- **Scale:** The base damage each being or vehicle causes is based on its Scale: Small (d6), Normal (2d6), Large (3d6), Huge (4d6), and Gargantuan (5d6).
- **Raise:** +d6 bonus damage for the attacker if he got a raise on his maneuvering roll.
- **Toughness:** +d6 if the vehicle's Toughness is higher than his foe's; +2d6 if Toughness is twice as high.
- **Speed:** +d6 to both sides if the attacker's Top Speed is between 60 and 120 MPH; +2d6 if it's over 120 MPH.

COMPLICATIONS

If a character or group's Action Card is a Club, something has gone wrong. An obstacle may block the path, the engine might stall, or a hero might have to run through mud, ice, uphill, or some other impediment.

The character, driver, or pilot must make a maneuvering roll as a free action to deal with the Complication. The suit on his current Chase Card determines any modifier to the maneuvering roll and the results of failure.

Note: The Action Card triggers the Complication; the Chase Card defines any modifier (Mod) and the result of failure.

COMPLICATIONS

SUIT	MOD	FAILURE RESULT
Spades	-	Treat as a Critical Failure on a maneuvering roll.
Hearts	-	The character or vehicle is Bumped.
Diamonds	-2	The character or vehicle is Bumped.
Clubs	-2	Treat as a Critical Failure on a maneuvering roll.
Joker	+2	The character or vehicle is Bumped up to two Chase Cards.

Special Conditions: GMs can also use Complications to trigger special conditions or hazards of the encounter. For example, triggering reinforcements anytime a Diamond Complication occurs, or the first character to fail a Club Complication is hit by lightning during a battle in a fierce storm.

ATTACKS

Characters may make ranged and melee attacks normally, using all their usual Edges and Hindrances as usual as long as the GM agrees they make sense in the particular situation.

MELEE ATTACKS: In foot, mounted, or car chases, characters can make hand-to-hand attacks only if they're on the same Chase Card. The usual rules, such as the Gang-Up bonus, Withdrawing from Melee, Innocent Bystanders, etc., apply as the GM sees fit. Should anyone want to attack a moving vehicle, its Parry is $2 + \text{half the driver's maneuvering skill}$, plus its Handling. Attacks aren't usually possible between very fast vehicles, airplanes, starships, and the like.

RANGED ATTACKS: Drivers and characters can fire ranged weapons as usual. The Range is the number of Chase Cards between participants (not counting the attacker's card) times the Range Increment. Attacks may also target crew if they're visible (don't forget any Cover they might have).

DAMAGE

- **CHARACTERS/MOUNTS:** Damage is resolved normally, but if the character (or his mount) is Shaken, Stunned, or Wounded in a chase, he's Bumped as well.
- **VEHICLES:** Vehicles cannot be Shaken, but if damage equals or exceeds their Toughness (whether they take a Wound or not), the driver must make a maneuvering roll or go **Out of Control** (see page 119).

Each raise on a vehicular damage roll causes a Wound and one roll on the **Vehicle Critical Hits** table (not one roll per Wound). Most vehicles can take three Wounds before they're **Wrecked** (page 118). Each Wound reduces a vehicle's Handling by 1 (to a maximum of -4).

If this is a chase, damage that equals or exceeds a vehicle's Toughness also **Bumps** it (page 116), but only once per attacker.

Called Shots on Vehicles: To target a particular part of a vehicle, the GM assigns a modifier based on the dimensions of the target. See **Size & Scale** on page 106 and **Cover** on page 99 for specifics. If the attack is successful and causes a Wound, it also causes the effects for that area (see the **Vehicle Critical Hit** table).

FIXED WEAPONS

Front-mounted weapons may only fire at targets ahead of them, side weapons to their respective sides, and rear weapons behind. Top or bottom mounted turreted weapons may fire in any direction unless the situation or particular vehicle says otherwise (assume ships, planes, or starships rise and fall during the turn to accommodate their top or bottom weapons).

Fixed Side-Mounted Weapons (Cannons): Firing fixed side-mounted weapons — those that must be aimed by turning the entire vessel — must be positioned. The captain or pilot chooses his target and makes an opposed maneuvering roll as an action. Failure means he can't line up a shot this turn. Success means the attacker may fire up to half his guns on one side at the target, and a raise means he may fire all of them at that target (a "broadside").

Treat each set of up to four cannons as "linked" (see page 82), rolling attacks and damage separately for each set.

Crossing the T: If a Large target (or greater) is hit by a broadside at Short Range, it's "raked" along its length. Add an additional d6 to each damage roll resulting from the rake.

REACTION FIRE

Weapons with this quality spray massive amounts of matter or energy, making them quick to fire against enemies who dart in and out of range to attack. Once per round when their craft is attacked, Reaction Fire weapons may return fire at -2. The attack is resolved *after* the enemy's who triggered it (if the gunner survives).

WRECKED

Vehicles take three Wounds before they're "Wrecked" as their base. Large vehicles can take four Wounds, Huge can take five, and Gargantuans can take six.

A wrecked land vehicle can't move, but its weapons may still be fired if they aren't powered by the vehicle's propulsion system.

Watercraft sink. Small vessels sink in a few rounds. Medium boats might take up to an hour to slip beneath the surface, and large ships might take several hours.

Aircraft plummet to the ground and are destroyed.

Occupants: Those inside a vehicle (and whatever it hits, if it matters) take damage depending on what caused the Wreck:

■ **COLLISIONS:** If the vehicle is Wrecked from a Collision on the **Out of Control** table, the passengers suffer $Xd6$ damage, where X is equal to the Wounds the vehicle suffered from the collision (don't forget any **Air Bags & Safety Harnesses**, page 82).

■ **DAMAGE:** If the vehicle is Wrecked from Wounds caused by enemy attacks, occupants in a land vehicle, speed boat, starship, or similar vessel take $3d6$ damage, or $5d6$ if the GM feels the vehicle was traveling at a high speed (usually in excess of 60 MPH) or some other precarious circumstance. Those

on large boats or ships don't take Wounds but must contend with Swimming rolls and survival afterward.

Occupants of an aircraft make an Athletics roll if they have parachutes to land safely. Failure means they take **Bumps & Bruises**, page 125, from a hard landing. Those who roll a Critical Failure on Athletics or are without parachutes plummet to their death, unless the GM feels they have a chance to survive. In that case they suffer **Falling** damage (see page 127) instead.

REPAIRS

Characters may repair vehicles given sufficient time and at least some basic tools. The attempt takes two hours per Wound and a Repair roll. If the roll fails, the mechanic must start over.

Field work requires at least a toolbox and basic supplies, and subtracts 2 from the Repair roll. An average garage negates this penalty, and an excellent or dedicated facility adds +2.

Each success and raise on the Repair roll fixes one of the vehicle's Wounds. With an additional raise above and beyond what's required to fix all Wounds, the repair time is halved.

Wrecks: Wrecked vehicles can be repaired if the mechanic has access to a full body shop and spare parts (GM's call). This takes a full day before other repairs can be made.



OUT OF CONTROL

Damage caused by an Out of Control roll doesn't trigger another Out of Control roll.

2D6	EFFECT
2	Major Collision: Everyone in the vehicle is Distracted. It takes d4 Wounds and one Critical Hit.
3–4	Minor Collision: The vehicle takes a Wound and a Critical Hit.
5–9	Distracted: Ground vehicles spin out or skid. Airplanes or spaceships stall, slide, flip, or roll unexpectedly. Everyone on board is Distracted until the end of their next turn.
10–11	Vulnerable: The vehicle and everyone on board is Vulnerable until the end of their next turn.
12	Glitch: Something is jarred loose or breaks from rough handling. The vehicle suffers a Critical Hit (reroll Crew results).

VEHICLE CRITICAL HITS

2D6	EFFECT
2	Scratch and Dent: The attack just scratches the paint or passes clean through the body without hitting anyone or anything vital. There's no permanent damage.
3	Guidance/Traction: The wheels, tracks, sails, thrusters, etc. have been hit. Reduce Handling by one each time this occurs (to a maximum penalty of -4).
4–5	Locomotion: The engine, mainsails, boiler, etc., is hit. Top Speed is reduced by 10% each time this occurs (to a minimum of 60% Top Speed).
6–8	Chassis: The vehicle suffers a hit in the body with no special effects.
9–10	Crew: For direct damage, subtract the vehicle's Armor (if appropriate for the victim's position) and apply the remainder to a random crew member. Area effect weapons affect everyone in a section determined by the GM. If this is the result of a Collision , the occupants are Shaken.
11	Weapon: A random weapon is destroyed. If there is no weapon, this is a Chassis hit instead.
12	System: The vehicle loses an electronic system, its airbags, or some other system determined by the GM. If it doesn't have any special features, treat this as a Chassis hit instead.

CUSTOMIZED CHASES

A little customization can make each chase different and unique. Here are some ideas you can use for your encounters.

CITY STREETS

Busy streets are a dangerous place for high-speed vehicle or frantic foot chases. Ranged attacks are made at -2 (in addition to Range penalties) to account for the Cover of buildings, cars, pedestrians, and so on.

Complications besides Jokers have a minimum penalty of -2 to represent the dangers of running red lights, pedestrians that must be avoided, blocked streets, or other hazards.

Rooftops: If the chase takes place on rooftops, change the results for Critical Failures (and failed Complications that say to treat the result as a Critical Failure) to the following:

Roll a d6. On a 1–2, the runner loses his turn. On a 3–4, he takes Fatigue. On a 5–6, he tumbles over an edge and must make an immediate Athletics roll (a free action). Success means he catches a ledge, railing, gutter, or other precipice and can pull himself up with a Strength roll (a free action each round). Failure means he's stuck for the turn and can take no further actions. A Critical Failure means the hero falls $d6 \times 10$ stories — or whatever the GM feels is appropriate for that city.

DEEP SPACE

The **Unstable Platform** penalty (see page 109) usually applies in chases, but it can be ignored in the vacuum of deep space!

DOGFIghts & Duels

The Chase rules generally assume the combatants are moving in the same direction — chasing prey, toward a target or escape route, etc. But the rules can also easily accommodate

dogfights, tank battles, demolition derbies, and aerial or naval duels by arranging the Chase Cards in different ways.

Instead of dealing the Chase Cards in a straight line, arrange them in a 4×4 grid to create a more fluid battlefield. Vehicles move and count Range orthogonally (no diagonals). Use common sense when determining weapon arcs and vehicle facings. A pirate ship with cannons on either side, for example, can fire left and right on an action, but can't fire at targets ahead or behind them on the same action.

Change the Range Increment as makes sense for your particular battle, letting the weapons with the longest ranges reach across the board but forcing those with shorter range to get in close.

You can also place special cards in the grid to represent asteroid fields or space stations in space battles, whirlpools and islands in naval battles, and so on. They might be impassable or have their own special rules as you see fit.

NAVAL CHASES

Bringing a target to battle on the high seas can take many hours or even days depending on the weather and the initial distance between the vessels.

If the ships are more than a mile apart when first encountered, assume the first phase of the chase represents the pursuer trying to bring the prey to battle. Treat each round as about four hours (or much longer in the age of sail if the wind is against them) and the Range Increment as a *mile*.

Once the pursuer reaches the same Chase Card as the prey, "zoom" in on the action and run the chase as usual, perhaps using the **Dogfights and Duels** option discussed above.

"YAR!"

-RED

VEHICLES ON THE TABLETOP

For car or boat chases and aerial or space duels with a lot of movement and mobility, use the Chase system. In tabletop battles where vehicles must operate in a confined space (and you want to use miniatures!), use these simple rules to handle the movement of most common land vehicles.

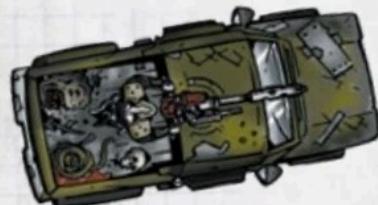
MOVEMENT

Vehicles can move up to 12" on the tabletop (or their Pace if slower than that) without having to make maneuvering rolls or worry about crashing into obstacles. At that speed they can move as desired and end their turn facing any direction.

If a driver wants to go faster, up to 24" per turn unless the GM says otherwise given the terrain and situation, he can do so but must make a maneuvering roll. The GM should assign a penalty (-1 to -4) if the move takes the vehicle through Difficult Ground, tight turns, or hazards. If the roll is successful, the vehicle ends its move wherever the driver wants. Failure means the vehicle moves only 12".

A Critical Failure means the vehicle goes **Out of Control** (page 119). If that indicates a collision, the GM can move it into the nearest obstacle or decide it's a feature not modeled on the tabletop such as a pothole, small ditch, fallen log, battlefield debris, etc.

Note: Ramming is an opposed test of maneuvering skills. If the attacker hits, use the damage described under the **Ram** maneuver on page 116.



Printable "Figure Flats" of characters, vehicles, and monsters are available for most of our settings!

EXAMPLE: RED'S DEAD REDEMPTION

Red is chasing a notorious space pirate who injured Gabe in a previous encounter. Both Red and the pirate have identical star fighters.

Red is on the first Chase Card and the pirate's on the fifth. That means the Range is 200" (4 × the Range Increment of 50"). That's Long Range for her Gatling laser so she decides to get closer. She makes a Piloting roll as a free action and gets a 7, +2 for her ship's Handling gives her a 9. That's a success and a raise so she moves two Chase Cards closer.

There are now two Chase Cards between Red and her target, or 100". That's Medium Range for her Gatling so she fires it up.

The base TN is 4, -2 for Medium Range (no penalty for Unstable Platform in space!). The Rate of Fire on the Gatling is 4 though, so Red rolls four d10s (her Shooting skill) and a Wild die. She gets one regular hit and one with a raise. The regular hit causes 16 damage, which is 2 over the pirate's Toughness of 14. The pirate must make a Piloting roll (he makes it) or go Out of Control. Since this is a Chase, Red also Bumps him a card *away* — a smart move since the pirate goes next.

Now Red resolves the hit with a raise. This one causes a Wound. She can't Bump the pirate again in her same turn, but he still has to make another Piloting roll or go Out of Control. He fails this time and rolls a 3 on the table, which gives him another Wound. Since he took Wounds from the attack, he takes a Critical Hit as well. It's a 5, so his Top Speed drops 10%. He's now slower than Red so she adds +1 to her Piloting rolls when changing positions.

CREWS

Passengers and crews go in whatever order they decide on their Action Card. This can make for dramatic and interactive experiences with a little narrative interpretation. On a pirate ship, the captain makes the maneuvering (Boating) rolls. The rest of the player characters fire a cannon, take a shot with a musket (if the captain is willing to get that close!), yell insults at the enemy (Test), or point out hazards (Support for the captain's Boating rolls).

The player character-controlled "bridge crew" of a starship can do the same. Maybe the captain focuses on Testing the enemy in a duel of wits and leaves the maneuvering rolls to the Navigation officer. The Weapons officers fire weapons while the Engineer Supports the navigator, captain, or gunners as needed each turn.

REMINDERS

- Add or subtract Chase Cards to the track as needed.
- A character's *Action Card* determines if a Complication occurs, but his *Chase Card* determines any penalty and results of failure.
- Dealing with a Complication is a free action.
- Evade and Hold Steady are good options for characters who don't expect frequent chases and so don't have Edges like Steady Hands.

