

# AN ALTERNATE TASK SYSTEM FOR T4

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In this system tasks fall into one of 4 basic categories, being – Easy, Average, Hard and Impossible. Depending on the task difficulty characters roll dice adding on their skill levels and a modifier based on a related attribute such as STR, END, INT etc.

## TASK SUMMARY

Task are made up of a dice roll, modified by skill levels and controlling attributes as per the following formula:

$D+S+M$

D= die roll, S= Skill Levels, M= Modifier

## ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER

Characters also gain a bonus due to the strength of the controlling attribute equivalent to the  $ATT/4$ , e.g a character with a dexterity of 8 gains a +2 bonus to dex related tasks (fractional values round down).

In every task the target number to exceed is always a 10

Easy Tasks Roll	4d
Average Tasks Roll	3d
Hard Tasks roll	2d
Impossible Tasks	1d

The task difficulty is then modified by circumstances if appropriate, e.g how quick does it need to be done.

Time modifications.

Hectic Tasks	-2d	Cuts time by $\frac{1}{4}$
Rushed Tasks	-1d	Cuts time by $\frac{1}{2}$
Cautious Tasks	+1d	Increases time by 2
Leisurely Tasks	+2d	Increases time by 4

Thus a character completing an average task, needing to get it done really quickly had better be highly skilled, as he or she would suffer a penalty of -2dice to the roll. So instead of rolling 3d only gets to roll 1d before adding his or her skill levels and attribute bonuses to the roll.

## TIME INCREMENTS

Before setting up a task the referee should give thought to how long the task will take to achieve at most, i.e the longest it could possibly take and divide the amount by 12, this figure becomes the time increment.

For an typical task, roll 2d multiply by the time increment to get the amount of time the task took to

complete before modifying for the task circumstances as per the following guidelines.

Hectic	Time x $\frac{1}{4}$
Rushed	Time x $\frac{1}{2}$
Cautious	Time x 2
Leisurely	Time x 4

E.g. Repairing a grav deck plate might take a maximum of two hours or 120 min, dividing this by 12 gives 10 minutes per time increment. When completing the task roll 2d and multiply the result to determine how long it takes to complete the task, e.g an average roll of 7 give us 70 min or 1 hour 10 min.

### **TASK EXAMPLE**

Repairing the grav plate would normally be an average gravitics task, our character has gravitics 1 (skill level) and an EDU of 8 (+2 modifier), giving +3 total to repairing the plate. The character needs to complete the task in the normal amount of time so rolls 3d+3, he or she rolls a 15 which is a success. To summarize, the character completed the task without any pressure in 1 hour 10 mins. However should the character have been in the midst of a battle with the ship maneuvering at random to avoid incoming fire, making the job urgent and the character could attempt a hectic task, rolling 3d-2d or 1d (5)+2+1 which is an 8 a failure. The character realizes that he or she has failed however after 2d x 10min (7 = 70 min) modified by the hectic circumstances or 17  $\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. Likewise a leisurely task would more or less guarantee success though take 70 x 4 = 280 min or 4 hours 40 min, though would have given the character an additional 2d or 5d in total (3d for average+2d for leisurely) even a low average roll of 15 would have seen the task completed.

### **CRITICAL SUCCESS/FAILURE**

If the target number is exceeded by 4 (14) then an critical success has occurred, which should provide some tangible benefit to the character, e.g. double damage in combat or a bonus time saving. The exact details of which is up to the referee depending on the circumstances.

Likewise a critical failure occurs if the target number is failed by 4 (any total of die rolls, skills and modifiers totaling 6 or less) – in which case the referee should award the character some penalty, such as damaging other equipment, weapons jamming, power failing or whatever else seems appropriate such as causing more damage when treating the wounds of an injured character. Again as per the circumstances, alternatively if the task is not likely to kill anyone, then the time should be extended by a 1 or 2 d increment, again as per the referees preference.

### **OPPOSED TASKS**

When directly confronting an opponent (arm wrestling/grappling) or arguing with an NPC, an opposed check can be initiated by the aggressor in which case roll 3d add the characters skills and modifiers to it, before taking away the opponents skills and modifiers, should the total exceed 10 the aggressor has succeeded in his or her goal.

### **COOPERATIVE TASKS**

When two or more character are working towards a common goal, they may attempt a cooperative task in which both characters add their skills and modifiers to the roll. Cooperative tasks cannot be used if the characters have no means of clearly communicating to each other. E.g. It's easy to lift a heavy girder together, but sharing skills and modifiers to trap an enemy can't be done if the characters can't hear each other or explain their circumstances to each other, such as in the heat of combat, with PCs wildly separated without communicators in an area of high noise.

## COMBAT TASKS

A simple to hit roll, in normal circumstances at an effective range is an average task, which can be modified for time increments (cautious, hasty when gunslinging etc), or increased in difficulty for cover, circumstances, rapid movement, fog, rain, mist etc. Conversely close range attacks or administering a coup de grace would be easier tasks.

Unarmed Strikes – Average Task

Brawling – Difficult Opposed Task

Armed Strikes – Average task

## SURPRISE

Is simply an average detection task (uncertain), between the respective groups, though may be modified by other factors such as inclement weather, lots of cover or even a lack of cover. The referee should determine which skills are important to the encounter such as leadership, tactics, sensor ops, recon etc, add up the total skill and modifiers of each group, roll 3d for each group and note the total. If one group scores 6 more than the other they have surprise and may act first or choose not to act in the combat. If the winning group has exceeded the opponent's total by less than 4 then both groups are considered to be aware of each other. Surprise continues indefinitely until a character on the surprised side is able to raise the alarm by shouting, hitting their communicators or finding a way to signal the group. Even if the combat takes place in vacuum with no noise being possible, weapons have muzzle flashes, injured comrades might be noticed falling over or writhing about, to notice this requires a perception task (difficulty varies) on the part of a nearby character with Perception Skill and INT or EDU as the appropriate modifiers.

All hand to hand tasks are Average though may be modified as appropriate by the weapons abilities and other circumstances such as light levels or weather conditions.

## Ranged attacks

All ranged weapons from pistols to rifles to cannons etc, have a range modifier based on their maximum range as given in the weapon description.

WM	Range	Meters	Base Difficulty.
+0	Contact	0-3m	Easy
+1	V-Short	4-15m	Easy
+2	Short	16-45	Average
+3	Medium	46-150m	Hard
+4	Long	151-450m	Impossible
+5	V.Long	451-1500m	Impossible

Ranged attacks can be made considerably easier by the use of sighting devices such as rifle sights, or by using the Cautious or Leisurely options, increasing time taken to aim etc, thus a rifle with a long range would give a task modifier of +4 to the roll (WM+4). Hitting something at long range is normally an impossible task requiring the use of 1d (modified by rifle skill and Dex), a typical character may have a skill of 2 and a dex modifier of 2, rolling 1d (impossible task) would guarantee a failure even if they rolled a 6 (the maximum), however adding in the +4 bonus that a long range rifle gives due to its sighting equipment raises the total to 14 (if the character had rolled a 6) enough for a critical hit. Likewise even an average roll of 3 is enough to do some harm (3+4+2+2) = 11, a standard hit.

## **SNAP FIRE**

A rapid shot, taken in combat without careful aiming, uses the difficulties as per the ranged combat though without any WM modifiers for aiming.

## **AUTO-FIRE**

Designate a primary target, to hit rolls increase in difficulty by one level, Average becomes Hard etc, targets either side of the primary target may also get hit for normal damage and a normal hit roll, whilst the primary target if hit, gets double damage after the effects of armor have been taken into account.

E.g a weapon that normally does 3D damage will actually do 4D damage if the character has been successfully hit and has one point of armor ( $3d-1d = 2d \times 2$ ). This simulates the effect of spraying a large area with lots of bullets. Ammunition is used at a rate of 5 per target in the auto-fire area.

## **UNCERTAIN TASKS**

Uncertain Tasks simply hide the dice from the player before describing the result, great for interpersonal tasks such as questioning and interrogation or bribery.

## **SHIP COMBAT**

Recommended changes to the basic ship combat system found in T4

Sensor Locks and Detection – is an opposed task with based on the following.

<u>Range</u>	<u>Detection</u>	<u>To Hit</u>
Very Short	Easy	Average
Short	Average	Hard
Medium	Hard	Impossible
Long	Impossible	Impossible

Modifiers include the character's sensor ops skills, attribute modifiers and the strength of the vessels sensors, A=1 P=2 etc as per the ship description. Whilst enemy vessels may use their jamming rating as a negative modifier.

Missiles reduce hit difficulty on medium and long range by one factor, Impossible becomes hard etc.

Once a vessel has been hit, it can use its shields or defensive screens to mitigate the attack. Lasers can shoot down incoming missiles, sandcasters can scatter laser beams or confuse missiles into detonating early etc.

The defending vessels gunner would make an intercept roll, based on a difficulty of Impossible with his skill levels, attributes, the sensor operator's skill level and the USP screen factor (or in the case of sand casters – the number of cannisters fired in this round, 1 per round, per launcher for MFD linked weaponry or those brought to bear by multiple players in cooperative tasks). Though difficulty may be varied by external circumstances.