

# POLYWAR

## The Dice Combat System

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### Background

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For hundreds of years they have watched others enjoy the glory of battle. They have helped heroes rescue the damsel in distress. They have won humans fortunes untold. They have decided the outcome of a million encounters. But never in all that time have they ever entered the battle as the hero or the damsel. Not a single coin has ever been won for them. Never has an encounter been theirs to experience.

At last, polyhedral dice have their chance! In this light tactical wargame, the players pit forces of dice against each other in mortal combat. There are no miniatures; the dice themselves fight their own battles. Now they can enjoy the glory of battle and so can you!

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## **Equipment**

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This game is primarily about dice so a quantity of dice is required. Most die-hard gamers will already own more than enough dice to engage in combat. If you new to the hobby then you will need about 5 dice of the following number of sides: 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20. You will need the included 4 Range Halos / Bases and the various Auras halos. You will need a few coins to represent 2-sided dice and some tokens. The tokens can be coins or glass beads. They must be able to fit through the hole in the center of a Range Halo easily.

## **Dice**

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All dice are rolled before placement of forces. This allows players to assess the strength of their forces and plan accordingly.

This games uses standard labeled dice. Dice with strange labeling such as Comic Wimpout dice are not permitted at this time. This is to avoid confusion during play.

2-sided dice are represented by coins. Heads are considered to have the value of 2, and tails the value of 1. In addition to any dice that a player decides to field as combatants, a player must have one die of each type available outside of the play area. These dice, called Command Dice, are used to resolve any attacks of special rolls during the game.

## **Set Up**

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Before combat starts, the players must decide upon a scenario and follow its recommendations for force sizes and terrain layout. Once play begins, the game is divided into stages.

## **Initiative Stage**

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Each player begins this Stage with 3 Option Points. These points should be represented by tokens. The players then must decide how many points they wish to bid for ranking in turn order. Any amount of points from 0 to 3 may be wagered. In secret, the players then place their bids. When all players have placed bids, they are revealed together.

The player with the highest bid goes first, then next highest goes second, and so forth. If more than one player has bid the same amount then they roll 1d6 with the high roller then going before the low roller.

## **Healing Stage**

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Any Option Points not spent in the Initiative Stage then may be spent during this Stage. Each Option Point may be used to increase the value of one die by one point, not to exceed the maximum value of that die. Multiple Option Points may not be used on the same die. All players complete this stage together with no set turns.

## **Turns Stage**

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Once all players have healed their dice, the Turns Stage begins with the highest bidder from the Initiative Stage. The active player then completes the following phases

### ***Attack Phase***

The active player's dice may now attack via Side-To-Side or Zap if able. See the Combat Rules for details. Any or all of a player's dice may attack during this phase.

### ***Movement Phase***

Any or all of a player's dice may move during this phase. See the Movement Rules for details.

### ***Action Phase***

A player may use the special power of only one die in his force. See Special Powers for details.

Once a player has completed these phases, it becomes another player's turn. After all players have completed this stage, all players then begin the Initiative Stage together again. This cycle repeats until the scenario objectives are met.

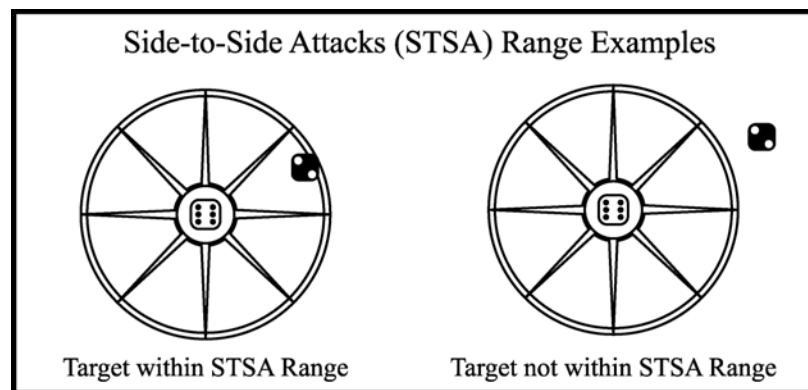
## **Combat Rules**

In Polywars there are 2 types of attacks: Side-to-Side attacks and Zap attacks. Each die may only attack once per Attack Phase unless a Power or Aura specifies otherwise.

*Side-to-Side Attacks (STSA):* A die may engage in a STSA attack if an enemy die is within one range unit. To determine this, place the Range Halo over the attacking die. If the halo can rest upon the enemy die, assuming that no other dice can interfere, then the enemy is considered in range.

If the enemy is in range then the attacking player rolls a Command Die of the same size. The value of the Command Die and the attacking die are then compared.

Perfect Attack: If the Command Die and the attacking die have the same value, then the enemy die is destroyed and removed from play immediately.

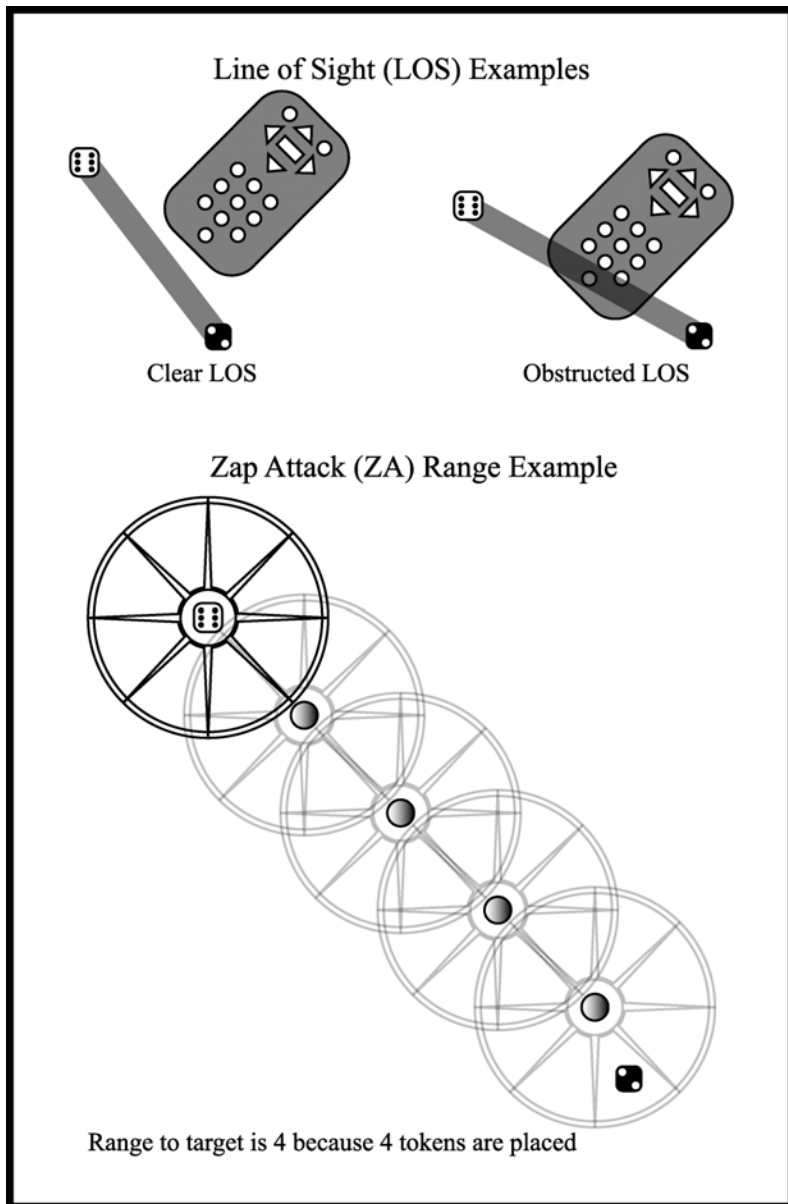


Successful Attack: If the Command Die's value is less than the attacking die's value then the enemy die's value is reduced by the Command Die's value. If this results in the enemy die's value being zero or less, then it is destroyed and removed from play.

Failed Attack: If the Command Die's value is greater than the attacking die's value then the attacking die's value is reduced by 1 and the enemy die suffers no damage. If this reduced the attacking die's value to zero, it is destroyed and removed from play.

*Zap Attacks (ZA):* ZAs are long-range attacks. A die may engage in a ZA if it has Line of Sight to the enemy die and the range to the enemy die is less than the attacking die's value.

To determine Line of Sight, look at the position of the attacking die and the enemy die. If any terrain or dice



obstructs the path between the two, then a ZA is not possible.

To determine the range to the enemy die, place the Range Halo over the attacking die. Place a token at the edge of the halo. Pick up and place the halo over that token, leaving the token in place. Repeat this procedure until the halo can touch the enemy die. Count the number of tokens that have been placed. This is the range from the friendly die to the enemy die.

Once range has been determined, the attacking player rolls a Command Die of the same size. The value of the Command Die and the value of the attacking die minus the range are then compared. The types of attacks are the same as in a STSA. Refer to Side-to-Side Attacks for details.

ZA have one extra requirement however. It is a tremendous strain upon a die to zap another over long distances. To reflect this strain the attacking die must pay the Zap Back cost if the ZA was successful. This cost is equal to the range between the two die. This cost can be paid in 3 ways. First, the attacking die's value can be reduced by the amount of the Zap Back cost. Second, the damage done to the enemy die can be reduced by the Zap Back cost. Or lastly, a combination of the both can be done. This means that the Zap Back cost could be divided between the attacking die's value and the damage dealt to the enemy die. The only exception to these rules is in the case of a Perfect Attack. In a Perfect Attack, the amount of damage done to the enemy die cannot be reduced by the Zap

Back cost, instead the attacking die must reduce its' value by the Zap Back cost. If the Zap Back cost reduces the attacking die's value to zero or less then it is destroyed and removed from play.

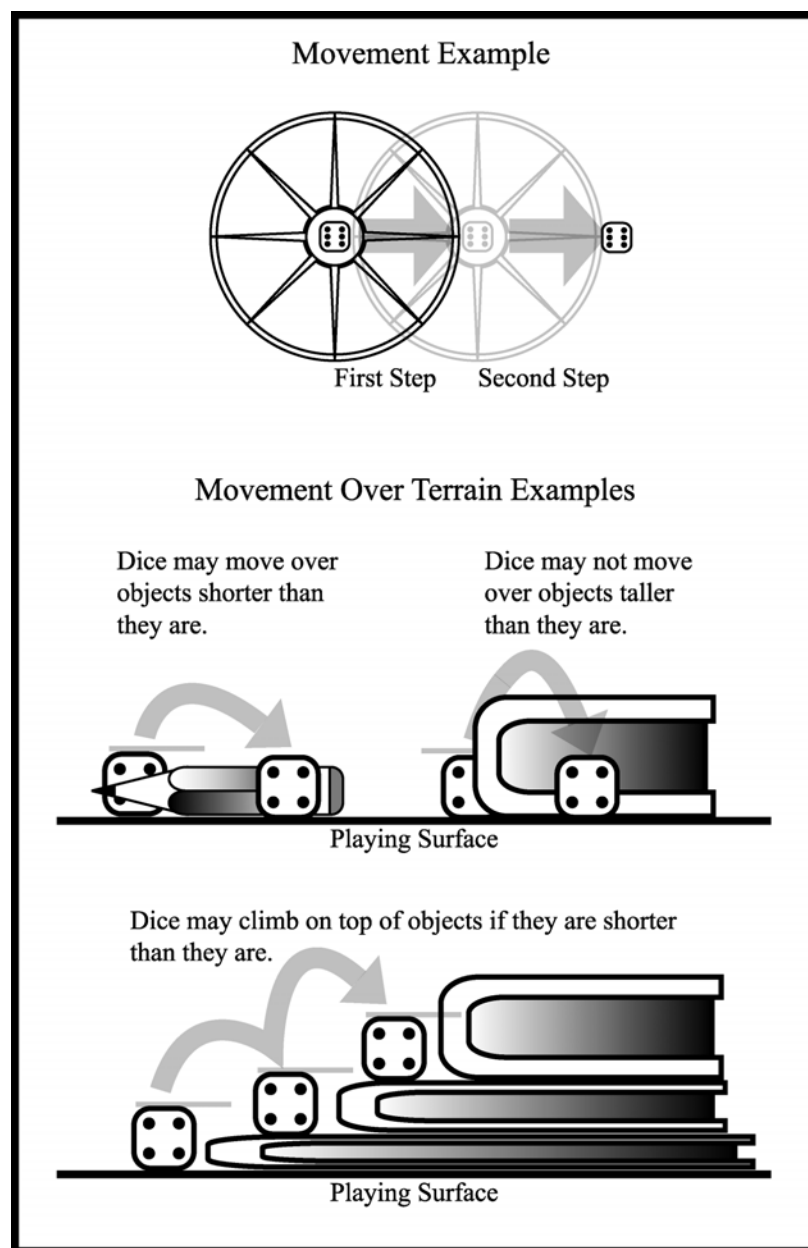
### **Movement Rules**

A die may only move once per Movement Phase unless a Power or Aura specifies otherwise. Each die may make a number of steps based on the number of sides it has. Dice with 2 to 5 sides may make 3 steps. Dice with 6 to 19 sides may make 2 steps. Dice with 20 to 99 sides may make 1 step. Dice larger than 99 sides may not move at all.

In order to make a step, place the Range Halo over the moving die. The moving die is then picked up and moved to the outside edge of the halo without changing the die's value. If another die/dice interferes with the placing of the halo flat against the playing surface, another player (not the obstructing die/dice's owner, or the moving die's owner, unless in a two player game) may temporarily move the obstructing die/dice until after the moving die has cleared the area. A die may move less than one step by moving within the area of the halo, however this still counts as a step being taken.

### **Terrain**

Polywars may be played on any surface with or without boundaries, depending on the scenario. This may include but is not limited to tables, floors, sidewalks, lawns, miniature scale landscapes, or anywhere else you can lay out a few dice. Dice may move over objects (like a stick) that are shorter in height than they are. Dice may climb on top of objects, or vertical playing surface anomalies (like a crack in a sidewalk) that are shorter in height than they are. And they may move down



from an elevation if they end the next step one die height below where they started.

## **Special Powers**

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Some types of dice have special powers that have evolved over time. These powers can be utilized during the Action Phase. However, just one die's power can be used per Action Phase and that power can only affect that die and those around it.

*Damage Field-* The 2-sided dice have developed the ability to emanate an aura of pain and damage like a halo. Any and all die within STSA range receive 1 point of damage. This damage field affects both friendly and enemy dice. The 2-sided die using this power loses 1 point value after its use.

*Super Speed-* The 4-sided dice, already know for being fast, can focus its energy and force another burst of speed. The effect is the die can make another movement phase. This effectively doubles the movement of this one die. The 4-sided die using this power loses 1 point value after its use. If this would reduce the die's value to zero, this die may not use super speed.

*Healer-* The 8-sided dice have focused their energy on healing rather than killing. The 8-sided die can heal up to 3 points on any dice (friend or foe) within STSA range. The die cannot heal itself however (although it may heal other 8-sided dice). The 8-sided die using this power loses 1 point value after its use. If this reduces the die's value to zero, it is destroyed and removed from play.

*Mutation-* the 10-sided dice have learned a unique power. They can force their brethren to change value. The 10-sided die using this power may force any or all dice within STSA range to be rerolled by their owner. If these dice roll the same value as they were before the reroll then they are destroyed and removed from play. The 10-sided die using this power loses 1 point value after its use. If this reduces the die's value to zero, it is destroyed and removed from play.

*Teleportation-* the 12-sided dice have learned to move themselves by bending the space-time continuum. A 12-sided die using this power may move from its present location to within STSA range of any friendly die in play. The 12-sided die using this power loses 1 point value after its use. If this would reduce the die's value to zero, this die may not teleport.

The other dice may have secret powers but they have not chosen to reveal them yet!

## **Auras**

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Auras are powers that are attached to a specific die and have special meanings within the scenario. Auras are indicated by various aura halos, and typically come in two types: fixed and carried.

*Fixed Auras-* This aura may start the game in effect on a die or may be tagged into effect. Once a die possesses it, it remains on that die until the die is destroyed or respawns. The scenario or Aura

description will determine whether or not the aura leaves play with the die or not.

*Carried Auras-* This aura may start the game in effect on a die or may be tagged into effect. Once it is possessed by a die it can remain on that die until the die is destroyed, respawns, or the die drops it.

Auras can be acquired by tagging. Tagging is the process of acquiring an aura. To tag an aura a die must end a step during the movement phase somewhere on the aura halo. From that moment on the aura is then centered over that die whenever the die is moved.

If the scenario permits it and the Aura description allows it, an aura may be dropped. To drop an Aura, the controlling player just announces that it has been dropped. From that point on it may be left in place as the die moves on. If another die tags it while the previous controlling die is present the tagging die acquires it without resistance.

No die may possess more than one Aura at a single time. If a die possesses a carried Aura, it may drop it (subject to scenario limitations and Aura description) in exchange for another fixed or carried Aura. If a die possesses a fixed Aura, it may not acquire another Aura fixed or carried.

### **Basic Auras Types**

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*Immunity Aura-* A die possessing this aura is immune to the effects of any die power (friend or foe). It also forbids the die from using its' own power. This is a carried aura and may be dropped.



*Flag Aura-* This aura may have victory conditions attached to it by the scenario. This is a carried aura. It may be dropped or transferred between friendly die by tagging. An enemy may acquire this aura by destroying the die currently carrying it.



*Leadership Aura-* This aura may have victory conditions attached to it by the scenario. This is a fixed aura. The aura leaves play when the die is destroyed.



*Rage Aura-* This aura represents an uncontrollable anger! On possession this aura increases the die's value to the maximum possible. The die must attack, friendly or enemy dice, during the Attack Phase if it is possible. If the rage aura die is attacked and a perfect attack occurs, the rage aura die isn't destroyed but instead loses half its' current value. This is a carried power and it is transferred to the die that destroys it via STSA, ZA or Special Power effect. It cannot be dropped or transferred by any other method.

### **Scenarios**

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Scenarios define what dice will be used and what the objective of the game will be. Here are examples of scenarios. Players should feel free to experiment with changing elements of these scenarios or create new ones!

### **Credits and Thanks**

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Thanks to my play testers: John Henry, Devon Jacobs, and my wonderful wife, Jen. Thanks to Phil Henry for the artwork!

Title:	<b>Kill the King!</b>
Number of Players:	Any number!
Face Values Allowed:	2,4,6,8,10,12,20,100
Total Sides Per Player:	Player's choice as long as all players have an equal amount.
Auras In Play:	Leadership Aura (1 per player)
Special Equipment:	None.
Objective:	Destroy your enemy's Leadership Aura die.
Force Deployment:	Each player places their Leadership Aura die first, and then the remaining dice within 2 range units of the leader.
Notes / Special Rules:	Destroyed dice are removed from the game.

Title:	<b>Capture the Flag!</b>
Number of Players:	2
Face Values Allowed:	2,4,6,8,10,12,20
Total Sides Per Player:	Players' choice as long as all players have an equal amount.
Auras In Play:	Flag Aura (1 per player)
Special Equipment:	1 Base per player.
Objective:	Tag your enemy's flag and return it to your own base.
Force Deployment:	Players place their base. Then the dice must be placed with 2 range units of the base.
Notes / Special Rules:	Dice that are destroyed are not removed from the game; instead they respawn on to the owner's base. When a die carrying a Flag Aura is destroyed, the flag is dropped and remains where the die was destroyed. A player may not carry his own flag back to his base. You must defend it where it was dropped!

Title:	<b>Rescue Mission!</b>
Number of Players:	2
Face Values Allowed:	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20
Total Sides Per Player:	Players' choice as long as the Rescuers have twice as many sides than the Defenders.
Auras In Play:	Immunity Aura (May not be dropped!)
Special Equipment:	1 Base per player.
Objective:	The Rescuers must tag the Immunity Aura die and return it to their base. The Defenders must prevent the Immunity Aura die from returning to the Rescuers' base for 12 turns.
Force Deployment:	The Defenders must place their base first. On that base place the Rescuers' Immunity Aura die. Then the Defender's must place the remaining dice in a defensive position around the base. The defensive position must not be more than 2 range units away. The Rescuers then must place their base. The base cannot be less than 5 range units away from the Defender's base and no more than 10 range unit away from the Defender's base. Then place the remaining dice within 2 range units of the Rescuers' base.
Notes / Special Rules:	The Immunity Aura die is considered frozen until a friendly

die tags it. After than the controlling player may attack and move it normally. Defenders may not attack Immunity Aura die until after it is unfrozen. Dice destroyed are removed from play.

Title:	<b>Snipe Hunt!</b>
Number of Players:	2
Face Values Allowed:	4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20
Total Sides Per Player:	Players' choice as long as all players have an equal amount. The Snipe player can have no more than 8 total dice.
Auras In Play:	None.
Special Equipment:	2 bases.
Objective:	The Snipe player must get as many of his force from the first base to the second base as possible. The Hunter player must prevent as many Snipe dice from reaching the second base as possible. For every Snipe die that makes it to the second base the Snipe player gains 1 point. Then the players reverse roles and play again. The player with the highest point total after the second battle wins.
Force Deployment:	The bases should place about 7 range units from each other. The Snipe player should place his

dice on the base. The largest die by sides should go on space number 1 and then second largest die by sides should go on number 2 and so on. The Hunter player may place his dice between the two bases. No Hunter die should be closer than 2 range units to either base.

Notes / Special Rules:

Dice destroyed are removed from play. On the first cycle through the Stages then Snipe player may only move the die in space number 1 on the base. On the second cycle through the Stages the Snipe player may move the first die and the die on space number 2. This continues until on the eighth cycle the eighth and final die may be moved.

Title:

**Attack on Tokyo!**

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Number of Players:

2

Face Values Allowed:

2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 20

Total Sides Per Player:

No more than 60 sides for 1 player. The other player will not need any dice.

Auras In Play:

Rage Aura

Special Equipment:

1 base.

Objective:

One player plays the Rage Aura and the other plays the remaining dice as Defenders. The Rage Aura, Godzilla, is trying to reach

Tokyo. The Defenders are trying to prevent Godzilla from reaching Tokyo until a defense system can be built. Godzilla wins if the Rage Aura die reaches the base. The Defenders win if the Rage Aura die is prevented from reaching the base in 10 turns.

Force Deployment:

The Defenders place the base. The Defenders then may be placed within 3 range units of the base. The Rage Aura player then chooses one of the Defender's dice and places it at least 8 range units away from the base with the Rage Aura on it.

Notes / Special Rules:

The Rage Aura must move towards the base. However, the Rage Aura is then passed to the die that kills it. The Rage Aura player then controls the next new die. Destroyed dice are removed from the game.

## Bits and Pieces

To use these halos, print them on to cardstock. You should print a copy of page 13-15 on one color and then 13-15 again on another color. If you are planning on playing with more than 2 players, just print more!

