

GRAY

THE DOCUMENT

A COMPREHENSIVE RULES SET FOR TACTICAL FOAM WARFARE



INTRODUCTION

AN ARGUMENT FOR FOAM

It is no secret that simulated warfare is an extremely popular form of entertainment across many mediums. Though tabletop and video games make significant contributions to players' joy, live-action re-creation is perhaps the most compelling model, both for its immersive potency and its forced engagement of the entire body.

Within the realm of live-action war games, foam combat holds many advantages over competing platforms. Foam is less expensive and far safer than paintball. It doesn't mandate outdoor space as water fighting does. Cleanup after play is not nearly as maddening an exercise as in Air Soft-style battles. Ammunition is universally reusable. It can be as casual or as hardcore as participants wish to make it. For many players, it also pushes some serious nostalgia buttons. Foam weaponry certainly falls short of some of these other products in areas like power and realism, and is of course not for everyone, but a balanced assessment of all factors puts foam prominently on top.

Many manufacturers are in the foam weaponry market. Nerf is the long term frontrunner, and not without good reason. Pioneering a highly successful genre of toys has its benefits, as name recognition and proven longevity have paved the way to dominant market share and the freedom to pursue innovation. Though not without its any brand's share of missteps and silliness, their long history of manufacturing within a relatively limited realm has resulted in ever-improving engineering, aesthetics, and firing systems.

The greatest benefit to their lengthy command of the market is that today's Nerf blaster lines are wonderfully robust and varied, capable of being the backbone of an equally robust and varied war game

experience. While the presentation of the Document focuses on Nerf products, other blaster manufacturers have their own selection of solid offerings available. Non-Nerf blasters are a perfectly eligible part of play and can be included without modifying the core rules. If it fires foam, it can be used with the Document.

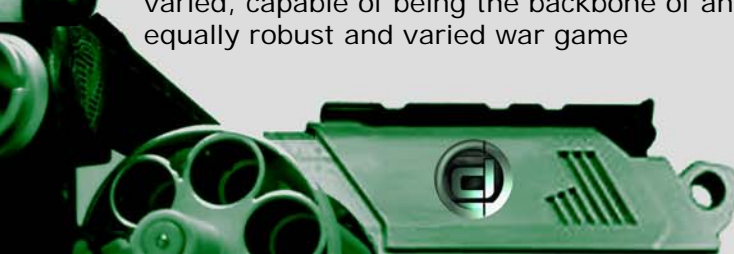
THE DOCUMENT IN BRIEF

The primary goal of this rules set is to provide a fast-paced, competitive, and highly entertaining framework for foam warfare. Its gameplay draws inspiration from modern first-person shooters, while the presentation of its rules in this text attempt to mimic the detail and depth inherent in the sourcebooks of pen and paper roleplaying or tabletop warfare games. The mode of play on which the Document focuses is round-based, team elimination style combat that revolves around three major themes:

- 1) Personalization of play styles and encouragement of tactical team play through the use of a player class system.
- 2) Heavy emphasis on the thoughtful selection of weaponry and equipment.
- 3) Intelligent management of player resources during combat.

These themes, together with nearly all of the rules outlined in the pages below, present a specific, highly organized and detailed method of play that formalizes nearly every aspect of combat. This approach is aimed at providing a tremendous amount of tactical depth as well as supplying the clarity required to prevent such dense systems from becoming burdensome to players.

While the vast majority of its content focuses on its own singular, comprehensive mode of play, it is not the intention of the Document to insist that players have their fun in any certain way. For this reason, the decision of whether or not to adopt a given segment of



the Document's rules is one that player groups are encouraged to make for themselves. Additionally, a significant portion of the core rules have been designed with potential for variation in mind, facilitating the implementation of other game types without the need for any massive overhauls. Later on in the Document, a full chapter is devoted to providing suggestions and examples for modifying play.

KEY TERMS

Throughout the Document, terms specific to its mechanics are consistently presented in **bold** once their functions have been described. All such terms are compiled and briefly defined in the Glossary section at the close of the Document.

PROCEDURE

THE PLAY SPACE

Foam warfare according to the Document is best in indoor spaces. When inside, there is no reason to be concerned over wind interfering with the flight of extremely lightweight projectiles, or with other, more obvious weather spoiling things entirely. Players are also less likely to lose ammunition in the absence of pesky things like grass and bushes, and will be fighting within firing distances more complimentary to common Nerf projectile ranges. Additionally, indoor spaces are naturally much more malleable, allowing player groups more choices for assembling balanced cover schemes in the form of furniture, boxes from the attic, etc. Perhaps most importantly, closed spaces keep the pace of combat up and help prevent the action from stagnating.

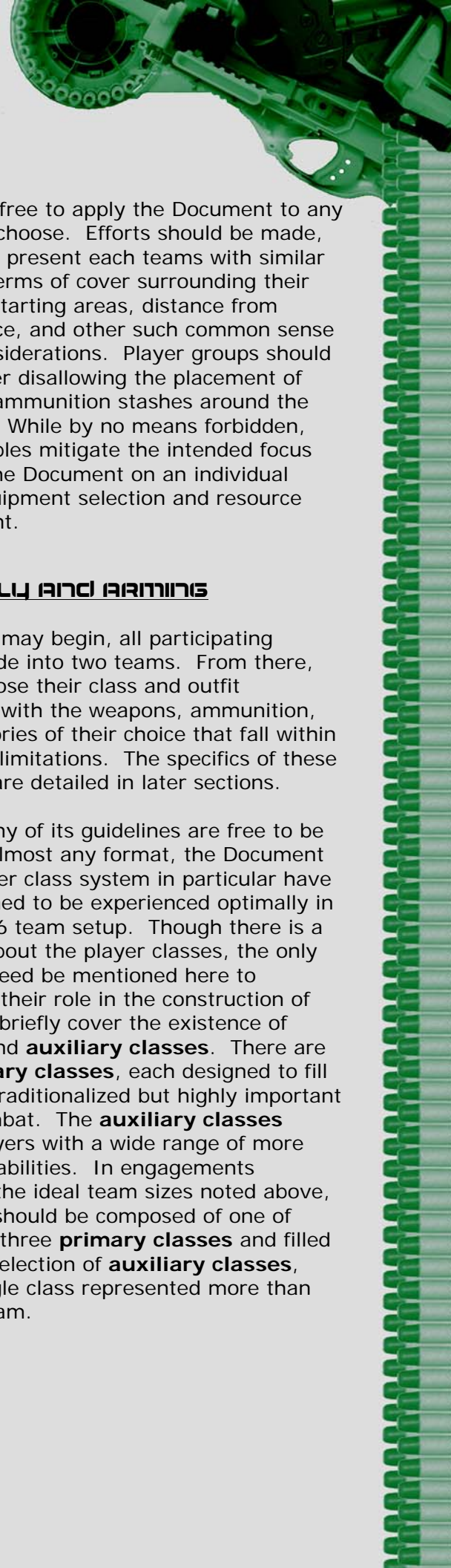
With all that having been said, there are no hard and fast rules outlining a play space;

players are free to apply the Document to any arena they choose. Efforts should be made, however, to present each teams with similar options in terms of cover surrounding their respective starting areas, distance from neutral space, and other such common sense tactical considerations. Player groups should also consider disallowing the placement of weapon or ammunition stashes around the play space. While by no means forbidden, those variables mitigate the intended focus placed by the Document on an individual player's equipment selection and resource management.

ASSEMBLY AND ARMING

Before play may begin, all participating players divide into two teams. From there, players choose their class and outfit themselves with the weapons, ammunition, and accessories of their choice that fall within that class's limitations. The specifics of these limitations are detailed in later sections.

Though many of its guidelines are free to be applied to almost any format, the Document and its player class system in particular have been designed to be experienced optimally in a 4v4 to 6v6 team setup. Though there is a lot to say about the player classes, the only thing that need be mentioned here to understand their role in the construction of teams is to briefly cover the existence of **primary** and **auxiliary classes**. There are three **primary classes**, each designed to fill somewhat traditionalized but highly important roles in combat. The **auxiliary classes** present players with a wide range of more specialized abilities. In engagements supporting the ideal team sizes noted above, each team should be composed of one of each of the three **primary classes** and filled out with a selection of **auxiliary classes**, with no single class represented more than once per team.



THE ROUND

This rules set favors an organized approach to foam warfare as opposed to the chaos of impromptu battles or more deathmatch-inspired play. One of the primary ways that this is expressed is by breaking down competition into a series of rounds. Round-based combat removes the hassle of live-action respawning and scoring and grants the thrill of victory or the sting of defeat to entire teams of players at frequent intervals. It also eases cleanup by allowing it to occur incrementally and gives stat junkies the opportunity to record whatever data they like before resetting for the next round.

The structure of a round of play is rather straightforward. Both teams of players begin within the bounds of two small, predetermined areas inside the play space, ideally as far apart as possible. The teams announce their readiness and then combat begins, with players free to engage each other as they please. There are very few restrictions on how players may use the tools of destruction they arm themselves with. Those restrictions that do exist are detailed later in this text. The team whose entire roster is eliminated loses the round. Players may then rearm and begin the process all over again.

SCORING AND ORGANIZATION

Player groups should feel free to implement an overall scoring system according to their own preference. There is no need to present ironclad rules stating that true victory is attained only in a best-of-five round format or that kills equal points of some kind, for example. There is, in fact, no particular reason to implement scoring of any kind. Many player groups will likely be satisfied with blasting each other round to round, taking the wins and losses as they come and giving little thought to anything beyond. For those groups composed of more detail-

oriented or highly competitive players, however, the specifics of scoring are entirely free to command.

Similarly, there are many particularities of setting up play that *could* be ruled definitively but simply need not be. If your player group wants to systemize the process of selecting weapons before play through the use of a lottery, for example, do that. If permanent teams, cycling rosters, mandatory class shifts, league play, tournament play or any other setup are the order of the day, then go for it. While the Document is a platform both broad and deep, it is a platform only. The organizational edifices built upon it should be designed and contracted by the players, and there is enough real estate to sturdily construct just about anything.

PENALTIES

It is all but inevitable that player groups will witness some form of violation of the rules during play. While the possibility of accidental infractions is ever present, it is still recommended that player groups consider the implementation of a penalty system of some kind to encourage both adherence to proper procedure and mindfulness in the midst of combat.

Some basic examples of penalties include the automatic infliction of damage or the imposition of a mandatory period of vulnerability to players caught committing a violation. Any number of other viable approaches are available, however, and player groups seeking to utilize penalties should work together to devise an approach that compliments their group's established approach to play.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

LIFE AND DEATH

Under the Document, each player's combat viability during a given round is leveled against a statistic simplistically termed **hits**. Players begin each round in an **unharmed** state with a set number of **hits**, the exact amount of which varies among player classes.

Any single projectile that strikes an enemy player reduces their total number of **hits** by one. Once struck, a player's state changes to **injured**. After a player suffers their final **hit**, they shift to the **incapacitated** state, and are to set themselves in a prone position on the battlefield until the conclusion of the round.

Incapacitated players cease all active involvement in a round's proceedings, though they may still have certain passive roles to play, the most significant of which are detailed in the Gearing Up section later in the Document. It shall be noted here, however, that **incapacitated** players may indeed serve as viable pieces of cover for particularly desperate individuals.

HITS IN DETAIL

What specifically constitutes a valid projectile strike against a player also utilizes the term **hit**, and is slightly more complicated than simply being tagged by some flying foam.

In this context a **hit** is fully defined as any projectile whose flight is noticeably altered by contact with any part of an enemy player's body, or with any object overlaying or attached to the body. Holsters, clips, ammo bags, slung weapons- essentially everything a player wears or carries into battle is an eligible target. The only exception is the weapon the target is currently **wielding**. In order to be considered **wielded**, a weapon must be fully free of any holster or container

that may house it and be occupying the use of at least one of the player's hands.

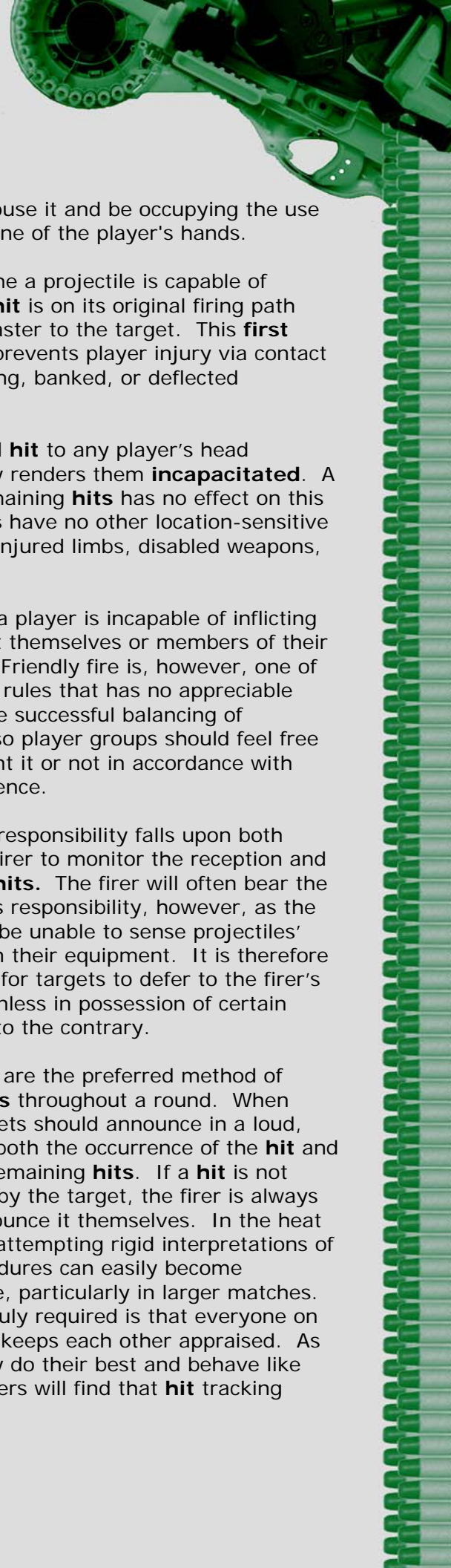
The only time a projectile is capable of inflicting a **hit** is on its original firing path from the blaster to the target. This **first flight** rule prevents player injury via contact with bouncing, banked, or deflected projectiles.

A successful **hit** to any player's head immediately renders them **incapacitated**. A player's remaining **hits** has no effect on this result. **Hits** have no other location-sensitive effects- no injured limbs, disabled weapons, etc.

By default, a player is incapable of inflicting **hits** against themselves or members of their own team. Friendly fire is, however, one of those types rules that has no appreciable affect on the successful balancing of gameplay, so player groups should feel free to implement it or not in accordance with their preference.

In combat, responsibility falls upon both target and firer to monitor the reception and delivery of **hits**. The firer will often bear the brunt of this responsibility, however, as the target may be unable to sense projectiles' impact upon their equipment. It is therefore good policy for targets to defer to the firer's judgment unless in possession of certain knowledge to the contrary.

Verbal cues are the preferred method of tracking **hits** throughout a round. When struck, targets should announce in a loud, clear voice both the occurrence of the **hit** and their total remaining **hits**. If a **hit** is not announced by the target, the firer is always free to announce it themselves. In the heat of combat, attempting rigid interpretations of these procedures can easily become burdensome, particularly in larger matches. All that is truly required is that everyone on both teams keeps each other apprised. As long as they do their best and behave like adults, players will find that **hit** tracking



quickly becomes a natural, hassle-free process.

HIT THEORY

As several of the rules that govern successful **hits** are thoroughly unrealistic or perhaps merely unexpected, some effort is here given to explaining the reasoning behind their implementation.

First, equipment's eligibility as a target serves to increase a player's vulnerability in proportion to the amount that they carry. This offsets the unnaturally light weight of Nerf equipment and helps make a player's choices in armament and accessories all the more important. In a war game where projectiles travel at speeds low enough to promote reactive dodging, the range of **hit** validity also enhances the already significant premium placed upon mobility, allowing the lightly armed player classes to achieve on the same scale as their firepower-laden brethren. Lastly, these rules help a great deal in eliminating argument over whether a "vulnerable" spot has been struck. The Document is a rules set that cherishes personalization through equipment and weapon selection. Should a hip holster or a massive blaster slung across the back prevent injury in those areas, players would be forced to contend with all manner of abuses, and that cherished element would become a potential game-breaker.

The ineligibility of a player's currently **wielded** weaponry as a target exists for different reasons. In the form of deflecting incoming projectiles purposefully, it grants every player a way to defend themselves other than moving or cowering that rewards expertise or – in the case of certain pieces of equipment – forethought. Separately, this **hit** ineligibility introduces a small but tangible element of luck into combat. Purposefully deflecting most Nerf projectiles with your average-sized blaster is *hard*, making most occasions where blasters save a player

incidental. The existence of such an x-factor can indeed be beneficial to a game as long as it is never common enough to overrule truly exceptional play. The plain fact of the matter is that being randomly saved from certain doom one out of fifty times is thrilling for players and can enhance an engagement's sense of drama.

DUAL WIELDING

Having more than one weapon at hand is an extremely common occurrence for players utilizing the Document. Unless otherwise noted in player class and weapon descriptions, **wielding** up to one weapon in each hand is entirely legal, and a perfectly viable way for players to bump up their fire potential at a moment's notice.

It is important to note, however, that automatic or truly semi-automatic weapons make up a relatively small portion of the Nerf product lines. Much more importantly, none of the standard player classes have access to more than one of such blasters at a time. This almost always means that dual **wielding** forces players to balance its power against the need for most blasters to be primed with two hands, making it most potent when used selectively.

When dual **wielding**, both the player's weapons are invalid targets as defined in the **hit** rules above.

TIMED MECHANICS

Some of the player classes outlined in the Document possess abilities that rely on the passage of time. Just as with **hit** tracking, verbalization is the preferred method for managing these abilities.

When enacting these mechanics, players should count aloud in some mode analogous to "one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand" with enough volume in their voice to reach all players in the area. In many cases, the



entirety of the play space should have no trouble hearing such a count. At a minimum, counting should be loud enough that any player engaged with the counter is clearly informed. Players are also encouraged to denote the ability for which a count has been initiated. This is most easily done by preceding the count with an announcement of the ability, but players can also work the identification into the count itself. For example: "One-Medic...Two-Medic...Three-Medic..."

GEARING UP

Within the bounds of the Document, everything a player carries into an engagement is collectively referred to as their **gear**. A player's selection of weapons, ammunition, and accessories are all extremely important decisions capable of either sublimely bolstering or utterly crippling their effectiveness in combat. The following sections not only cover the rules that govern these various forms of equipment, but will also provide suggestions for maximizing efficiency, examples of homespun **gear**, and a smattering of other useful information.

THE FORM OF FOAM

This section is devoted to covering the various types of ammunition and clips available for use under the Document. The following subsections not only describe and compare the native properties of this **gear**, but also serve as the official lines by which ammunition and clip types are separated according to the rules.

Darts

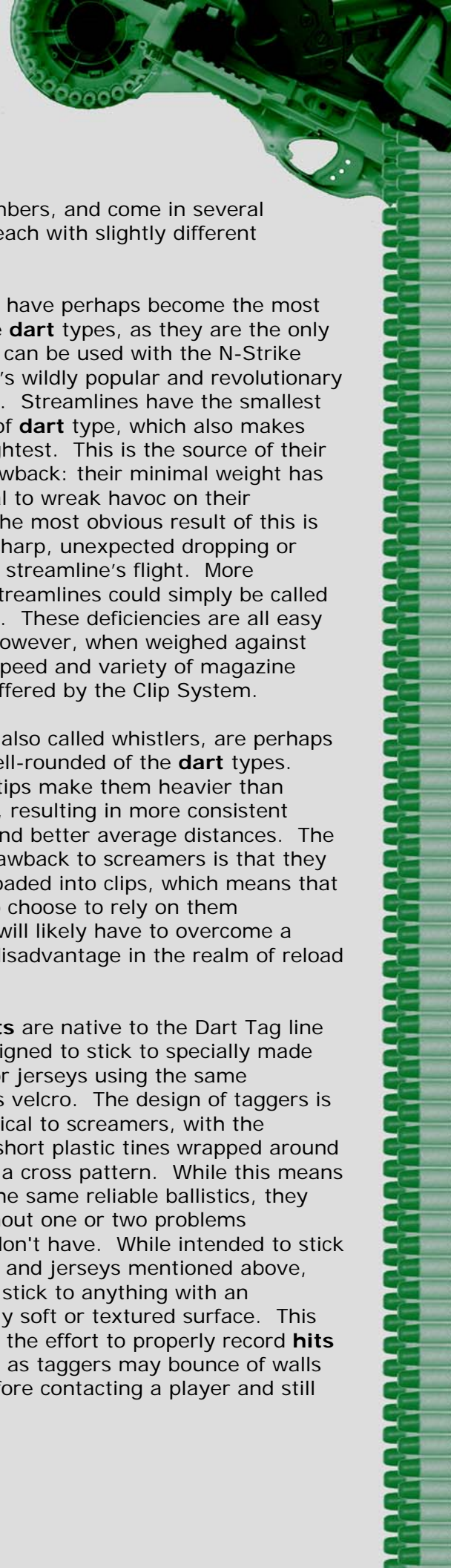
Though not the first type of ammunition Nerf devised for its blasters, **darts** now service the vast majority of its products and are certain to be the backbone projectile of any engagement. **Darts** are small, easy to carry

in large numbers, and come in several variations, each with slightly different properties.

Streamlines have perhaps become the most iconic of the **dart** types, as they are the only variety that can be used with the N-Strike product line's wildly popular and revolutionary Clip System. Streamlines have the smallest tips of any of **dart** type, which also makes them the lightest. This is the source of their primary drawback: their minimal weight has the potential to wreak havoc on their ballistics. The most obvious result of this is occasional sharp, unexpected dropping or veering in a streamline's flight. More generally, streamlines could simply be called inconsistent. These deficiencies are all easy to accept, however, when weighed against the reload speed and variety of magazine capacities offered by the Clip System.

Screamers, also called whistlers, are perhaps the most well-rounded of the **dart** types. Their large tips make them heavier than streamlines, resulting in more consistent flight arcs and better average distances. The only real drawback to screamers is that they cannot be loaded into clips, which means that players who choose to rely on them exclusively will likely have to overcome a significant disadvantage in the realm of reload speed.

Tagger **darts** are native to the Dart Tag line and are designed to stick to specially made Nerf vests or jerseys using the same principles as velcro. The design of taggers is nearly identical to screamers, with the addition of short plastic tines wrapped around their tips in a cross pattern. While this means they have the same reliable ballistics, they are not without one or two problems screamers don't have. While intended to stick to the vests and jerseys mentioned above, taggers will stick to anything with an appropriately soft or textured surface. This can confuse the effort to properly record **hits** during play, as taggers may bounce off walls or cover before contacting a player and still



end up stuck to them. Their tines also cause them to get tangled up in a variety of inconvenient ways, such as in loose threads at the bottom of an ammo bag.

Suckers, the last of the common **dart** types in production today, are appropriately named. The rubber structure of their tips is not hollow like with the other dart types, giving them a decent weight, but their suction cup shape is very nearly the complete opposite of proper aerodynamics. As a result, their performance is generally poor. Since a screamer will load just as well in any blaster that accepts suckers, there is literally no situation in which this **dart** type should be recommended. That is, of course, unless your opponent is a window.

The use of older Nerf ammunition with a suction cup tip such as the megadart has become uncommon today, but such projectiles still officially fall into the **dart** category. The same is true of the forthcoming *Elite* product line's screamer/streamline hybrid.

Discs

The newest form of Nerf ammunitions, **discs** provide excellent range to any weapon in which they are loaded. This is certainly of great benefit, but **discs** are not without their drawbacks. Though they are wider than **darts** and therefore often require more significant movement to dodge, this is balanced by their being easier to track with the eye and a flight velocity that degrades notably as they travel. While a high level of consistency gives them a form of accuracy, **discs** arc both vertically and laterally during flight, making firing them less intuitive than other ammunition types. **Discs'** unique flight properties do reward practice with some devious advantages. The careful application of tilt to a **disc** weapon's barrel can persuade the ammunition to dive down sharply into or slice gently around cover.

Arrows

If it was designed to fit over a weapon's barrel as opposed to within it and manufactured with foam fletching, it is an **arrow**. While they can vary in size, **arrows** are most commonly much larger than other ammunition types and thus can be cumbersome to stow in larger amounts. Their size also bestows the usual characteristics of being more demanding to dodge but easier to deflect. **Arrows** are relatively consistent and arc pleasantly during flight, giving them some of **discs'** enhanced potential for cover penetration while remaining more intuitive to fire.

Ballistic Balls

The original Nerf ammunition, the **ballistic ball** has remained virtually unchanged for decades. Though few modern blasters now use them, they are not without their purpose on the battlefield. Their significant size and generally poor ranges make them most appropriate and effective in close quarters, but their higher weight has some use for dropping shots behind cover at greater distances, too. Separately, the firing mechanisms commonly employed by **ball** weapons can make achieving any sort of accuracy or consistency difficult for players, but by no means impossible.

Small Clips

Any *Clip System* or *Vortex* clip with a capacity of 10 projectiles or less is considered a **small clip**. Currently the only clips that fit into this category are the 6-dart and 10-disc varieties. **Small clips** are relatively easy to tote around in large numbers and are available to a wide array of the player classes. Clips of all kinds offer vastly superior reload speed to blasters loaded in other ways, but players choosing to rely on **small clips** must be prepared to reload frequently.

Large Clips

Clips with a capacity exceeding 10 fall into this category. **Large clips** are only available to a few of the player classes, as they greatly increase the potential of any blaster in which



THE DOCUMENT

they are loaded. On the down side, **large clips** are unavoidable bulky, though some less than others.

WEAPON DESIGNATIONS

As already noted, Nerf weaponry is wildly varied, sporting significant differences in firing systems, magazine capacities, ammunition types, rate of fire, and physical size. Predictably, the combination of these differences can put the overall capabilities of one blaster worlds apart from the next. The Document formalizes these divergences by placing each blaster into one of the following four **designations**:

Heavy

These weapons are the beastly terrors of any engagement. Most commonly, **heavy** weapons are those that marry a large magazine capacity with a high potential rate of fire. As such, fully automatic Nerf blasters are almost invariably part of this **designation**, as are most weapons capable of Slam Fire. Weapons that provide massive fire potential in other ways, such as the Unity Power System, are also **heavies**.

Assault

The blasters that carry the **assault designation** are somewhat difficult to define concretely, but most may be described as having either a large magazine *or* a high rate of fire. They often also possess some additional utility, such as on-board ammo storage. Non-automatic Clip System blasters are frequently **assault** weapons.

Light

These blasters are quite numerous and diverse, and tend to be notably smaller than most **assault** and **heavy** weapons, making them excellent side-arms. Their size also makes them more conducive to effective dual **wielding**. The typical magazine size of **light** weapons is also limited.

Stealth

These blasters are tiny, even in comparison to **light** weapons. **Stealth** weapons are easy to carry, easy to include in dual **wielding**, and tend to have excellent range and accuracy despite their size. On the negative side, they almost never have a magazine capacity exceeding one projectile, making their effective rate of fire very low indeed.

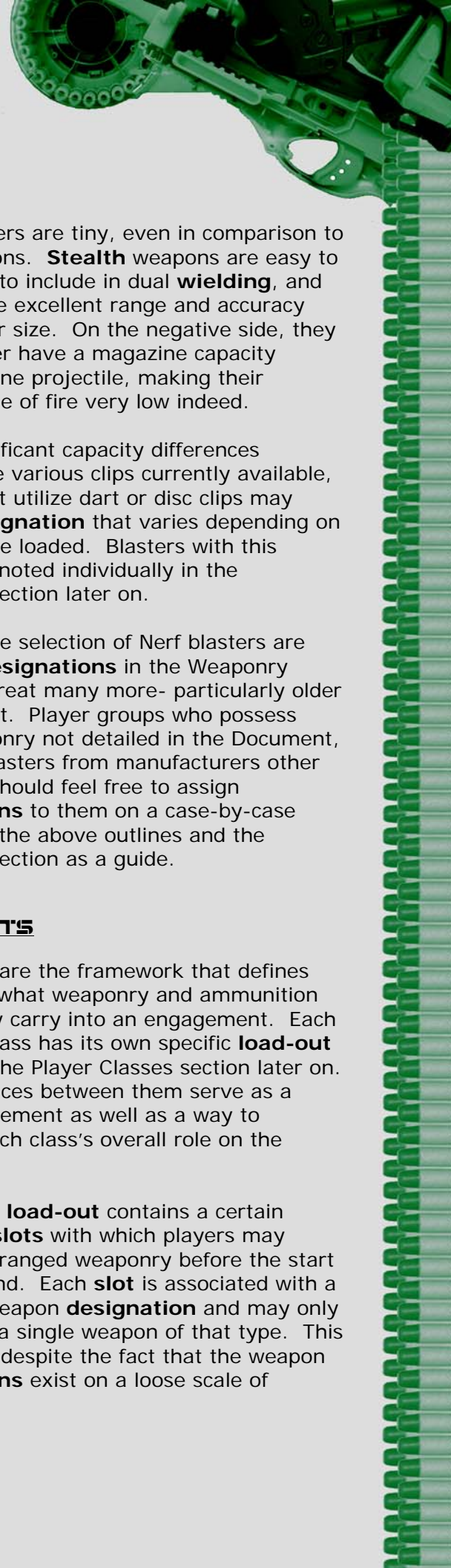
Due to significant capacity differences between the various clips currently available, blasters that utilize dart or disc clips may have a **designation** that varies depending on how they are loaded. Blasters with this feature are noted individually in the Weaponry section later on.

While a large selection of Nerf blasters are assigned **designations** in the Weaponry section, a great many more- particularly older fare- are not. Player groups who possess foam weaponry not detailed in the Document, including blasters from manufacturers other than Nerf, should feel free to assign **designations** to them on a case-by-case basis using the above outlines and the Weaponry section as a guide.

LOAD-OUTS

Load-outs are the framework that defines the limit of what weaponry and ammunition players may carry into an engagement. Each individual class has its own specific **load-out** detailed in the Player Classes section later on. The differences between them serve as a balancing element as well as a way to reinforce each class's overall role on the battlefield.

Each class's **load-out** contains a certain number of **slots** with which players may select their ranged weaponry before the start of each round. Each **slot** is associated with a particular weapon **designation** and may only be filled by a single weapon of that type. This means that despite the fact that the weapon **designations** exist on a loose scale of



potency, players may not “trade down” to select a weapon not specifically granted to their class. Players are not obliged to fill all of their **slots** when choosing their weaponry, leaving them free to bear a lighter load in exchange for a drop in firepower should they so desire.

Load-outs may also place restrictions on a player’s ammunition. Class descriptions may note limitations on the number of projectiles or clips of a given type that may be carried at a given time, ammunition or clip types that are entirely forbidden, or both.

All of a player’s ammunition and clips count towards their class’s restrictions, including that which is loaded or stored in weapons. Any unrestricted types of ammunition may be carried in any amount.

Despite the rather wide freedom many classes have to carry a large supply of ammunition, players should always keep the Document’s **hit** rules in mind when deciding exactly how much to bear. Most often, this consideration results in a natural limitation on the ammunition carried as opposed to an artificial one.

ACCESSORIES

While a player’s **load-out** may be home to all their direct means of overcoming the enemy, their choices of indirect assistance in the form of other **gear** can be equally as vital to victory. The Document labels everything that is not a weapon, a projectile or a projectile clip an **accessory**. Attachable weapon parts, bags, slings, ammo belts, holsters and other such equipment all fall under this label.

With the N-Strike line, Nerf began to place a dramatic new focus on supplementing its catalogue of non-blaster products. This is most evident in the bevy of **accessories** available for use with the *Tactical Rail* system, but other gems such as the *Tactical Vest*, *Bandolier*, and *Flip Clip* can be found almost

everywhere and are fantastic vehicles for the enhancement of combat utility.

Accessories come in two varieties: **weapon accessories** and **non-weapon accessories**.

Weapon Accessories

Any **accessory** specifically designed to attach directly to the frame of a blaster is a **weapon accessory**. These include stocks, barrels, *Tactical Rail* pieces, *Flip Clips*, and anything of the sort that may be released in the future. Note that slings and similar **gear** meant to assist the player in carrying their weapons are not considered **weapon accessories**, even though they are often physically connected to a blaster.

Each weapon a player carries into an engagement may bear no more than two **weapon accessories** at any one time. There is no exception for blasters that are able to accommodate more than two **weapon accessories**, or for blasters manufactured to be paired with specific **weapon accessories** unique to their retail package. Note that players may stow or carry any number of **weapon accessories** in bags or on belts and such- only those actually attached to weaponry face restriction.

Weapon accessories that are in place on a blaster are considered to be a part of it, as is any ammunition that may be stored in or on it. These types of attached **gear** are therefore invalid **hit** targets if the weapon is being **wielded**. As above, this does not apply to slings, straps and such as they are capable of covering a much broader area of the player’s body than the weapon itself.

Some **weapon accessories** are useful enough that they must occupy a weapon **slot** in a player’s **load-out** in order to be used. Such **accessories** do not count toward a weapon’s two-piece limit noted above, and are identified in the Weaponry section under the description of the blaster with which they are packaged. These **weapon accessories** occupy a **slot** in a player’s **load-out**



THE DOCUMENT

whenever they are carried, regardless of whether or not they are actually attached to a weapon.

Non-weapon Accessories

All other **accessories** fall into the category of **non-weapon**, and these serve as the primary means by which players secure their other **gear** for combat. Slings, bags, holsters, and branded equipment such as the *Tactical Vest* and *Bandolier* are common examples of **non-weapon accessories**.

The number of **non-weapon accessories** that a player may carry is in no way restricted, regardless of the player's selected class. Indeed, players are encouraged to get their weapons and ammunition strapped down and ready for practical application with whatever methods and materials they please. As such, this type of gear offers more potential for personalization and creativity than any other. This potential is discussed in much greater detail in Doing It Yourself below.

GEAR IN COMBAT

Once a round of play has begun, **gear** is governed by an additional system of rules designed to reinforce the Document's themes and greatly increase the dynamism inherent in any place space. Players have many options regarding their own **gear** and much of the **gear** they may come across during play that they are not carrying. These options are supported by the concept of **interacting with gear**, which is exactly what it sounds like: manipulating it to achieve some effect, such as players resupplying themselves, sabotaging the resupply of their opponents or simply removing the **gear** from the equation of play.

Before the details of this system are discussed, one important rule that applies to all players at all times must be set forth: the only **gear** a player may **interact** with during a round are those types of **gear** that are

permitted by the player's **load-out** and other class rules. To put the same statement in thematic terms, players may only **interact** with **gear** that their class has been trained to use. For example, if a player's class has no **assault weapon slots**, then that player may not **interact** with **assault weapons** during play. In the case of weapons with variable **designations**, the weapon's current **designation** is the determining factor for players who may wish to **interact** with it.


So, what exactly may players do when **interacting with gear**? The answer varies depending on the situation. Players can encounter **gear** during combat in three different forms: **equipped gear**, **discarded gear**, and **postmortem gear**.

Equipped Gear

Everyone inevitably encounters **equipped gear**, as it is quite simply every piece of **gear** that a given player is carrying. Player **interaction** with their **equipped gear** is very nearly unlimited. They may freely fire, prime, reload, draw, holster or sling any of their **equipped** weapons at any time. Any clips not loaded into weaponry may be refilled with other **equipped** ammunition or emptied as players see fit. **Weapon accessories** may be added to or removed from weapons. Also, the storage location or orientation of *any* **equipped** piece of **gear** may be altered by the player at will.

Players may also **discard** any piece of their **equipped gear** while **interacting** with it, giving them a way of lightening their load should equipment prove unneeded or unwanted. To **discard** their **gear**, players need simply to fully separate it from their person and place it on any available surface within the play space. Hiding any type of **gear** while **discarding** it is not permitted. **Gear** that a player has **discarded** is no longer considered **equipped** and ceases to count towards any corresponding limitations imposed by the **discarding** player's **load-out** or other class rules- the **slot** once occupied by a **discarded** weapon is emptied, the





consumed portion of an ammo limitation is reduced, etc. Before players may **discard** their **equipped weapons**, the weapon must first be removed from any **non-weapon accessory** that may house it and/or separated from **non-weapon accessories** to which it may be attached. Attached **weapon accessories** and any loaded or stored ammunition may remain in place when an **equipped weapon** is **discarded**.

If a player has a weapon with a variable **designation equipped**, they may feel free to reload it with a different clip type in order to take advantage of its mutability. In order to do this, however, the player needs to have both an appropriate new clip **equipped** and an empty **slot** in their **load-out** that corresponds to the weapon's new **designation**. Note that multiple clip capacities may be associated with a single **designation** depending on the weapon. Changes in **designation** tend to take place when a **small clip** is exchanged for one of the varieties of **large clips** or vice versa, as opposed to changes in capacity within those types. This means that a change in a weapon's clip size doesn't necessarily force a change in its **designation**. (Separately, weapons with a variable **designation** may always be considered to be of their base **designation** if the player **equipping** it wishes.)

One of the only things players may not do with their **equipped gear** is to attempt to give it to other players. This rule applies for all types of **gear** at all times. The only other restriction on the use of **equipped gear** is that players may not **interact** with it in such a way as to potentially damage it or harm other players, such as by throwing it or slamming it down. More generally, players should always be sure to act with respect for **gear** belonging to others in mind, as there is always a chance they will find themselves using it.

Despite perhaps being obvious, it bears stating explicitly that the sum of a player's

equipped gear may never exceed any limits imposed by their chosen class's **load-out**, any other class-specific rules, or any other rules covered in the Document.

Discarded Gear

Any piece of **gear** lying static in the play space is **discarded gear**. In addition to **gear** actively **discarded** by players, any ammunition expended from weaponry during play is also considered to be **discarded gear**.

Unlike **equipped gear**, player **interaction** with **discarded gear** is extremely limited. The only types of **discarded gear** players are permitted to **interact** with during combat are ranged weapons, ammunition or clips that are loaded or stored in ranged weapons, and **weapon accessories** that are attached to ranged weapons.

Altogether this is quite a narrow field, but it allows for **discarding** to serve as a means for players to permanently end any active effect individual pieces of **gear** have on a combat round. Disallowing the gathering and reuse of fired/**discarded** ammunition is a particularly critical inclusion, as it forces players to balance what they can efficiently carry with what they believe they will need to succeed in a given round. In addition, by making weapons the only platform for interacting with **discarded gear**, player assessment of a battlefield potentially littered with other equipment becomes a simpler task.

When **interacting** with eligible **discarded gear**, players have many options similar to those that are available with **equipped gear**. Ammunition loaded or stored in the **discarded** weapon may be removed and either **discarded** to remove it from play or **equipped** to become a part of the **interacting** player's **load-out**.

Players may also **interact** with any **weapon accessories** that are attached to **discarded** weapons. Just as with ammunition, **accessories** may be removed from the





weapon and **discarded** or **equipped** by the player for immediate use or to be stowed for later application. The same is true for any ammunition that may be attached to such **weapon accessories**.

The most significant thing a player may do while **interacting** with **discarded** weapons is to **equip** the weapon itself to their **load-out**. This is often faster than reloading an empty blaster, can provide a player with a new method of attack, or serve as a way to catch opponents off guard. **Equipping** a **discarded weapon** requires only that a player's **load-out** has an empty **slot** of a corresponding **designation** to that of the weapon in question. This often means that players will need to **discard** one of their currently **equipped** weapons in order to acquire the new one.

Players are permitted to leave in place any **gear** already loaded in or attached to a **discarded weapon** they seek to **equip**, provided- as always- that the sum of what is being **equipped** does not cause them to violate any class or **load-out** restrictions. Players are always able, of course, to **discard** their **equipped gear** in order to free up some space at any time.

Those **weapon accessories** that occupy **slots** when **equipped** also require special consideration when attached to **discarded weapons**. These **accessories** may be removed and **discarded** by **interacting** players, or may be **equipped** if an appropriate **slot** in the player's **load-out** is empty. The weapon and **accessory** may be **equipped** as one provided both required **slots** are empty. Note that although these **accessories** occupy a **slot** like weapons, in all other ways they are considered purely as **weapon accessories** during **interaction**.

All **interactions** with **discarded weapons** must be undertaken at the location where the weapon is found. Players may pick up a weapon to better facilitate their **interactions** without being considered to have **equipped**

the weapon itself, but they may not change their location until those **interactions** are either completed or abandoned. Barring an end result of the weapon being **equipped**, it must be returned to an approximation of its original position when a player completes their **interactions** with it. **Discarded** weapons may never be fired under any circumstance- they must first be **equipped** by an **interacting** player before they may be considered **wielded** or used in any way.

Postmortem Gear

The final venue for **interacting** with **gear** during combat is that of **postmortem gear**, being the **gear equipped** by other players who have been **incapacitated** during a round of play. All of the rules that apply to **interacting** with **discarded** weapons apply to **postmortem** weapons. The restrictions placed on other **postmortem gear**, however, are far lighter than those imposed on corresponding types of **discarded gear**.

Active players may **interact** with all **weapon accessories** and ammunition types allowed to their class found on **incapacitated** players, not just those loaded in or attached to weapons. Under the ever-present restrictions of their class and **load-out**, they are free to either **equip** or **discard gear** found in this way. Forbidden types of **gear** found with **incapacitated** players are never eligible for **interaction** and **must** be left entirely alone.

While the contents or attachments of **postmortem non-weapon accessories** may be **equipped** or **discarded** through **interaction**, the **non-weapon accessories** themselves may not. This is a general ruling to represent the fact that most players who have been **incapacitated** during play would not want someone coming along and undoing their belt buckle to get at a holster, or wish to experience someone trying to shimmy them out of a *Tactical Vest*. **Incapped** players should, however, put forth effort to ensure their eligible **postmortem gear** is available to potential **interaction** from other players

by politely rolling over, adjusting the position of their limbs, or simply opening their fingers if requested.

Players may not **discard** their **equipped gear** "onto" an **incapacitated** player so as to turn it into **postmortem gear** for later retrieval. Any **gear** that is **discarded** in the vicinity of an **incapacitated** player must be separated from the corpse to a significant enough degree so as to ensure is it not mistaken for **postmortem gear**.

MELEE COMBAT

Nerf has been making things from foam that don't fire from blasters for a long time, but the N-Force line, released following the debut of N-Strike, was its first earnest foray into the realm of hand-to-hand weapons. This section covers the rules for seamlessly integrating melee combat into play using foam weaponry from the N-Force line or similar products.

Though normally fully enclosed within or otherwise constructed of soft foam, Nerf melee weapons are quite sturdy and are fully capable of packing a wallop. For this reason, melee combat under the Document concerns itself with striking a balance between safety and player freedom. Player groups should feel free to amp things up a bit if they like, particularly as they grow in experience, but every group should make sure that all members consent to the increased possibility of bumps and bruises before implementing melee combat.

These rules are designed to allow for melee combat to be easily left out of play if desired, but note that some of the **auxiliary classes** possess abilities that make them reliant on melee weapons. None of the **auxiliary classes** are indispensable to gameplay, however, so player groups who chose to omit

melee combat may simply leave the melee-oriented classes out as well.

DESIGNATION

Melee weapons bear a **designation**, just like ranged weapons do, though they come in only two varieties: **speed** and **deflection**. **Speed** melee weapons are smaller and easier to carry but may also have limited reach or defensive capability. **Deflection** melee weapons are long or broad or both, providing enhanced defensive potential. Their inherent bulk, however, can make them more difficult to tote about and slower to ready.

In addition to its **slots** for ranged weapons, each class's **load-out** includes a **slot** for the selection of a single melee weapon. Just as with ranged weaponry, the melee **slot** is assigned a **designation** and may only be filled by a weapon of the listed type. The **designation** to which each player has access is determined entirely by that player's selected class. Just as with ranged weapons, players are not obligated to fill their melee **slot** before play begins.

GET READY TO FIGHT

One of the biggest problems to be tackled when layering melee combat over top of warfare primarily focused on projectiles is keeping the two approaches balanced. The most common effective ranges for foam projectiles tend to create distances between players that can be covered very quickly on foot, making it relatively easy for a player with a melee weapon to get into close quarters with an enemy. This certainly bears consideration when attempting to devise a system for melee combat, but there are other factors at play as well. Think about the fact that every player class could take more than one **hit** while charging with a blade. Think about the need for most blasters to prime between every shot. Think about weapon jams. Taken altogether, these factors make it easy to understand why limitations on melee



combat are needed to prevent it from becoming overpowered in blaster-centric game types like this one.

The Document therefore attempts to grant practicality to melee weapons only when used as a last resort or with specific tactical intent.

Primarily, this is accomplished by fully separating each player's use of ranged weapons from their use of melee weapons. Players who wish to **wield** their **equipped** melee weapon must first holster, stow, or **discard** all of their currently **wielded** ranged weapons. **Wielded** melee weapons must be fully sheathed or otherwise stowed before ranged weapons may be used again. Alternatively, a **wielded** melee weapon can be **discarded** at any time, at which point the **wielding** of ranged weapons may resume immediately. Blaster **wielding** must also be discontinued by players wishing to **equip** any **discarded** melee weapons of their allowed **designation**. **Discarded** melee weapons that are being **equipped** must be stowed before any ranged weapons may be **wielded**, though the melee weapon itself may be **wielded** immediately.

These restrictions leave melee open as a constant option to players, but one that requires close consideration due to the periods of heightened vulnerability its use generates (beyond the usual vulnerability inherent in bringing a knife to a gunfight, even). The separation between ranged and melee combat does not, however, prevent players from creatively mixing both elements. Accidentally drop your only **wielded** blaster during a charge while attempting to prime a second shot? You may be better off trying to finish off the enemy by pulling your dagger than by scrambling around for your lost blaster on the floor. Know that an enemy is huddled just around a blind corner but unsure you will survive to get off more than one shot? Use the time offered by their fear to whip out a mace and see if you can enhance their surprise- no reloading or priming required. The ease of these sorts of

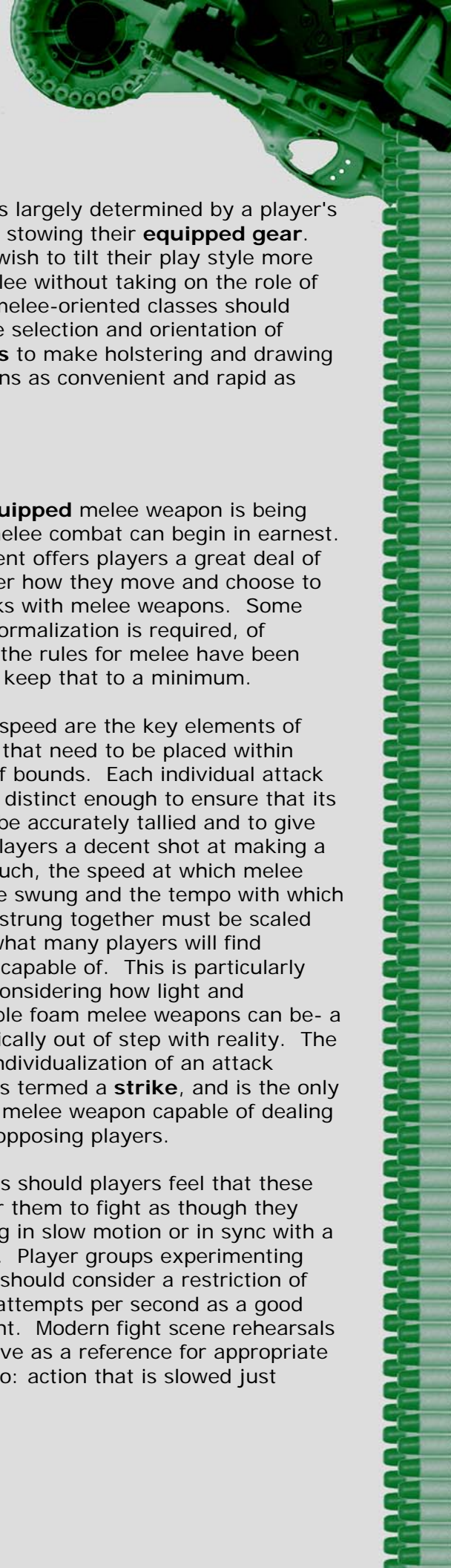
operations is largely determined by a player's approach to stowing their **equipped gear**. Those who wish to tilt their play style more towards melee without taking on the role of one of the melee-oriented classes should optimize the selection and orientation of **accessories** to make holstering and drawing their weapons as convenient and rapid as possible.

METHOD

Once an **equipped** melee weapon is being **wielded**, melee combat can begin in earnest. The Document offers players a great deal of freedom over how they move and choose to make attacks with melee weapons. Some amount of formalization is required, of course, but the rules for melee have been designed to keep that to a minimum.

Timing and speed are the key elements of melee style that need to be placed within some sort of bounds. Each individual attack needs to be distinct enough to ensure that its results can be accurately tallied and to give defending players a decent shot at making a stand. As such, the speed at which melee weapons are swung and the tempo with which attacks are strung together must be scaled back from what many players will find themselves capable of. This is particularly true when considering how light and maneuverable foam melee weapons can be- a factor drastically out of step with reality. The deliberate individualization of an attack movement is termed a **strike**, and is the only motion of a melee weapon capable of dealing damage to opposing players.

By no means should players feel that these rules call for them to fight as though they were moving in slow motion or in sync with a metronome. Player groups experimenting with tempo should consider a restriction of two **strike** attempts per second as a good starting point. Modern fight scene rehearsals can also serve as a reference for appropriate melee tempo: action that is slowed just



enough to promote the safety of the actors and to help ensure that the camera and audience will be able to pick up on what is happening.

Players are free to use any style of grip on their melee weapon, but the weapon must be held by its handle one way or another to be considered **wielded**. A **wielded** melee weapon may be used to freely **strike** at an opponent regardless of whether or not that opponent is **wielding** their own melee weapon. **Strikes** may be made in any number, against any number of opponents at a time. Players may use any form or technique they choose, **striking** at any angle and targeting any part of an opponent's body. Player groups that are particularly interested in safety, however, should consider prohibiting the use of thrusting movements or deliberate aiming at an opponent's head, as these are the most likely ways in which melee weapons can cause accidental injury or other interruptions to play.

All players should also deliberately restrain the strength behind their **strikes** as a general consideration for the safety of those involved in play. The exact degree to which this restraint is applied should be decided by the players in each group. Players unaccustomed to melee combat may also want to give each other a few test hits to get a better feel for their preferences.

Furthermore, any sort of attack motion that does not involve the business end of a melee weapon is forbidden. No punching, kicking, head-butting, pommel strikes, shoving, tripping, and so on. Players are also forbidden from grabbing an opponent's weapons or otherwise attempting to restrain them and from throwing their melee weapons.

MELEE CLASH

Successful melee **strikes** against opposing players result in the application of **hits**. The rules that govern melee **hits** are nearly

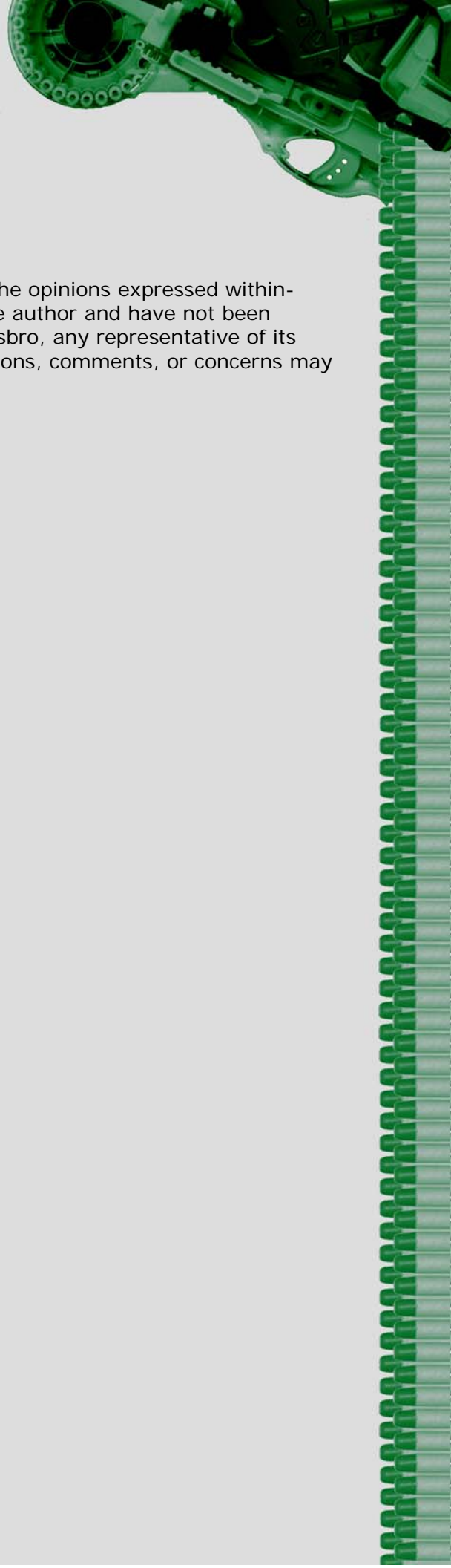
identical to those that apply to projectiles, though not without a handful of notable alterations.

The biggest difference is that **strikes** that contact an enemy's torso count as two **hits** instead of the usual one. **Strikes** that contact a player's head also count as two **hits** as opposed to automatically rendering the target **incapacitated**. Player groups who have elected not to allow deliberate **strikes** to opponents' heads should count accidental contact above the neck as a **strike** to the torso, provided no harm is done and play is not interrupted. **Strikes** that contact any of an opponent's limbs count for a single **hit**.

A player's vulnerability to **strikes** is handled in exactly the same way as it is with projectiles; their entire body and all their **equipped gear** are eligible targets, excluding any **wielded** weapons. This means that players may use their **wielded** blasters to attempt to deflect incoming **strikes**, however inefficient or awkward it may be. Likewise, **wielded** melee weapons are ineligible hit targets, and they may be used to block or deflect both **strikes** and incoming projectiles alike. When defending themselves with a melee weapon, players are under no obligation to restrain the speed at which they operate as they are when making **strikes**.

A form of the **first flight** rule that applies to projectiles also exists for **strikes**. An eligible target must be the first thing an individual **strike** contacts in order to result in a **hit**. For example, a **strike** that slides down the length of a defending player's sword and ends up touching their hand or wrist is harmless, even though it both instances of contact may result from a single movement by the attacker.





DISCLAIMERS

All content presented in this text is the property of the author. The opinions expressed within- regarding any retail products or otherwise- are solely those of the author and have not been solicited by any party. The author is entirely unaffiliated with Hasbro, any representative of its Nerf brand, or any other public or private business entity. Questions, comments, or concerns may be submitted to thedocumentblog@gmail.com.



רוכב.דסקספוט.כנ.דרמונט-ארד