

# HEIST

Rules v. 1.0 beta 1



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## Acknowledgements

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## Resources

Additional game resources such as scenarios, quick reference sheets, characters sheets etc. can be found at <http://heist.smallcuts.net>

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## Introduction

Heist is a small scale skirmish game intended to model close range urban firefights in plentiful cover with modern weaponry between a handful of combatants on each side. Due to the ranges, the timeframe is extremely short which means some actions may be practically impossible within the timeframe of the game. You can change that flat tire *after* you've dealt with the people shooting at you.

Heist also includes additional rules for playing semi-cooperative games about titular heists and similar activities, but this doesn't mean the basic mechanics could not be used for any similar firefights. The basic game is played between two players, but the game can also handle multiple players either as sub-commanders or as truly distinct sides in the scenario.

The game is intended for 28mm models mounted individually on roughly 1" bases, though it could easily be adapted to other scales. 15mm and 20mm models can probably be used as is, smaller scales probably warrant reducing move and fire distances while with 40mm and larger models need slightly longer distances. *The most important thing is that each model must be uniquely identifiable*, this can get pretty difficult with smaller scales. Some game measurements are based on base width, if multiple basings are being used, you should agree on a common measurement for base width. There is no need to mark model facing on the base.

The game uses multiple dice types. You will need a minimum of four each of d6's, d8's, d10's and d12's. In addition to a normal ruler a 3" radius transparent template is useful though not strictly required. A laser pointer or a piece of string is useful for determining line of sight. A couple of spare bases help to regulate movement.

You will need an aim point counter for each model. It is important that each aim point counter is uniquely identifiable and tied to a specific model. The numbered tokens you can see in some of the pictures here are aim counters.

In addition you need counters for grenades (if used) and for stuns, wounds and spent ammo (these can also be recorded on a playsheet).

## Game basics

Heist is built around actions and reactions. Each model is activated individually to perform its actions, which may be interrupted by reacting models. Only one model is active at a time and it must finish all its actions for the turn before the next model is activated.

Setting aim is a key action in the game. While some defensive reactions without aim are possible, setting aim makes them much more effective and allows you to control ground. Unless you have a really good plan for something else, your last action for a turn should always be to set up aim.



Shooting at targets in good cover is relatively ineffective. The most likely result is spoiling their aim and forcing them to stay in cover. These tactical openings should be used to execute flanking moves instead of just shooting more. Once you get to a flanking position, it is much easier to take out the opposition.

At extremely short ranges firefights turn very deadly and even cover is largely negated, but the possibility of mutual kills also increases. Moving in close can produce quick results but is also very risky.

The primary function of grenades is to flush opponents out of their cover, don't expect them to cause a whole lot of casualties if you are not prepared to follow up.

Ammunition limits available fire. Execute your plan while you still have the resources to do it. Sometimes it may be smarter to reload before you run completely dry. On the offense, watch for the tactical openings created by defenders stopping to reload.

There is no provision for hand to hand combat as it is assumed anyone with a working firearm would prefer to use it instead. If two models without guns face each other, it is more likely the firefight will end before the fisticuffs produces any meaningful result. There is no commando knife quick kill in this game.

## Glossary of terms

The following terms are used in the game.

Term	Definition
<b>Player</b>	A person playing the game.
<b>Model</b>	A single combatant in the game.
<b>Turn</b>	A player's turn consists of activation of all his models.
<b>Active</b>	The player whose turn it is and all his models.
<b>Inactive</b>	All players who are currently not active and all their models.
<b>Action</b>	A single discrete thing a model does.
<b>Activation</b>	A single model's all actions in a given turn.
<b>Reaction</b>	An action done as a reaction to another model's action. Some special actions can only be done as a reaction.
<b>Table</b>	The playing area where models move

## Pre-measuring

It is assumed that the models are aware of their immediate surroundings and their own capabilities. However, they do not have satellite image downlinks, flying spycams with laser rangefinders or similar.

You may pre-measure an action you are just about to perform, e.g. can the model cross the alley in a single move, is the enemy in short range if I shoot now, can I see him from here at all?

You may **not** pre-measure arbitrary distances or lines of sight anywhere on the table.

You also may **not** pre-measure several actions into the future. E.g. can I reach the door in three moves, can I see him if I move to that corner.

## Models

Each model represents an individual combatant in the game. In the basic game models are defined by

### *Name*

Each model should have a name. "Criminal A" is just so impersonal, call him Mr. A at the least.

### *Actions*

The number of actions the model can perform in a single activation. This can vary from 1 to 5, with 3 being the default for competent combatants.

### *Skill rating*

A number representing the general skill level of the model. Varies from 1 to 10, with 5 being default. When the model is required to make a skill check, roll 1d10. If the result is **equal to or less than the skill rating**, the skill check is successful.

### *Gear*

Equipment carried. Most importantly this includes weapons and reloads.



## Short format

For brevity character stats can be listed in shortened format. In this case actions should always be shown first, then skill level.

*E.g.*

*Mr. A (3/5) SMG w/2 reloads*

A tabular format is also possible and looks good when several characters need to be listed.

*E.g.*

Name	Actions	Skill	Equipment
Mr. A	3	5	SMG w/2 reloads
Mr. B	3	5	SMG w/2 reloads
Mr. C	3	5	SMG w/2 reloads
Mr. D	2	3	Pistol w/1 reload
Mr. E	2	3	Pistol w/1 reload

## Sequence of play

The game is played in alternating turns. The scenario should define the first player to take a turn, though this can be diced off if desired. The player taking his turn is the active player while all other players are reactive players – their models may react to the actions the active player's models are taking and thus having a bathroom break while your opponent is having his turn is generally a bad idea.

On their turn each player activates each of their models one at a time. The order of activation is free but each model **must** be activated, even if only to pass their activation.

In each activation, the activated model performs all its actions. Each action must be finished before the next one is started. Actions cannot be combined even if they are just moving in a straight line. Once a model's activation is finished, it cannot be activated again in the same player turn. The model must perform at least one action in an activation, even if it is only to pass. This is important because actions trigger reactions – you cannot elect to “do nothing” in order to avoid reaction fire.

Reactions may interrupt an action, in which case the action is resumed immediately after the reactions are resolved. It is also possible that the reaction's priority is lower in which case the action is finished first, then the reactions before another action can be taken.

There is no limit to how many times a model may react during a turn, though ammunition and other situational considerations may quickly reduce useful choices. Once you've ducked into cover, repeating the same reaction serves no purpose.

Once the player has activated all his models, his turn is over and the next player's turn starts.

#### Start of turn and end of turn

When something is defined to happen at the start of a player's turn, it happens *before* any models are activated.

Likewise, end of turn events happen when the player's last model finishes its activation but before the next player's turn starts.

## Actions

The available actions in the game are:

- Move
- Use
- Aim
- Shoot
- Ready weapon
- Recover
- Defend
- Take cover
- Pass
- Free action



#### *Skill checks for actions*

Some actions require a successful skill check to be performed successfully. If the skill check is not successful, the action is wasted but still counts as an action performed.

#### *Step option*

All actions except move itself may be combined with a small positional shift, either before or after the actual action. See movement rules for more details.

## Declaring actions and reactions

You must declare your entire action before executing any part of it. Action declaration cannot be conditional, you must execute the entire action if you are able to even if reactions or other battlefield events change the conditions. Enemy reactions are declared based on the action declaration. Once the action and all reactions to it are declared, the execution begins.

However, there is no need to declare your *next* action in advance.

*E.g. Player 1 declares: "Mr. L will step up to the corner and fire a snapshot at Officer A." Before any models are moved or dice are rolled player 2 declares his reactions: "The corner is in Officer A's aim zone. He will take shot at Mr. L as he comes visible and tucks into cover". Then the declared actions and reactions are played out.*

### Move

Make a single move. See movement rules for more details.

### Use

Generic action to interact with objects in the environment. Typical examples include:

- open or close a door
- push a button or pull a lever
- pick up loot or equipment
- hand a single item to an ally in base-to-base contact

Stuff picked is assumed to be automatically stowed in a bag, equipment belt etc. unless the scenario details limitations on carrying specific objects. Some use action may require a skill check to be successful (e.g. starting a cranky car) – these will be scenario specific.



### Aim

Place the model's aim marker anywhere within line of sight. Note that taking any action besides shoot will immediately remove the aim marker.

### Shoot

Take a shot at something, including throwing grenades. You do not need to aim first, but it helps hitting stuff.

See shooting rules for more detail.

### Ready weapon

This is a generic action to do something with the model's weapons or equipment. Actually finishing the task may take multiple actions of this type. Examples include:

#### *Draw a weapon*

Draw a weapon from holster or similar.

#### *Reload*

Reload weapon. Actually finishing a reload will usually take several reload actions. The typical sequence of actions for most magazine-fed weapons is:

1. Drop old magazine (can't shoot until reload finished)
2. Retrieve new magazine from belt/pocket
3. Insert new magazine (ready to shoot)

Successfully reloading clears all the ammo counters you have accumulated for a single weapon and uses up one reload. Reloading does not have to be done in successive actions.

Each weapon has a reload speed defined, see the equipment section for details. Some weapons like shotguns may have additional special rules.

#### Clear jam

Attempt to clear weapon malfunction. Make a skill check, if successful the weapon is operational again.

#### Recover

Recover from a stun damage result. Until the model uses this action to recover, it is subject to the stun penalties. In some situations it may still be smarter to do something else first, e.g. get to cover.

To recover, make a skill check. A success removes the stun *immediately*, a failed roll wastes the action.

This may also be used to help an ally in base-to-base contact, **if and only if** they have dropped to zero actions due to damage effects.

#### Defend

Stay low. This reduces the damage the model receives but prevents it from taking reactions or doing pretty much anything else. Any action other than ready weapon or recover cancels defend. Hopefully a team mate will come to rescue.

#### Pass

End the model's activation. In case you really want to "do nothing", you must still use this action. If the model takes any other actions, it is not required to end the activation with a pass even if all available actions are not used.

#### Take cover

Taking cover is a free action that can be done any time except when dice are already being rolled. Taking cover removes the model's aim marker making it harder to hit providing it is in cover. In the open you should try moving into cover instead. Taking cover is an exception to the general rule that actions must be declared in advance.



#### Free action

Free actions are small things that do not count as actions.

The most significant free action is taking cover described above. The second most useful option is dropping whatever the model has in its hands. Speaking is also considered a free action. Chewing gum is a bit borderline.

## Movement

Models move in two ways: by using a move action or by combining a step movement with any other action.

### Step moves

Any action other than move may be combined with step movement either before or after the action. Stepping does not break aim.

In step move the model may shift its position by up to one base width. It may not cross obstacles or other obstructions and step moves do not give a snap to cover bonus.

### Movement actions

In each move action the model may move up to 3" in a straight line to any direction.

If the model start its move in base contact with an obstacle it may be ignored provided that

- it is chest high or lower (can be vaulted over or climbed onto), or
- it is an unlocked door or similar, or
- there is a clear path within one base width away (e.g. stepping around a corner)

Any subsequent obstacles stop the move action, though they may then be ignored on the next move action.

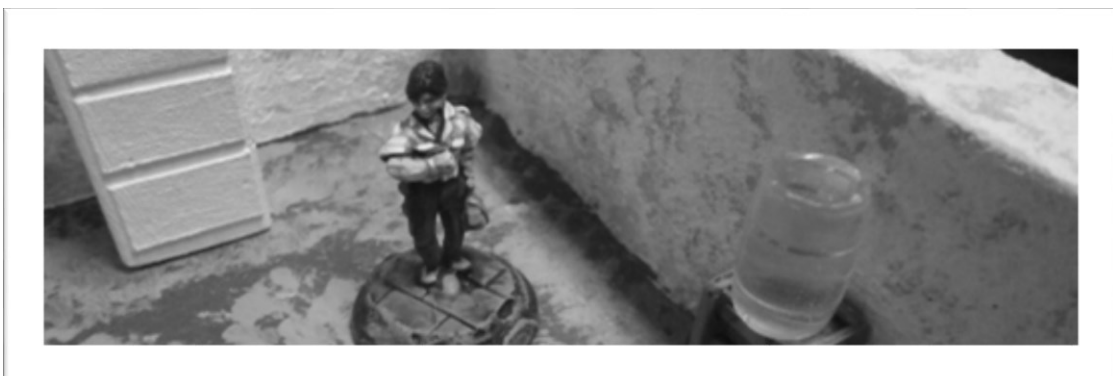
When stepping around an obstacle, the player may first move the model the minimum distance required to clear the obstacle and then measure from this position.

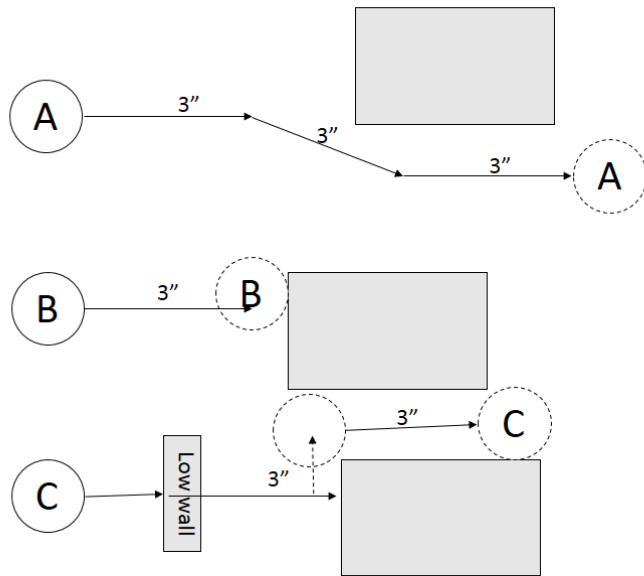
The model may **not** move through other characters, friendly or otherwise. It must go around them in the same fashion as obstacles or wait for them to get out of the way. Civilians sometimes move out of the way as a reaction when bumped into, but they still count as obstacles for that move action.

#### *Snap to cover*

If a model finishes its last move action for the turn within one base size of cover, it gets a free bonus move to contact that cover if the player wants to. It may still use other actions, but it may not take another move action until its next turn.

Note that you still cannot move through solid walls. You must be able to place a spare base in the desired cover position touching or overlapping the model's base but not overlapping anything else.





- A uses three move actions to skirt around the obstacle.
- B uses snap to cover bonus to get into position.
- C uses the first move action to contact the low wall, the second to vault over it and move forward and then skirts around the corner in the final move action. Note that snap bonus is not used to contact either wall.

### Terrain

It is assumed that the ground is relatively flat and easy to move through and all significant obstacles are individually modeled on the table. Moving through a wooded area is slower because the models have to actually go around the trees, not because their movement slows down due abstract proximity of foliage. If you're really fighting in a pit of quicksand, there may be scenario special rules to cover this.

## Cover and line of sight

Heist is a game of extremely close range encounters. It assumed that all significant features are modeled accurately on the tabletop. However, the models don't represent marble statues but rather combatants constantly on the move. As far as the environment goes, line of sight is based on true model's eye view. However, you are not required to see the actual model but rather a place where the model might be.

Taking cover is important in this game. To take cover, the model must be in base-to-base contact with the cover. If it's not in contact, it's not in cover. It might still be out of line of sight, but if anyone manages to sight it, it's screwed. Multiple models can fit in the same cover if there is room for all of their bases to touch it, just remember that shooting through other models is generally not a good idea.

Cover is defined as low cover or high cover. Low cover is chest high or lower and can be seen and shot over.

High cover is anything a standing model cannot easily see over, including walls and pillars but also high cabinets, parked vans etc. Objects less than knee high are generally not usable as cover.

The model is assumed to slightly move and peek around the edges of the cover. This means line of sight may be drawn to the model or the edge of its cover. The thickness of the cover is ignored unless it is more than half a base width, in which case the line of sight must be drawn to the corner actually closest to the model.

Most cover only really protects from one direction. Multi-direction cover (e.g. foxholes, gun pits) should be avoided in game setup because it negates flanking.

If line of sight can be drawn to the model's base without going through the actual cover or an imaginary line extending the face of the cover, this counts as a flank shot and cover is negated. This imaginary line is called line of cover. Note that if the line of fire touches the line of cover without actually going through it, this also counts as a flank shot.

E.g. if a model is taking cover behind a low wall, it counts as being in cover unless another model can actually get to a position behind the wall – even though you might be able sight the model through a gate in the wall or similar.

If the cover object is round, assume an imaginary box around based on the position of the model.

Line of sight may be drawn to a model or to any edge of the cover it's using within one base size of the model's position – unless there is another model in the way behind the same piece of cover. Consequently, if you want to place a model completely out of line of sight, leave at least one base width between it and the edge of the cover. For clarity, it is best to declare this openly when positioning the model.

Models behind low cover have 360 degree visibility – they are assumed to peek over the top of the cover as necessary.

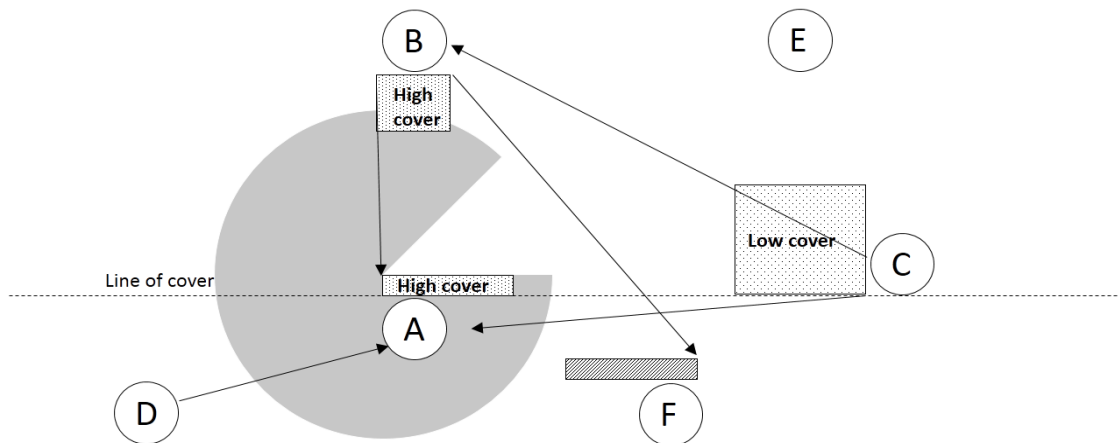
Models behind high cover may have dead angles. Imagine a line perpendicular to the line of cover. A model may draw a line of sight a maximum of 45 degrees to the side of this line blocked by the cover. If a steeper angle is desired, you should reposition the model.

Line of sight always works both ways. If a model can see something, then it also can be seen. This means both models must have a valid line of sight to each other – if one is blocked for some reason than the other is also blocked.



Line of sight may be drawn through another model, but they count as obstructions. Obstructions are described in more detail in the shooting section.

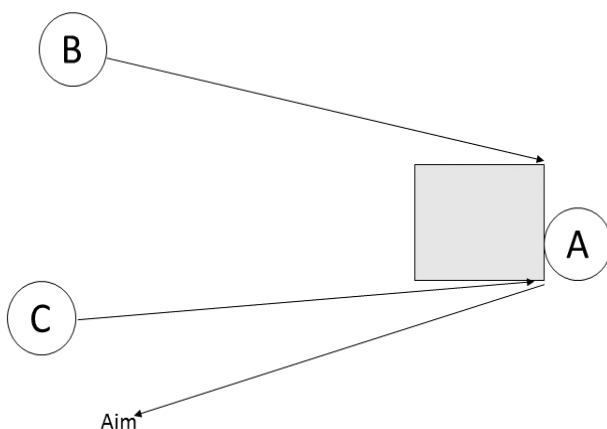
Line of sight may be drawn through any opening, however actually shooting through very small gaps may count as obstructions.



- A is in cover against B's fire because it passes through the line of cover.
- A is not in cover against C's or D's fire, because they don't pass through line of cover.
- B can see A and F, because it is less than a base width away from both edges of cover and thus can use either one to draw line of sight.
- C can see B looking over its low cover.
- A cannot see E, because it is outside the 45 degree arc (the Pac-Man shading) and A is too far away from the other edge of the cover. Therefore E cannot see A either.

## Exposed targets

A target in cover may be exposed. This happens primarily when the target is aiming. To determine whether the target is exposed, see if the shooter can trace line of sight to the start of the target's line of aim.



- A counts as in cover against B, because B can't see the start of A's line of aim.
- A counts as exposed against C, because C can trace line of sight to the same corner A is aiming from.

Similar method should be used to determine in reaction fire whether the target counts as shooting in cover or simply in cover.

## Height advantage

The basic game assumes the entire table is more or less at the same level. Adding different levels of elevation is not very complex, though. Each height level is assumed to be roughly equal to one floor in a building.

Height differences may create dead spaces which are out of line of sight. Always first check that a line of sight exists before proceeding.

When placing aim markers, it should always be noted which height level is being aimed at if this is not obvious. It is not possible to aim between levels or to cover more than one height level with a single aim counter. The 3" aim radius does **not** extend into vertical space. Models on a staircase or similar between two levels count as being on whichever level is closest, though they may also be subject to lesser height advantage (see below).

Models on a lower level behind low cover always count as exposed targets against shooters on a higher level.

Shooters on a higher level behind low cover always count as being in cover (i.e. not exposed) against shooters from a lower level – unless they are actually aiming at the lower level. E.g. a model on a balcony may have a shootout with another model on an opposing balcony with relatively little risk of being interrupted by models below them.

High cover is not affected by height difference. Yes, low cover on a higher level is better than high cover is some ways.

Line of cover extends into vertical space and thus it is possible to flank models by getting directly above or below their cover.

#### Lesser height advantage

Lesser height advantage, such as a model climbing on top of a table does not negate cover in any way but it does allow shooting over low obstructions. Likewise, being in a substantially lower position you cannot see over any intervening obstructions and in some cases line of sight may be blocked.

## Aiming

In most cases hitting targets without aiming will be quite difficult. The aiming counter represents the model's point of aim. Fire benefits from aiming when the target is

- within 3" of the aim point, or
- within 1" wide line drawn from shooter through the aim point to table edge

This area is called the model's aim zone.

Naturally, the target must still be in line of sight to be fired upon.

Aiming can be maintained indefinitely as long as the model only takes shoot actions within the aim zone. Any other action cancels the aim and removes the aim marker from the table, including shooting at a target outside the aim zone. Receiving any damage also cancels the aim, but simply being shot at does not if the fire fails to have any effect.

## Shooting

A single shooting attack consists of one or more actual shots. If the target is within the shooter's aim zone, start by centering the shooter's aim on the target's location at the moment of the shot. If you are shooting reaction fire against a moving opponent, you may freely pick the exact spot for the shot within your aim zone. Then determine the dice and target number proceed to see what effect the shot has.

To find out the required roll to hit, first determine the class of the target:

Target class	Target number	Description
<b>In cover</b>	10	The target is in cover.
<b>In cover, shooting</b>	9	As above, but the target is shooting at something (reaction only).
<b>Exposed</b>	8	The target is in cover, but it has an aim marker and the shooter can see the start of the target's line of aim.
<b>Open, moving</b>	7	Target is in open, moving (applies to reaction shots only)
<b>Open, not moving</b>	6	The target is not in cover.
<b>Immobile</b>	5	Target is in open and incapable of movement such as inanimate objects, stopped cars etc.

Note that target class is always determined for each shooter separately. The target may well be in cover to one shooter, exposed to another and open to a third one.

Determine the final score required to hit and roll dice as follows:

Shooter is	Dice rolled
<b>Aiming (target in aim zone)</b>	3d10
<b>Snap firing (target not in aim zone)</b>	3d8

Modifiers:

<b>Close range (4" or less)</b>	<b>+1 dice shift</b>
<b>Point blank range (1" or less)</b>	+1 dice shift, hits count double
<b>Intense fire</b>	+1 die, take 1 ammo counter automatically
<b>Crossfire</b>	+1 dice shift
<b>Weapon modifiers</b>	see weapon descriptions

Dice shifts

Each dice shift changes the dice type used to one better or worse. The minimum dice type is d6, if you fall below that the fire is automatically ineffective and you gain one ammo counter. The maximum type is d12, each shift beyond d12 grants a +1 for the die results instead.

For each 1 rolled, the model gains an ammo counter. If the ammo counter total is **more** than the weapon's ammo capacity, the shot automatically misses and the weapon is out of ammo. If it's **equal**, the weapon is out of ammo but this shot still counts.

If the shot is valid, count all the dice that have scores **equal to or greater** than the required to hit score. This is your number of hits. If the target was defending, it may attempt a skill roll to negate one hit.

Number of hits	Effect
<b>1</b>	Target stunned, loses aim
<b>2</b>	Target wounded, loses aim
<b>3</b>	Target killed

Hail Mary shots

If you need a higher roll than you can actually roll on your dice, there is still a small chance of success.

When you roll the maximum result on any die, you may choose to use it as a +1 modifier on another die instead. E.g. two sixes rolled on d6's can count as one result of 7 if desired. This gives you a slim chance against targets that would otherwise be impossible to hit.

These modifications happen after ammo and weapon malfunctions are checked, and thus cannot affect them.

## Damage effects

All damage effects take place immediately. If the target takes any damage, it will always lose aim. In addition:

### Stunned

Target counts as stunned until it successfully uses a recover action. Stunned models have one less action than normal. This is cumulative with the penalty for being wounded. If a stunned model receives another stun, it is wounded instead (replace stun with wound – if it was already also wounded it is killed).

### Wounded

Target is wounded. Wound status cannot be negated during the game. The target may be wounded and stunned, but if it gets another wound it's dead. Wounded models have one less action.

### Killed

Pretty obvious. Drops anything in hands (live grenades...)

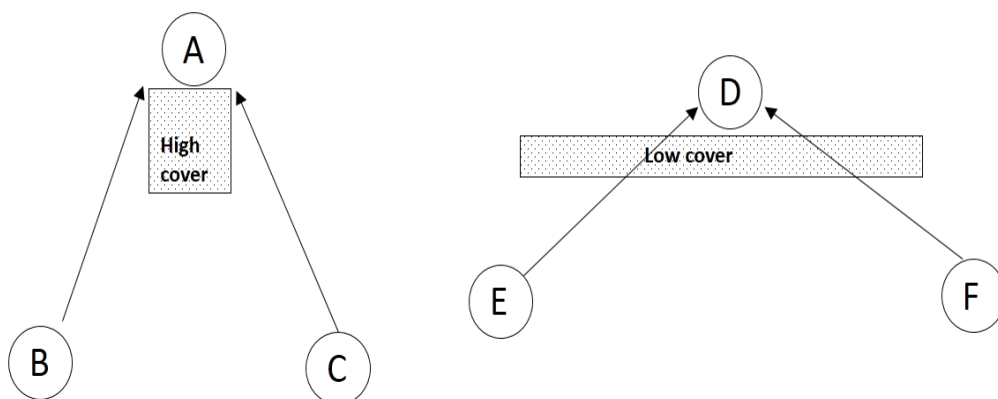
## Crossfire attacks

It is easier to ferret out foes from cover if you can shoot at them from multiple angles. To qualify for crossfire attack you must:

1. Shoot at a model and get at least a stun result
2. Immediately shoot with another model which either draws line of sight to the target through a different edge of the target's cover or is at least 90 degrees separate from the original LOS

The second shooter can then claim a crossfire bonus of +1 dice shift for this one attack roll.

Note that the original shooter does **not** get to finish its activation, it loses all remaining actions this turn. Crossfire opportunity must be used immediately or it's lost.



- B and C get crossfire against A because they draw their lines of sight through different edges of A's cover.
- E and F get crossfire against D because the angle between their lines of sight is over 90 degrees.



## Line of fire

Line of fire is a 1" wide path drawn from the shooter to the target and extending to the edge of the table. Things that are on the line of fire may be obstacles to fire or suffer collateral damage. The line of fire does not have to be centered on the models, but it does have to cover the line of sight. Once the line of fire is placed, it is the same for all obstructions and collateral targets. You cannot twist the line to cruise around obstacles.

E.g. A model is shooting around a corner into a corridor along the corridor wall, perhaps at an enemy in the next doorway. The line of fire should be placed entirely in the corridor so as to not count the corridor wall itself as an obstruction. As long as the 1" path along the wall is clear, the shot is not obstructed. However, a water cooler by the wall would count as an obstruction.

## Obstructions

Obstructions are things that are in the way of shooting but not being actively used for cover. They are between the shooter and the target and clearly over the line of fire. If it is debatable whether an obstruction is actually on the line of fire, assume the firer found a good angle and ignore the obstruction.

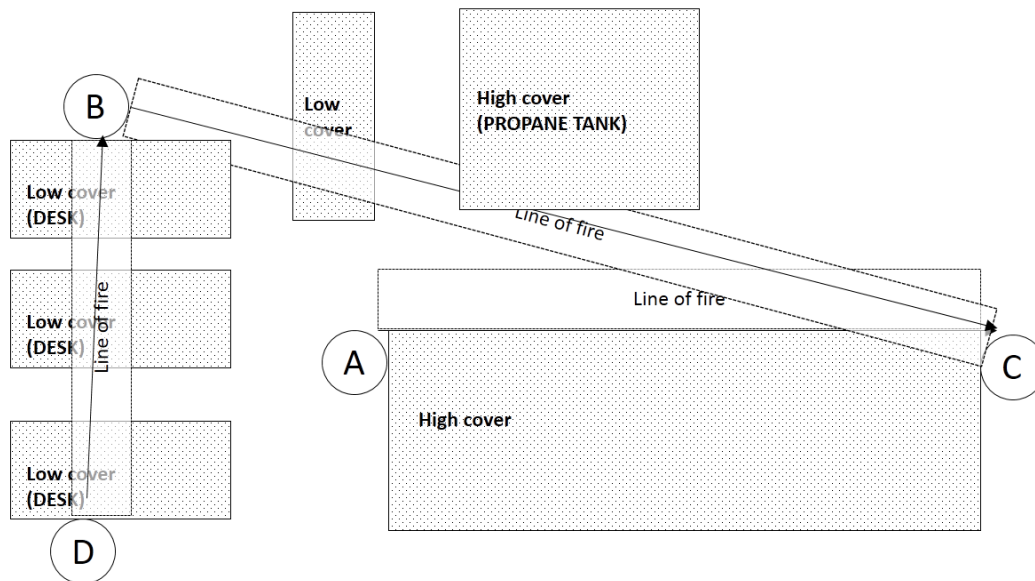
The cover actually used by the shooter or the target is never counted as an obstruction. In case of walls and such, this consists of the actual corner being used for cover, not the entire wall.

Calculate attack as normal and roll the dice. Starting from the closest one, assign one die for each obstruction starting with the highest rolled result. Whatever dice are left count against the original target.

If the obstruction can be damaged (it is a model or a part of the environment that has specifically been designated as destructible), the target number is the same as if you had originally targeted it. Otherwise the roll counts only for ammo purposes.

If the obstruction is a model, it can attempt a skill check to ignore the hit. If the obstruction is an inanimate object, the shooter may attempt a skill check to ignore the hit.

Shooting from or at high or no cover low obstructions can be ignored. In other words, low obstructions only count if both shooter and target are crouching behind low cover.



- A's line of fire to C is not obstructed by the wall as it does not have to be centered on the line of sight.
- B can ignore the intervening low cover when shooting at C since C is in high cover, but the propane tank counts as an obstruction with possibly explosive results.
- D must count the intervening desk as an obstruction when shooting at B since they are both in low cover.

**Example:** Mr. K takes an aimed shot at an exposed opponent. Unfortunately, a large fire extinguisher is in the way obstructing his aim. Mr. K rolls 3d10, getting 5, 8 and 9. The highest die is assigned to the obstruction while the remaining two count against the target. The opponent gets a stun. The 9 is enough to hit the fire extinguisher, Mr. K must succeed in a skill check to avoid filling the corridor with foam.

## Reactions

An inactive model may react to enemy actions if it has line of sight to the active model at some point during the action. **Models on the active side do not react.** Each action provokes a separate reaction.

- A model on defend cannot react to anything.
- A model may react to **any** enemy action in its aim zone.

Possible reactions are:

- Shoot
- Take cover (may be combined with shoot)

**All reactions for a single action must be declared before any are resolved!** If a model chooses to wait to see what effect its allies' reactions have, it must also wait for the target to make a new action to react to.

A shoot reaction must target whatever triggered the reaction. You can't use a reaction to shoot something else intentionally, though they may still be hurt if they are in the line of fire.

Each model counts as performing the declared action immediately, regardless of when the action is actually resolved. Only the take cover reaction can change model's target classification in the middle of the reaction sequence.

## Action/reaction priority

Actions and reactions are resolved in order of priority. If multiple actions have the same priority, models without any damage effects go first. Otherwise they are considered simultaneous.

1. Aim, Defend, Recover, Take Cover (if desired)
2. Aimed fire, Take Cover (if desired)
3. Snap fire
4. All other actions

### Take cover

Note that you may elect to take cover at any point, except in the middle of simultaneous actions. It may be good idea to take your higher priority shot first and then take cover before the return fire hits.

*E.g. Mr. K is aiming at a doorway when a SWAT officer tries to break the deadlock by popping off a snap shot. Mr. K reacts by shooting. Aimed fire takes precedence, and Mr. K manages to wound the officer. However, this does not cancel the officer's shot. Deciding not to risk it, Mr. K takes cover losing his aim but causing the officer to miss.*

*Later in a similar situation, Mr. K finds himself covering the wrong doorway when an officer pops out of a different door and aims at Mr. K. Since Mr. K was not aiming that way, he cannot react to a mere aim. When the officer shoots, he reacts by taking cover and snapping a return shot. Taking cover comes first, then the officer's aimed shot and finally Mr. K's snapshot if he's still fit to shoot. Since Mr. K is shooting, he counts as in cover, shooting even though his shot comes last.*

## Advanced Rules

Once you are familiar with the basic rules, you should consider taking the advanced rules into use. The most important of these is the concept of pressure, the rest can be considered optional.

### Pressure

Heist firefights are really hectic affairs. The whole thing might be over in a couple of minutes. Quick judgement is critical to success. To create time pressure a timer should be used, real chess clocks being best for this. As the player uses up time, pressure mounts and can be used by his opponent.

Before play, the pressure level should be determined and pressure mode chosen.



### Pressure level

Each scenario should define a pressure level for each player. The default pressure level is two minutes per model in the player's starting force, plus one minute for each model with 4 or more actions. For ease of play, this may be rounded up to the nearest five minutes if both players agree.

Pressure level does not change due casualties or reinforcements unless specifically directed in the scenario.

### Rising pressure mode

In rising pressure mode, a running total of time used by each player is kept. One pressure point is gained per each full increment of pressure level used. E.g. if the pressure level is 5 minutes, one point is gained at 5 minutes, another at 10, another at 15 and so on.

The clock should be switched over to the opponent during reactions.

### Overtime pressure mode

If you don't have or want to use a chess clock, you may use a simple timer. Set the timer to the pressure level at the start of each turn. Pause the timer during reactions.

- If you finish your turn in less than half the pressure level time, your opponent does not gain any pressure points.
- If you finish your turn in more than half the time but still under the limit, your opponent gains one pressure point.
- If you're not finished when time runs out, you finish in overtime and your opponent gains two pressure points.

### Constant pressure mode

If you do not want to use a clock, e.g. when new players are involved, each player gains a pressure point every time their opponent finishes a turn.

### Pressure points and Heist cards

For each pressure point gained, the player gets to draw a Heist card. Each Heist card details when it can be played. After the card is played, it is discarded. If the deck is exhausted, just reshuffle the discard pile.

Unless the card specifically grants a reroll, the card must be played before any dice are rolled.

If the multiple cards are played that have exactly opposite effect (e.g. one makes a roll automatically succeed while the other causes it to fail), the cards cancel each other out and are discarded.

Cards themselves never trigger reactions. However, if they grant bonus actions those actions trigger reactions as normal.

If you feel you are stuck with unusable cards, you may discard two cards at the start of your turn and draw one new card.

## Reinforcements

Many scenarios will have one side or maybe even both getting reinforcements. The scenario will detail when reinforcements become available and what they consist of, but these general rules apply to bringing them actually onto the table.

### Reserves box

Each player has their own reserves box. This represents additional combatants making their way onto the scene of the action.



At the end of the turn add any new reserves to the reserves box. Then each model in the active player's reserve box may make a skill check. On a success that model may be moved from the reserve box next to any of the entry points. If the model stays in the reserve box, it must roll again next turn.

Models can be kept in the reserve box as long as the player likes, but once they are moved next to an entry point, they are committed and cannot change the entry point or go back to reserve pool.

### Entry points

The exact location of entry points is detailed in each scenario, but there should be at least one for each player able to bring in reinforcements. Both players typically have their own entry points.

At the start of his turn, the player may deploy any models waiting next to an entry point onto the table. Unless otherwise dictated by the scenario, they may be deployed anywhere within 4" of the entry point. Deployment does not count as an action and will not trigger reactions, but any subsequent actions taken by the models obviously will.

Once deployed, models are fully functional and have their full allotment of actions to use.

## Collateral damage

Standing behind a target is rarely a good idea... if there are possible targets or obstructions on the line of fire *behind* the intended target and *within 4"*, follow this procedure to determine effect against them:

- If any of the attack rolls were high enough to hit the collateral target had it been the actual target of the attack, it gets a single hit.
- If the collateral target is a model, it can attempt a skill check to ignore the hit. If it is an inanimate object, the shooter may attempt a skill check to ignore the hit.

**Example:** After popping one too many pills, Mr. L starts seeing things and opens fire in a crowded disco. He fires and rolls 7, 6 and 5. The 7 and 6 are high enough to hit the intended target, wounding it. The rolls are also high enough to the others in the 4" danger behind the first target, since none of them are in cover. They

*must all make a skill check to avoid getting a single hit – collateral damage always causes just one hit. There is also a big fish tank in the danger zone. If Mr. L does not want a flood, he must make a skill check to avoid hitting it. Unfortunately, he thinks he just saw a sea monster...*

## Body armor

Wearing body armor can mitigate damage to some degree, but it will never make you immune to bullets. In the interest of simplicity, all body armor is treated equal. Either a model has or it does not.

Whenever a model with body armor is eliminated, leave it on the table. It may attempt a skill check at the beginning of its next turn.

If the check is successful, the model returns to play with a wound and a stun. Otherwise it is removed from the table. The model may be saved from elimination this way any number of times.

**Example:** *Mr. L shoots at a SWAT officer wearing body armor. He rolls three hits and the officer is eliminated. At the start of the police turn, the officer attempts a skill check. He is successful and returns to play barely alive, with a wound and a stun. Unfortunately Mr. L was still aiming at the area: “Stay down!”*

## Grenades

A grenade can be thrown with one or more shoot actions, the further you want to throw the more actions it takes. Grenades cannot be thrown as a reaction. The model is holding a live grenade from the start of the first shoot action to the end of the last. While a model is holding a live grenade, place a grenade marker beside it.

If the model receives a wound or worse result while holding a live grenade, the grenade is dropped. Oops.

Grenade range is 6” per action used to throw (max three).

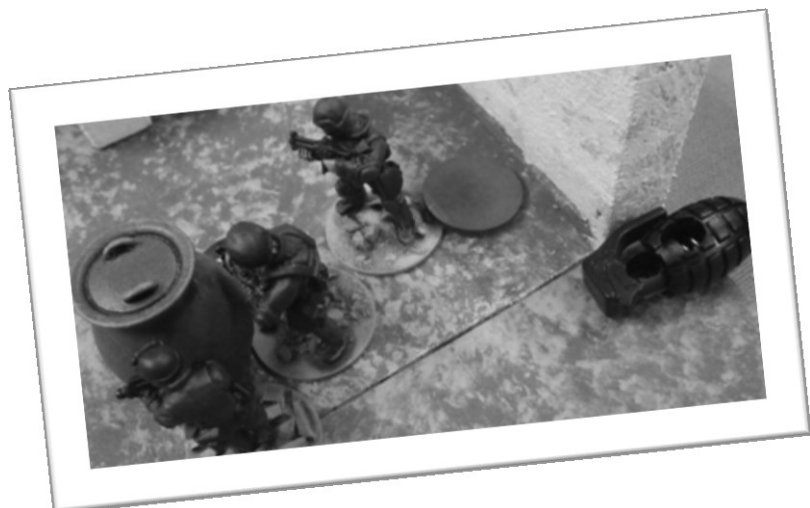
To throw a grenade, target a spot. If the spot is within the model’s aim zone, make a skill check. If successful, you hit spot on. If you fail the check or lobbed the grenade outside the aim zone, the grenade will deviate 1d6 inches in a random direction.

The grenade may deviate to any spot where there is a line of sight either from the thrower or from the aiming point. If it deviates inside a wall or similar, place it in a valid point as close as possible to the rolled result.

### *Choke points*

If the grenade passes through a window, doorway or similar opening of one base width or less, or over low cover terrain, an additional skill check must be made for each such choke point starting from the closest one. If a check is failed, the grenade will immediately scatter from that point (further checks are not necessary).

The model may ignore a choke point it is in base contact with.



### Lobbing

Grenades may be lobbed blind in an arc over high obstacles. Treat the range as 6" more than it actually is and the throw obviously cannot be aimed. Make skill checks to clear each obstacle as if they were choke points, but the model may **not** ignore an obstacle even in base contact.

**IMPORTANT:** The grenade does not explode immediately. Place a grenade marker at the landing spot. Grenade will explode at the **start** of the throwing player's next turn (so everyone else basically gets one turn to run away).

Effect depends on grenade type:

### Frag grenades

A frag grenade is a 6d10 attack against each model within LOS from the grenade. Subtract 1d10 for each full inch of distance, no other modifiers.

### Smoke grenades

Smoke grenades produce a 3" radius cloud of smoke that counts as an area of limited visibility 4". Smoke does not dissipate during the game. Scenario conditions may render smoke ineffective (high winds etc.). Overlapping smoke clouds do not produce increased effect. See low visibility rules for more details.

### Teargas grenades

Work as smoke grenades except that models without a gas mask are automatically stunned by the cloud. This counts as non-lethal damage and cannot be removed while in the cloud.

### Flashbang

Non-lethal weapon. Resolve as frag, except using 6d12 as base. See non-lethal weapons below.

### Other stuff

You may also throw other similar size items, such as spare magazines and pistols. Follow the grenade rules, except they don't explode. You may even throw a real grenade without pulling the pin if you're really tricky...

**Example:** *Mr. K is pinned down by a couple of goons inside a shack. Crouching down behind some crates, he spends an action to select an aim point inside the shack and two actions to throw the grenade 10". Since the aim point is inside the shack, he must first pass a skill check to land the grenade through the window. He passes the check. Then he needs to pass another check to land it spot on. He fails, meaning the grenade will deviate. Luckily, it can't get very far inside the shack and both goons face serious shrapnel rash.*

*On their turn, the two goons decide to hastily exit the shack rather than take their chances with the grenade. Unfortunately for them, that is exactly what Mr. L had been waiting for...*

## Weapons

A model may have one long weapon (rifle, SMG etc.) and one sidearm. Long arms require two hands to shoot but may be held with one hand while the other is used for something else.

As a baseline, models have two reloads for the primary weapon and one for the sidearm are carried.

### Service revolver

Basic old fashioned sidearm. Ammo level 1. Three actions as usual to reload with speedloaders. Without speedloaders, cannot be reloaded in game. -1 dice shift at over 12" range.

### Service pistol

Basic sidearm. Ammo level 1. We'll assume 1911 fans are less likely to spray and pray and call it even. -1 dice shift at over 12" range. On the plus side, pistols are slightly faster to reload requiring only 2 actions.

### Machine pistol

Ammo level 2. MAC-10's, Glock 18's, Scorpions etc. Compact submachine guns without a proper stock. Often with smaller magazines and/or overinflated fire rates. -1 dice shift at over 12" range. Slightly easier to reload due to handy size.

### Submachine gun

Ammo level 3. Uzis, MP5's etc. Anything without a proper stock really warrants a -1 shift at over 12" range.

### Assault rifle

Ammo level 3. AK-47's, M16's etc. Old battle rifles such as FN FALs and G3's are also essentially equivalent for the purposes of this game.

### Combat shotgun

Ammo level 2, close range 8", -1 dice shift to hit at over 16". Two reload actions to remove one ammo counter. Note that unlike other weapons, you do not have to start reload with dropping the old magazine and thus the weapon is always ready to shoot (unless you actually managed to run it dry). Usually a higher number of reloads are carried because each ammo counter represents less actual shots.

This covers all tube-fed shotguns, both pumps and semis. We assume people with pump guns have spent the time training with their guns.

### Magazine shotgun

Ammo level 2, close range 8", -1 dice shift to hit at over 16". Reloads as an assault rifle but usually less reloads are carried due to their inconvenient size.

**Unreliable:** If you roll three consecutive numbers on the attack roll (such as 1-2-3), the gun jams after the shot is resolved. If you fail two consecutive clear attempts, it is permanently broken.

This covers Saiga-12's, SPAS-15's and similar weapons. There is a reason you don't see a whole lot of people using them...

### Machinegun

Ammo level 6. Takes 5 actions to reload. Requires a ready weapon action before aim action can be taken (i.e. setting up aim takes two consecutive actions). Due to the size and weight, few or no reloads are usually carried.

This covers belt-fed squad automatic weapons and GPMG's such as FN Minimi, M60, PKM etc. While they are really a bit too cumbersome for close quarters, some people insist on using them. Lighter variants with large drum magazines can be modeled by reducing ammo and reload time by one.



Sometimes machineguns can be found on pintle-mounts in vehicles or prepared defensive positions. In that case reloads are usually not available. The weapon may or may not be readily removable from the mount.

#### Weapons table

Name	Ammo level	Reload speed	Special
<b>Service revolver</b>	1	3	-1 shift over 12"
<b>Service pistol</b>	1	2	-1 shift over 12"
<b>Machine pistol</b>	2	2	-1 shift over 12"
<b>Submachine gun</b>	3	3	
<b>Assault rifle</b>	3	3	
<b>Combat shotgun</b>	2	2 per ammo	Close range 8", -1 shift over 16"
<b>Magazine shotgun</b>	2	3	Close range 8", -1 shift over 16", Unreliable
<b>Machinegun, belt-fed</b>	6	5	Requires ready action before aim
<b>Machinegun, drum-fed</b>	5	4	Requires ready action before aim

## Non-lethal weapons

Some weapons and effects are classed as non-lethal. These can only ever cause a stun. If the target is already stunned, non-lethal damage has no further effect. However, the stun works as a normal stun regardless of original cause.

Thus, zap 'em first, whack them second. Not the other way around.

## Vehicles

Vehicles in Heist are mostly used to enter or exit the table. These rules cover normal cars up to van size, larger vehicles where model may actually have room to move inside may be treated as moving terrain.

#### Entering and exiting vehicles

Models may enter a vehicle by moving into contact with one of its doors and spending an action. Likewise, it takes one action to exit the vehicle. The vehicle must be stopped before in can be entered or exited and it cannot have moved on the same turn yet.

### Moving vehicles

To drive a vehicle, a model must enter the driver position and spend an action starting the vehicle. The vehicle then moves up to 12" for each action the driver spends driving. Vehicle movement is always in a straight line, but you may turn up to 90 degrees at the start of the move. Stopping the vehicle is an action.

The vehicle can also reverse up to 6" per action, but the driver must spend one action stopped changing gears every time the direction of travel is changed.

### Traffic accidents

If the vehicle moves into contact with a model, that model gets an immediate reaction to get out of the vehicle's path. If the skill check succeeds, the model may take one move action to get out of the way. If the model fails the skill check for the reaction or is unable to get out of the vehicle's path for some other reason, it gets an automatic wound instead.

If the vehicle's front contacts anything more substantial such as another vehicle or wall, it stops immediately, the engine stalls, every occupant is stunned and the driver's activation ends. In addition the vehicle takes 1d6 hits. The driver may try to restart the vehicle and continue next turn.

If the vehicle's driver is unable to spend any actions driving a moving vehicle for some reason, the vehicle will make a single move straight forward at the end of the turn.

### Shooting from vehicles

The driver and passengers are not allowed to shoot from the vehicle. They must exit it to be effective combatants. The bed of a stopped pickup truck or similar can be treated as terrain, but passenger compartments are just too cramped for effective fighting.

### Shooting at vehicles

Vehicles are pretty easy to hit, they are never in cover. They count as moving targets unless they are stopped, in which case they are dead ducks as immobile targets. Vehicles are also so large that even obstructions don't count if a free fire lane can be traced to any part of the vehicle.

Simply keep a running total of hits against the vehicle, most civilian vehicles become undrivable after five hits. After that, roll d10 for each additional hit – the vehicle explodes a like a frag grenade if any 10's are rolled (calculate distance from the center of the vehicle). Passengers never count any cover against their own vehicle exploding.

Passengers in moving vehicles count as in cover shooting, in stopped vehicles as exposed targets.

Vehicles are compact death traps in a firefight. If the vehicle or anyone in it is hit by an attack, everyone else including the vehicle itself must make a skill check or take one hit. The vehicle uses the driver's skill rating if it's moving, otherwise it automatically fails.



**Example:** Mr. K takes an aimed shot at a stopped police cruiser before the two officers inside can exit. He goes for the driver and rolls 4, 6 and 8. The 8 hits the driver. The other officer and the cruiser must make skill checks to avoid getting hit also. The car uses the driver's skill rating and fails, getting one hit.

Slightly later one officer is still using the cruiser for cover and blocking the escape route. Mr. K decides enough is enough and spends three actions shooting at the car. His first shot causes two more hits, the second one causes one more ruining the cruiser – there is no need to roll for collateral damage as no one is actually in the car anymore. Mr. K burns ammo on the last shot rolling three more hits. He rolls 3d10, getting one 10 and the cruiser explodes taking the officer out of action.

#### *Hollywood option*

To simulate high octane action films, use d6's to roll for vehicle explosion – any 6's rolled blow up the vehicle.

#### *Jerry Bruckheimer option*

Don't bother keeping record of hits against vehicles. Roll as per the Hollywood option for every hit. When a vehicle blows up, the occupants may take a skill test to dive out of the exploding vehicle. Yes, the only way to stop a vehicle is to blow it up.

This is getting pretty silly and no one sensible wants to be anywhere near anything with four wheels. Might as well add red barrels while you're at it.

## Limited visibility

All shootouts do not happen in broad daylight. Even in an urban environment there are dark alleys and deep shadows. Limited visibility may be caused for example by darkness, heavy rain or snow, fog or smoke grenades. Regardless of the source, the same rules are used to define the effect of limited visibility.

Limited visibility makes it harder to shoot and harder to identify targets.

Limited visibility is rated as a distance. For every full increment of limited visibility distance, all fire gets a -1 dice shift to the attack roll.

Limited visibility does not stack. If multiple causes of limited visibility are applicable, use the worst rating.

Typical ratings:

- 24" for dawn or dusk
- 16" for night with limited artificial lighting (street lights etc.)
- 12" for heavy rain or snow or light fog
- 8" for a moonlit night or heavy fog
- 4" for pitch black and smoke grenades

Note that only the actual distance through the limited visibility counts. E.g. shooting through a smoke cloud, only the distance through the cloud counts. Shooting into a well-lit building from a moonlit yard, count only the distance up to the building wall.

## Target identification

In addition, target identification becomes an issue if there is any limited visibility – even if the distance is not enough for a full dice shift. If someone performs an action in a model's aim zone the model may need to make a skill check to identify the target:

- Aggressive models need to pass a skill check if they **do not** want to fire.
- Defensive models need to pass a skill check if they **want** to fire, unless they are reacting to being shot at.

The scenario defines which models are aggressive and which are defensive. Typically, criminals, terrorists and similar are aggressive while the police, security guards etc. are defensive. It's all about whether you care about positive target identification or not.

There is a -1 modifier to the skill check for every full limited visibility distance.

Note that target identification is only required for reactions.

### Weapon lights

Weapon lights are effective if the visibility distance caused by darkness is 16" or less. If it's too light, the weapon light offers no bonuses or penalties. Note that this is the general "darkness rating", not the actual distance to a target.

When effective, weapon lights extend limited visibility caused by darkness by 6". However, they also make you easier to spot, offering the same bonus to anyone shooting at the user of a weapon light. In addition they give the user a +2 bonus to target identification skill checks (opponents do not gain this benefit, they are just aiming at your light).

For simplicity, weapon lights are assumed to be always on. Leave it home if you don't want it.

### Night vision equipment

Full night vision goggles or sights change the visibility distance caused by darkness to 24". Has no effect on other causes of limited visibility. Target identification checks still need to be made and the green blur offers no further bonuses.

**Example:** *Mr. L moves through a Japanese garden at night. There is limited visibility in effect, rated at 16". Mr. L moves through the aim zone of a wary yakuza guard 20" away. As the guard is defined as defensive, he needs to pass a skill check to fire, with a -1 penalty for the distance. Fortunately for Mr. L, the guard fails his test and only shouts: "Who's there?" Mr. L decides sneaking time is over, takes aim and shoots at the guard. As he is defined as aggressive, he does not need to make a skill test to fire. He does suffer a -1 dice shift, rolling 3d8 for the attack instead of the usual 3d10 for aimed shot. As the guard ducks into cover, Mr. K curses and runs for the house – through Mr. L's aim zone. Mr. L now needs to pass a skill check to avoid popping a shot at his companion...*



## Designer's notes

Necessity is the mother of all invention. I wrote this game because I wanted to play it and no one else beat me to the punch. It may be due my role-playing heritage, but I have always loved the idea of small scale skirmish games where every man and every bullet counts. I have tried many of the games on the market and while some of them had interesting ideas, none of them had quite the mix I was looking for.

I played tournament paintball on national championship level for 15 years. I've also done IPSC shooting for over 20 years. While I don't claim to be a world class athlete, some of my friends are. I also love tactical

computer games like Laser Squad and X-Com. I wanted to recreate the dynamics of a paintball game in other media – in console gaming the cover-based third person shooters come pretty close but in miniatures gaming I couldn't really find anything quite like it.

Tournament paintball is a sport. The teams are the same size and their equipment is roughly identical. While individual skill does matter, it is a team sport. Victory generally goes to the team that can execute the better plan. It is a game of angles, movement and tactical positioning, not standing in line and "rolling better" or "bringing a better list". That is what I wanted to recreate with Heist. A game where even a mirror setup is still interesting to play. A game that that is won through superior tactics and maybe a little luck, not by picking a rock against your opponent's scissors.

But this is not a sports game. All sports have stupid things that are done only because the rules dictate them and I didn't want to recreate that aspect on a tabletop. It's not even a fashionable military/anti-terrorist game, though it could easily be played as one. The thanks for that goes to IO Interactive's excellent video game Kane & Lynch. It is one of the extremely few video games I've played through multiple times on the hardest difficulty setting. While there are some technical issues, it gets so many ideas right and offers such tactical variety that it is still in my opinion the best video game of its genre. The kick-ass theme and plot don't hurt, but I don't do multiple playthroughs unless the gameplay itself is extremely engaging. Heist is a homage to Kane & Lynch.

I think video games have a lot to offer to miniatures gaming, but we should take the good stuff and ignore the idiotic "video-gamey" stuff...



If I had written this game ten years ago, it would have been chock full of details: phased actions, individual ammo counters by the bullet, extremely detailed weapons and equipment. In fact, for many years I planned to write that game – as a computer-assisted game because I thought that would be the only way to handle all the detail. But I have changed as a gamer. I no longer see extreme detail as a gateway to realism and quite frankly I no longer have much patience with lots of fiddly bits and memorizing. Less is more.

Heist is built around the cover and aiming mechanic. That is the real game and everything else is there just to enable it. I think pace is very important to a game. To convey the hectic pace of a close quarters firefight, I have tried to simplify everything else. Practically all calculations have been eliminated from the system to facilitate speed of play. You just need to identify a few things to get your dice and target number – the typical

cases should be memorized after a couple of games. I have also tried to reduce the number of things to remember to a minimum, hopefully improving the flow of play.

The bane of reaction-based games is their tendency to be reduced to deadlocked stalemates where no one wants to move. This may be realistic in some situations, but it certainly isn't much fun to play. Many of the additional features in Heist are designed as ways to break deadlocks.

The ammo system is one of these mechanisms. With unlimited ammunition it would be too easy to close down choke points with a single aim counter. Now even the best defensive position becomes susceptible to being overwhelmed simply because the defender needs to stop to reload at some point. I did not want to implement an exact ammo counter mainly due to the bookkeeping requirements but I did not want ammo running out due to a single bad roll either. The current system is a compromise where each shot does not have to be counted but the shooter still has some warning before running out of ammo with most weapons.

Incidentally, you may have noticed that shooting without proper aim is more likely to generate ammo counters. This is an intentional side effect. I have found that in less than perfect shooting conditions it is very tempting to compensate for lack of accuracy with volume of fire. You rarely waste ammo on the easy shots, it's that irritating elusive target you could almost hit if you only fired a couple more rounds...

Snap firing is another mechanic for breaking deadlocks. In addition to allowing quick shots against easy targets, it also allows you to shoot from cover in relative safety. This means that even if someone is aiming at your cover, you have a reasonable chance of shooting back. You just need to take it slowly and keep your head down until you can clear the inevitable stun results.



Which brings me to the damage system. The basic system is a pretty simple three-tier affair, but the stun result adds a temporary damage effect. The stun effect has similarities to the regenerating health system of modern video games and it is there for a similar reason: to create incentive to seek cover without permanently penalizing. It can be rationalized as minor flesh wounds, scrapes, near misses and simply the shock of being shot at. It is similar to pinning mechanics in other games but instead of forcing a stop in the action, it gives the player the choice whether to do the sensible thing and seek cover or to continue at reduced effectiveness and increased risk. Sometimes continuing is the sensible thing to do.

Shooting at targets in cover is difficult and most likely to just stun them. This is both to create the incentive and the means to execute tactical maneuvers. If the penalty for cover is too small, the time spent on a flanking move would be better spent just pouring in more fire at slightly lesser odds. Flanking and crossfire are very powerful, but not absolutely necessary. You may get in that lucky shot even against a difficult target, which will open another tactical opportunity to be exploited.

Like any cover-based game, Heist is very sensitive to table setup. Open flat battlefields may suit massed ranks of ancient hoplites, but not this game. If you are designing your own scenarios, you should always make sure that there is enough cover, the distances between different pieces of cover aren't too long and that there are always multiple avenues of approach. Luckily the Heist does not need a very large table to play, so the amount of terrain required should be at a reasonable level.

In addition, if you want to model an "equal" encounter, make sure there is no line of sight to either deployment area within one turn's movement from the other one. Starting with enough separation defuses the issue of determining the starting player.

There is a lot of stuff that isn't in Heist. Some stuff has been left out simply to keep the focus of the game tight. It is not supposed to be a general system doing anything and everything, it is designed to do one thing well. If that's not your thing, you are probably better served by some other game system.

Some stuff has been left out in the name of abstraction and simplification. While it may be fun to drool over a Brownells catalog, it doesn't really make a difference at this abstraction level whether you have a Wilson extractor in your pistol or not. I believe that skill and familiarity with the equipment are deciding factors. At 30 yards it doesn't make much difference whether you have an AimPoint or iron sights, as long as you know how to use them. You can't buy your way to victory – I know, I've tried to.

Some stuff has been left out simply because I either don't believe it has a place in close quarters firefights or I don't believe in it at all. I don't believe you would pop out from behind a trash can to shoot an RPG-7 at a person 5 yards away (and the grenade wouldn't arm anyway). Shooting two pistols looks cool, but it only really works in a John Woo movie. Outside movies and video games, magnum handguns are primarily seen in gun collections and very specialized sports.

There is no provision for picking up equipment from dead combatants. This is mostly because I wanted to avoid video game –like running around trying to pick up powerups, but there is also a realistic justification for this. When you shoot at someone in cover, your hits are concentrated on his head, arms and gun because those are the parts sticking out. Thus there is a very real chance that the weapon itself has suffered damage. It may also be pinned under the dead body or maybe flung under a nearby desk – it certainly won't be floating in the air, highlighted just waiting to be picked up. The first rule of gun fights is to bring a gun. Planning to steal one from someone else is a losing proposition.

As far as the future of Heist is concerned, I plan to write more scenario supplements. These may include some scenario-specific special rules, but in general I think Heist has pretty much all the rules it needs to. It would be easy to add little cool things here and there but the inevitable end result would be unnecessary clutter and burying the basic rules under layer upon layer of exceptions – and I don't believe in rules design by exception.

I hope you enjoy playing Heist as much as I have enjoyed writing it. And despite all my lofty aims, prejudices and hiccups, when you're playing it, it's your game. Feel free to change anything you like. I know you want that gold-plated Desert Eagle...

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