

# Crimson Skies for Savage Worlds

By Clint Black

## Aircraft Creation

All aircraft have 4 basic attributes listed below. They are ranked from Poor to Excellent. Aircraft start with Poor in each attribute and 4 increases to distribute among them. Aircraft can gain up to 2 additional points by taking Glitches (1 point per Glitch). These additional points can also be used to purchase Upgrades on a 1 for 1 basis.

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Speed	6	8	10	12
Toughness/Armor	12(2)	13(2)	13(3)	13(4)
Weaponry (ROF: 3)*	2d8 (AP2)	2d8+1 (AP2)	2d10 (AP2)	2d10 (AP3)
Hard Points	0	2	4	8

\*All aircraft weaponry comes with a base 540 rounds (or 60 autofire attacks). By reducing damage by one level, the amount of ammunition can be doubled. All aircraft weaponry also has a range increment of 5/10/20.

### Glitches:

**Engine Overheating-** This aircraft's engine overheats when stressed. When performing any maneuver with a -4 or worse modifier, this vehicle suffers an additional -2 modifier.

**Fuel Hog-** This aircraft suffers a -2 modifier when rolling for fuel usage.

**Increased Stall Speed-** The aircraft's stall speed (normally  $\frac{1}{4}$  its maximum speed, rounded down) is increased by 1.

**Inferior Targeting-** This aircraft incurs a -1 penalty to either guns or hard point attacks. This Glitch can be taken twice to apply the penalty to both kinds of attack rolls. Obviously, this Glitch cannot be taken for Hard Points if the aircraft has none.

**Location Weakness-** This aircraft has a weak point in a certain location that can have dire effects if hit in combat. The location requires a called shot at -2 to hit, but the GM adds +2 to the roll on the Critical Hit table if a wound is caused.

**Poor Handling-** All Piloting rolls suffer a -1 penalty.

**Weaponry Overheating-** This aircraft's guns are prone to overheating and shutting down until they cool off. On the second and subsequent rounds of continuous usage, roll a d8 with a penalty equal to the total rounds used. On a failure, the guns shut down and can not be used the following round. The guns remain inoperable until a success is rolled.

## Upgrades:

**Decreased Stall Speed-** The aircraft's stall speed (normally  $\frac{1}{4}$  its maximum speed, rounded down) is decreased by 1. This Upgrade can be taken twice for cumulative results. If stall speed is reduced to 0, the aircraft is effectively a VTOL (zeppelin or gyrocopter).

**Fuel Efficient-** This aircraft gains a +2 modifier when rolling for fuel usage.

**Improved Engine-** This aircraft's engine is capable of performing in extreme conditions. It negates 2 points of Piloting penalties. This Tune Up can be taken twice for cumulative effects.

**Improved Handling-** All Piloting rolls gain a +1 bonus.

**Improved Weaponry-** This aircraft uses an advanced gun system. The weapon's ROF is increased by 1.

**Improved Targeting-** This aircraft gains a +1 bonus to either gun or hard point attacks. This Upgrade can be taken twice to apply the bonus to both kinds of attack rolls.

## Aircraft Combat and Piloting

Aircraft combat is handled almost exactly like normal combat with the addition of a few rules and maneuvers to cover the differences.

Movement is based off the aircraft's speed. Aircraft can move any amount up to their maximum speed, but must move at least their stall speed during a round. Aircraft movement is scaled up from character movement by a factor of 10 (1" at aircraft scale equals 10" character scale).

Aircraft take wounds just like characters. A "shaken" result requires the pilot to make a successful Piloting roll or face the results from the Out of Control table. A "wound" on an aircraft piloted by an extra effectively knocks them out of combat (roll for Scrub). An aircraft piloted by a Wild Card is wrecked when it takes its 4th wound. Each wound requires a roll on the Critical Hit table and inflicts a cumulative -1 Piloting penalty to all further rolls until repaired.

## Aircraft Maneuvers:

**Flat-Hatting-** This is a dangerous maneuver, but it can save a pilot's life. Flat-hatting is flying at high speed at barely above ground level. It requires a Piloting roll every round to avoid the various obstacles, including the Earth itself. Unless your opponent is also flat-hatting, you gain a minimum concealment of -2 and other aircraft must make a Notice roll each round to pick out your position.

**Flee-** To escape a fight, a Pilot must win 3 consecutive opposed Piloting rolls against the opponent chasing him with the highest Speed.

**Force-** The pilot must move into a square adjacent to another plane and then makes an opposed Piloting roll with the other pilot. The loser goes Out of Control.

**Perch-** Most air combat takes place on generally the same level as the pilots jockey so one does not get the height advantage. By using this maneuver and getting a raise on an opposed Piloting roll, a pilot can get that height advantage on his opponent. This gives the pilot a +2 bonus to attack rolls. Unlike Tail (below), the pilot must get a raise on his Piloting roll each round to maintain the advantage.

**Rack-** By making a Piloting roll, the pilot performs maneuvers that make his plane harder to hit. A success inflicts a -2 penalty to hit the plane with a raise increasing it to -4. The pilot suffers the same penalties on his attack rolls as well. A failure on this roll causes the plane to go Out of Control.

**Tail-** The pilot must move into a square adjacent to another plane and then makes an opposed Piloting roll with the other pilot. If the initiating pilot can get a raise, they are considered tailing the other plane. The tailing plane moves with the other plane and gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls. It is impossible for a slower plane to tail a faster plane for more than one round.

**Shake a Tail-** A pilot that is being tailed can attempt to lose his pursuer. This is a simple opposed Piloting roll, only the tailing plane gets a +2 bonus. If successful, the plane takes its movement, leaving the tail behind. With a raise, the pilot can choose to reverse positions, and tail his old pursuer. If the tailed plane has a lower stall speed than his pursuer, the pilot gains the difference as a bonus to his Piloting roll.

#### **Fuel Usage:**

Every 100 miles and immediately after any combat, aircraft need to check for fuel usage. This is a d6 roll modified by the plane's fuel level and the distance flown. The roll is at -1 for each 100 miles flown. Each failure on the roll reduces the fuel level by one.

Topped off the Tank	+2
About Half, Give or Take	+1
Might Need to Head Home	+0
Flying on Fumes	-1
Dead Stick	Better hit the silk or find a place to land.

Hard Points can be used to mount extra fuel tanks. These must be mounted in pairs (one on each wing for balance), and each pair adds a +2 bonus to the fuel usage roll.

## Character Creation Notes

The following Feats from the basic book would be very useful in this game.

### **Pilot**

#### **Steady Hands**

**Marksman** (Instead of movement, the character must not make a Piloting roll to get this bonus in flight.)

**Rock and Roll** (Instead of movement, the character must not make a Piloting roll to get this bonus in flight.)

**(Improved) Trademark Weapon** (This Feat can be taken to apply to combat with a particular plane.)

The following new feats are available as well.

### **Ace**

Requirements: Veteran rank, Pilot, and Piloting d10

You can spend a Bennie to make a soak roll for damage taken by any plane you are piloting.

### **Aerobat**

Requirements: Seasoned rank, Pilot, and Piloting d10

You're skilled at spinning, tumbling, and spiraling your plane in flight. You get a +2 bonus to use the Rack maneuver.

### **Barnstormer**

Requirements: Seasoned rank, Pilot, and Piloting d10

You're skilled at flying your aircraft through tight spaces and around obstacles. You get a +2 bonus to Piloting rolls to avoid obstacles and when engaged in the Force maneuver.

### **Certified Expert**

Requirements: Veteran rank, Pilot, and Piloting d10

You're skilled at flying a particular type of aircraft. You get a +2 to Piloting rolls when flying your chosen aircraft. This Feat can be taken multiple times; each time it applies to a different type of aircraft.

### **Push the Envelope**

Requirements: Seasoned rank, Pilot, Piloting d10, and Vigor d8

You're able to withstand G-Forces better than most. You get a +2 to Piloting rolls to Shake a Tail whether you are the pursuer or pursued.

### **Wingman Extraordinaire**

Requirements: Seasoned rank, Pilot, and Shooting d8

You are accomplished at aiding other pilots in combat. You can make a Shooting roll (with all normal modifiers) opposed by a target's Guts. If you win, you lead the target into the sights of another aircraft, giving them a +1 to hit the target (+2 with a raise). If your target rolls a natural 1 on his Guts roll, he actually turns into your attack and you hit. Roll damage normally.

## Aircraft Combat Tables

### Out of Control

Roll	Effect
2	<b>Drop:</b> The aircraft loses altitude. If your opponent did not have it before, they are now treated as having the Perch maneuver on you. If you were Flat-Hatting, you just met an immovable object, the Earth.
3-4	<b>Shimmy:</b> The aircraft begins to shake making it harder to control. -2 to Piloting rolls for 1d6 rounds.
5-9	<b>Jerk:</b> The aircraft makes a sudden movement in an unexpected direction. Move the aircraft 1d6" to either the right or the left (in the direction of the failed maneuver or away from the attack).
10-11	<b>Spin:</b> The aircraft goes into a spin. Each following round the pilot must make a Piloting roll; it takes a raise to pull out of a spin (characters with Push the Envelope receive a +2 to this roll). If the aircraft does not pull out of the spin in 2d6 rounds, it collides with the earth.
12	<b>Auger In:</b> This is similar to a Spin, only the engine gets jammed at full throttle, pulling you to the ground. The same rules as a Spin apply except the Piloting roll is at -2, and the pilot only has 1d6+1 rounds before he hits the earth.

### Critical Hit

Roll	Effect
2	<b>Scratched the Nose Art:</b> The attack just messes up the paint job. Halve Repair costs.
3-4	<b>Chassis:</b> The aircraft just takes a hit to the body with no additional effect.
5-6	<b>Controls:</b> The control system is hit. -2 to all further Piloting rolls.
7-8	<b>Weapon:</b> One of the guns or hard points is hit (determine randomly). Reduce available ammunition by half, rounded down.
9-10	<b>Engine:</b> The engine is hit. Speed is halved.
11	<b>Crew:</b> The shot hit the pilot (or other passenger if more than one, determine randomly). Reroll damage from the attack and apply it to the character. They do get the benefit of the aircraft's armor.
12	<b>Wrecked:</b> The attack ignites a fuel tank or other critical component. The pilot must make an Agility roll at -2 to parachute out.

### Scrub Roll

When an Extra takes a Wound in combat, they are out of the action. After rolling to see if they go Out of Control, they then make a second Piloting roll. If successful, the ship is damaged but still flies, and the pilot exits engagement. If the roll is failed, the aircraft goes down, and the pilot needs to make a successful Agility roll in order to parachute out. If this roll is failed, the pilot is now flying with the angels.

Some disreputable pilots do not honor the rules of engagement. If an Extra that attempts to exit engagement is successfully attacked a second time, their aircraft automatically goes down, and they need to make an Agility roll at -2 to get out.

# Aircraft Equipment

## Specialty Ammunition

### Armor Piercing (AP)

AP rounds are designed to bore deep into a target aircraft's armor; armor piercing rounds are often used to chew through exterior armor, allowing more damaging ordnance to strike at a target plane's innards.

**Cost:** 2x normal      **Effect:** +2 AP

### Dum-Dum (DD)

The opposite of armor piercing ammunition, dum-dums flatten upon impact, inflicting damage across a broader area, with minimal penetration.

**Cost:** 1.5x normal      **Effect:** +4 Damage (-2 to rolls on the Critical Hit table/+2 on Scrub rolls for Extras)

### Ceramic-Coated Magnesium (MG)

MG rounds do very little damage upon impact; however, once ignited (by friction while in flight), MG rounds burn for several minutes, melting through armor and interior surfaces and inflicting a great deal of damage. If a magnesium round hits a fuel tank (after armor has been stripped away by armor piercing or dum-dum rounds), the target plane explodes.

**Cost:** 3x normal      **Effect:** +2 to rolls on the Critical Hit table/-2 on Scrub rolls for Extras

## Hard Point Weaponry

### Aerial Torpedo

Perhaps the most dangerous weapon in the fighter pilot's arsenal is the aerial torpedo. Aerial torpedoes are deployed in inertial attacks; they maintain the same course as the deploying plane when released. As a result, pilots must fly straight and level in order to release the weapon with any accuracy, making them easy prey for enemy fighters. Aerial torpedoes are typically deployed against targets that are heavily armored (such as the engine nacelles of zeppelins) or stationary.

**Range:** 10/20/40

**Damage:** 4d8+8 (AP10) (Medium Burst Template)

**Special:** Aerial torpedoes are comparatively easy to avoid. The attacker must win an opposed contest of his Shooting against the target's Piloting roll to hit. If someone has a held action, they can attempt to shoot an aerial torpedo down before it hits; this is a normal Shooting roll at -4 for the torpedo's size.

### **Armor Piercing Rockets**

Armor piercing (or "AP") rockets are among the most common air-to-air weapons. These long projectiles inflict significant damage by penetrating deep into a target plane. The nose of an AP rocket is thick and sharp, allowing it to slice into armor (though it carries little explosive payload as a result).

**Range:** 5/10/20

**Damage:** 3d8 (AP 10)

### **Beeper and Seeker Rockets**

One of Nikola Tesla's many innovative inventions, beeper rockets are small, armor piercing rockets equipped with transmitters. When fired at a target aircraft, beepers inflict only cosmetic damage, instead attaching themselves to the target and emitting a homing signal for several minutes.

Seeker rockets, on the other hand, follow this homing signal, exploding when they come into close proximity with the beeper. Seeker rockets are complex devices; essentially, they are small, radio-controlled and rocket-powered aircraft. Although the seeker rocket is "smart" enough to move toward the beeper, it is not sophisticated enough to avoid collisions with other obstacles. (Pilots firing a seeker at a target that has been "tagged" with a beeper must have a clear line of sight to the target.)

These weapons are difficult to use, but devastating when used properly. Though high-g maneuvers can throw off a seeker rocket, such aggressive evasive tactics can inflict damage on an aircraft, as well. Because dogs can hear the high-frequency sounds emitted by a beeper rocket, many pilots fly with pet canines stowed in the cargo area (as an early-warning system against this unusual weapon); when the dog starts barking, pilots start making evasive maneuvers.

**Range:** 5/10/20 (Beeper)

**Damage:** 4d8 (AP5) (Seeker)

**Special:** The attacker must make a successful Shooting roll to attach the Beeper. Once this is done, he can release the Seeker rocket at anytime as a free action. As long as the Seeker is within 20' of the Beeper and has line of sight, it will strike its target. The only way to lose a Seeker is to first, be aware of it and second, get a raise on an opposed Piloting roll against the Seeker's Piloting of d8. A failure means the Seeker hits, and success without a raise means you have avoided it for this round but must make another roll next round.

### **Bombs**

Bombs are large, heavy containers of high explosives, typically dropped from diving planes on stationary or slow-moving ground targets.

Bombs are rarely used by most militia or pirate forces, as their heavy weight overstresses aircraft engines and large size increases drag (further reducing speed). Bombs are usually deployed from large aircraft (bombers) or zeppelins.

**Range:** ½Speed/Speed/2xSpeed

**Damage:** 4d10 (AP10) (Large Burst Template)

**Special:** Bombs have no propulsion of their own and are dependent on inertia for range. Therefore their range is based on the speed of the aircraft carrying them. They also can only be used on targets below the aircraft. On fighters, every 2 bombs, rounded up, reduce speed by one rank. If speed would be reduced below Poor, the fighter is overloaded and cannot fly.

### **Drill Rockets**

Another unusual weapon design, the drill rocket punches into aircraft armor, chewing through it to damage or destroy critical systems. The drill rocket is a small, thick projectile, with an impeller located midway down the unit' s body. When fired at a target, the impeller winds an internal high-torque spring.

When the rocket strikes the target, the impact punches spikes into the target to grab hold; the drill head - propelled by the internal spring - then drives into the target, inflicting enormous damage (particularly to structural supports).

**Range:** 5/10/20

**Damage:** 3d8 (AP5)

**Special:** +1 on Critical Hit table.

### **Flak Rockets**

Flak rockets are projectiles that travel at high speed and for a short distance before exploding into a cloud of shrapnel.

The shrapnel does very little damage unless the weapon detonates close to a target aircraft; typically flak rockets are used to force targets into the path of other, more damaging anti-aircraft weapons.

**Range:** 2/5/10

**Damage:** 3d8+2 (Small Burst Template)

**Special:** Any target within the template must make a Piloting roll or go Out of Control even if they take no damage from the attack.

### **Flare Rockets**

Flare rockets are medium-range weapons, exploding in a blinding phosphorous flash. Pilots unfortunate enough to be facing the flare are blinded, making them easier prey for enemies or causing them to crash.

**Range:** 5/10/20

**Effect:** Use the Medium Burst Template; any target within must make a Vigor roll or be blinded for 1 round. A natural 1 means the target is blind for 1d6 rounds and Shaken as well. With a raise on Shooting, the roll is at -2.

### **High-Explosive Rockets**

High-explosive (or HE) rockets detonate upon impact with a target, driving shards and fragments of metal deep into the target and igniting anything flammable (fuel tanks, for example).

Given the strength of modern aircraft armor, HE rockets are most effective when fired at portions of a target that have already been torn up by other ordnance, allowing the explosion to take place in the aircraft' s interior.

**Range:** 5/10/20

**Damage:** 4d8 (+1 on Critical Hit table)

### **Sonic Rockets**

Upon detonation, a sonic rocket creates a burst of high-frequency noise that stuns or deafens pilots. This effect makes it easier for attackers to destroy the target, reducing the chances that the affected pilot can evade or respond to an attack.

Sonic rockets inflict no damage to target aircraft, and have limited range. In addition, sonic rockets are known to occasionally explode while still carried on a plane' s hardpoints; typically, this type of weapon is only carried by pirates or smugglers.

**Range:** 5/10/20

**Effect:** Use the Medium Burst Template. Any target within must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken. With a raise on Shooting, the roll is at -2.

**Special:** If a pilot carrying a sonic rocket rolls a 1 for any Shooting roll, the rocket explodes on his hardpoint. If one sonic rocket explodes, there is a 3 in 4 chance any sonic rocket beside it explodes and a 1 in 4 chance that a sonic rocket on the other wing explodes. This chain reaction is known to pilots as the "sonic boom."

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