

GURPS 4e - Combat Examples

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[Why are you doing this?](#)

The purpose of all these examples is to help people learn to play GURPS 4th edition, myself included. The core mechanics of GURPS combat are simple and elegant, but they also allow for a *lot* of extra details and options - sometimes those extra options can be a bit intimidating until one sees them in practice.

[How many examples do you plan to make available?](#)

I don't actually have a set number in mind - I basically just plan to keep adding examples until I run out of steam. That will likely be quite a while, as creating these examples is currently the only outlet for my gaming energy. Could be dozens, could be a hundred, we'll see.

[Are you taking example submissions from others?](#)

Not just yet, but probably in the near future. Once I do, I'll post a template for submissions, to make sure all the examples are using the same format I've already started with.

Naturally all credit for posted examples will go to the original author. If you're just itching to submit right now and want to take your chances, you can email to the address below - but it's going to take me some time to get to other people's examples.

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[Why are you including so many optional rules?](#)

I'm purposely trying to include as many optional rules as possible, to give exposure to the widest variety of options. In actual play, it's unlikely that most groups would be doing this, so those combats would go even quicker.

I'm not proposing that every GM has to use every option available or only the Basic rules exactly as written - but it's always good to have a clear understanding of what the rules *are* before you ignore or break them.

[Will you ever include rules from other GURPS books besides just Basic? \(Martial Arts, High-Tech, etc.\)](#)

I originally thought I would, now I'm not so sure. The amount of new and expanded options just in the **Martial Arts** book is significant, almost an entire second combat system layered on the

first.

If I do, it won't be for quite a while.

[Can I download these examples in a print-friendly format?](#)

Though not originally intended for offline viewing, I have tried to reformat the examples as PDFs to make it easier to print and share them. They can be downloaded individually from each example's page, or [collected together in a single .zip file](#) (which also includes this FAQ and the [Directory](#) page).

[Who died and made you arbiter of what's official GURPS and what's not?](#)

I'm not trying to be the authority on what is or isn't "official" GURPS - I'm simply trying to find out how the rules work exactly as written, so I can make sure my own understanding is correct, and maybe make it a little easier for others to learn.

That does include, though, making every possible effort to ensure that the examples as posted work the way they should according to the published GURPS 4th edition rules.

[What are some handy page references relating to combat?](#)

The following list of page references has been very helpful in minimizing how much flipping around I have to do - it is not even remotely exhaustive, and will continue to grow as I work on more examples:

- Bleeding (B420)
- Deceptive Attack (B369)
- Dice Conversions (B269)
- Disarm (B401)
- Dodge and Drop (B377)
- Dodging Rapid Fire (B375)
- Feverish Defense (B357)

- Grappling (B370)
 - Hurting Yourself (B379)
 - Kicking (and falling down) (B274)
 - Knee Strike (B404)
 - Knockback (B378)
 - Knockdown and Stunning (B420)
 - Lethal Strike (B404)
 - Mighty Blows (B357)
 - Neck Snap (B404)
 - Rapid Fire (B373)
 - Retreat (B377)
 - Scatter (B414)
 - Sprinting (B354)
 - Unconsciousness (recovering from) (B423)
 - Unspecified attacks default to Torso (B369)
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[What are some of the combat-related issues you've already explored?](#)

Below are some of the things I've learned since starting this project, or already knew and consider important to keep in mind.

[Can you Disarm or Parry with a weapon immediately following its Ready maneuver?](#)

I wasn't sure about this, but after a [long discussion on the GURPS forums](#) it was clarified to me that, yes, you **can** attempt to Disarm a weapon or Parry with a weapon *immediately following a declaration to Ready it*.

A Ready doesn't take a full second to resolve any more than an Attack or most other maneuvers takes a full second - as soon as you choose the Ready maneuver and your turn ends, that weapon is out and ready, and can be used to Parry, or can be the target of a Disarm attempt.

[If you are Grappling someone and are subsequently Stunned, do you lose your Grapple?](#)

The answer to this question is 'No, you do **not** lose your Grapple if you become Stunned'. The

rationale for this is B371 - discussing attempts to 'Break Free' after being grappled, it says "If your foe is stunned, he rolls at -4". If being stunned caused you to release a successful grapple, there would be no need for such a modifier.

[Do you always have to match your target's Posture when Grappling?](#)

This one was also discussed quite a bit [on the GURPS forums](#), particularly regarding Judo Throws.

My confusion stemmed from a couple of somewhat conflicting passages. The description of the Judo Throw on MA75 says that you do not lose your grapple on an opponent after a successful throw, only on a critical failure. But B370 says that "to grapple a prone, kneeling, or sitting opponent you must kneel or lie down yourself".

The tentative approach I'm using is that if you have an opponent Grappled and Throw him (so that he's now Prone), you can remain Standing and maintain the Grapple; but if you do *not* have your opponent Grappled and are attempting to, you must match his Posture.

[Can you always throw a punch?](#)

One key thing to always remember is that a Punch requires you to be in Close Combat - it only has a Reach of "C". You do *not* have to be in Close Combat for a Kick - it has a Reach of "C, 1".

[Which maneuvers require Movement Points?](#)

The only maneuvers that require the spending of Movement Points are Attack, Move and Attack, All-Out Attack, and All-Out Defense (Increased Dodge) - the one-hex Step that is part of most other maneuvers does not spend Movement Points.

[When can you let go of a Grapple?](#)

If you are Grappling an opponent, you can let go of either one or both hands as a free action - but only on *your* turn (B370). So, if you are Grappling someone with both hands and he attacks you, you can **not** let go with one hand in order to Parry.

[When should you use a Deceptive Attack?](#)

Basically, any time your effective skill is over 16, there's no real reason to not use a Deceptive Attack to lower it to 16 - because a 17 or 18 is going to fail or critically fail regardless.

[Do Retreats always allow you to move back 1 hex?](#)

If you are adding a Retreat to your active defense against a Grapple and fail the defense, you do *not* move back 1 hex as normal - the successful Grapple prevents the Move.

[How do firearm scopes work?](#)

The rules for firearm scopes and how they confer their bonus after an Aim maneuver are on B412, "With a *fixed-power* scope, you must aim for at least as many seconds as the scope's bonus. With a *variable-power* scope, you may Aim for fewer seconds, but this reduces your bonus by a like amount."

So, for example, using a rifle with a fixed-power scope and an Accuracy of "6+3" (that is, the weapon has an Accuracy of 6, the scope gives a bonus of +3), the bonuses would accrue as follows:

Turn 1: Aim - get +6 for weapon Accuracy (total +6, no bonus from scope yet)

Turn 2: Aim - further +1 for Aiming (total +7)

Turn 3: Aim - further +1 for Aiming, +3 for scope (total +11)

Turn 4: Aim - no further bonuses, total bonus is +11

A variable-power scope set to "+3" would function identically to a fixed-power scope of +3; a variable-power scope set to "+5" (giving the weapon an Accuracy of "6+5") would function identically to a fixed-power scope of +5, namely:

Turn 1: Aim - get +6 for weapon Accuracy (total +6, no bonus from scope yet)
Turn 2: Aim - further +1 for Aiming (total +7)
Turn 3: Aim - further +1 for Aiming (total +8)
Turn 4: Aim - no further Aiming bonus possible (total +8)
Turn 5: Aim - +5 for scope (total +13)
Turn 6: Aim - no further bonuses, total bonus is +13

Also remember that "the combined bonus from all targeting systems...cannot exceed the weapon's base Accuracy" (B364).

[For the purposes of halving Move and Dodge, when *exactly* are you at 1/3 HP?](#)

This was discussed here on the [GURPS Forums](#), seeking clarification on which of the following examples is correct - assuming a character with HP 10:

A) $1/3$ of 10 = 3.3, rounded down to 3 - "less than 3" is 2, so Move and Dodge are halved at HP 2

B) $1/3$ of 10 = 3.3 - "less than 3.3" is 3, so Move and Dodge are halved at HP 3

The correct interpretation is **B)** - there is no reason to round off at all, so the halving of Move and Dodge occur at the following thresholds:

HP 09, when HP = 2

HP 10, when HP = 3

HP 11, when HP = 3

HP 12, when HP = 3

HP 13, when HP = 4

HP 14, when HP = 4

HP 15, when HP = 4

HP 16, when HP = 5

etc.

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