ROAD WARS
VEHICLE COMBAT EVOLVED

Vehicle based combat rules supplement for D&D 5e
Heavy Lifting Built By Trekiros (Space UnJammed) Homebrew
iteration for ground encounters by Idealien

Introduction

Vehicle combat in D&D usually tries to emulate Star Trek: the players incarnate a group of bridge officers all cooperatively piloting a **single, huge, slow ship**.

This has several drawbacks. First, you would need to teach players an entirely different system. Secondly, players who want to play melee characters might feel constrained by the need to stay on the same ship as everyone else. Third, these minigames can often end up being repetitive, drawn-out, and generally un-fun.

This document offers a different approach, which emulates the aesthetic of Star Wars instead, with a focus on **numerous, fast dogfighters**, like a swarm of fighter jets being deployed from a capital ship.

When combat breaks out, most participants will jump onto small personal vehicles and mounts, and spread out like they would in a regular combat encounter - except instead of using a 5-foot-scale, this dogfighting encounter uses a 30-foot-scale.

This big, slow vehicles are still there, and they can still do some interesting things, but they aren't the only deciding factor anymore - just a very interesting part of the battlemap. And players can use their knowledge of how combat usually works, rather than have to learn an entirely new system.

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Credits

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Vehicle Rules Glossary

Here is a short glossary of new mechanics used throughout this document:

Vehicle. The vehicles in this document are presented in the form of stat blocks. They follow the same rules as mounts: they can roll initiative and act independently, or act on the turn of their pilot (see below). Unless it has a pilot, a vehicle automatically fails all saving throws.

Pilot. A creature can use its action to become a vehicle's pilot until the start of its next turn. If they do, they can now make the vehicle's saving throws in its stead: they use their own ability score and proficiency bonus, and can apply various abilities such as the barbarian's *danger sense*, or the ranger's *evasion* to the save.

Stations. Vehicles and mounts can have stations, which are actions that a creature can take if it is currently on the vehicle or mount that provides it. Each station can only be used once per round, unless stated otherwise.

Mishaps. Whenever a vehicle takes enough damage, it might trigger a mishap. The types of mishaps and when they happen depends on the type of vehicle.

Vehicle Attunement Slots. This document includes a number of magic items which require attunement by a vehicle. These magic items are too large for a creature to carry around in their backpacks, but can give a vehicle some interesting additional abilities.

However, a given vehicle can only be attuned to a certain number of magic items. Attuning a vehicle to a magic item takes 8 hours.

Collective Vehicles

These vehicles are large enough to host an entire crew.

Caravandal [1]

A rugged, steel-plated juggernaut cobbled together from salvaged carts, siege weapons, and armored plating. Often used by merchant convoys or wasteland raiders, Caravandals are versatile landships that carry both cargo and chaos across the badlands.

Caravandal
Gargantuan vehicle

Armor Class 15 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 400 (damage threshold 15)
Speed 30 ft fly (hover)
Attunement Slots 6
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)
Value 30,000 gp

Mishaps

Every time the Caravandal takes 50 or more damage at once, roll 1d4 - the Caravandal suffers the corresponding mishap until it is repaired. The Caravandal can suffer from the same mishap multiple times.

1) Engine compromised.
The vehicle's speed is reduced by 30.

2) Cannons destroyed.
The ship's Salvo action deals 1d10 less damage.

3) Smoke.
A *stinking cloud* (as per the spell, DC 15) appears on the ship.

4) Shake.
Each creature on the deck of the Caravandal must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be thrown overboard.

Stations

Ballista x2. *Large ranged martial weapon, 3d10 piercing damage, ranged (120/480ft), loading.*

Actions

Salvo (recharges after 1 minute). Each creature and vehicle in a 60 foot wide, 900 foot long line starting from the Caravandal, that is not behind cover, must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.
A huge target takes double damage, and a gargantuan target takes quadruple damage.

Wanderwagon [2]

These lightweight wagons ride low to the ground on worn wheels and arcane stabilizers. They're the commoner's ride—cheap, adaptable, and often repurposed into bandit rigs. Whether it's a lone wanderer or a pack of scavengers, the Wanderwagon is their go-to.

Wanderwagon
Huge vehicle

Armor Class 15 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 200 (damage threshold 10)
Speed 60 ft fly (hover)
Attunement Slots 2
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)
Value 2,000 gp

Mishaps

100 hp left. The Wanderwagon is greatly damaged. Its speed is halved.

Stations

Ballista x2. *Large ranged martial weapon, 3d10 piercing damage, ranged (120/480ft), loading.*

Actions

Salvo (recharges after 1 minute). Each creature and vehicle in a 60 foot wide, 900 foot long line starting from the galleon, that is not behind cover, must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.
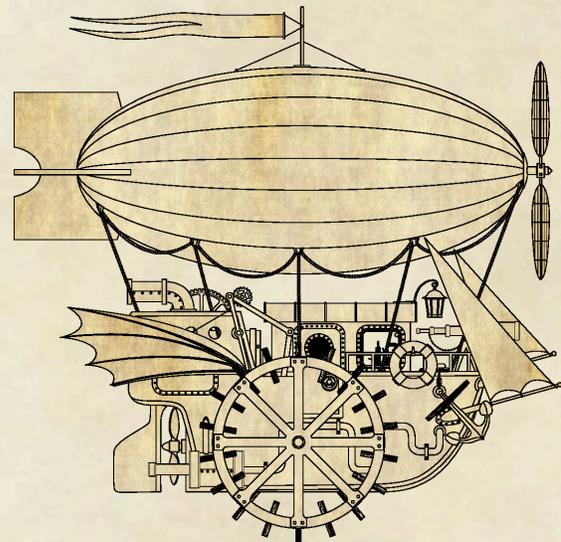
Dunebugger [1]

A lumbering, dome-shelled transport built atop the remains of a petrified giant beetle. These mobile hideouts are fortified homes-on-wheels, slow but resilient, often used by nomads or druids who coax the living core to keep moving with food or ritual chants.

DUNEBUGGER
*Gargantuan Monstrosity

Armor Class 15 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 300 (damage threshold 20)
Speed 30 ft fly (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

Skills stealth +5
Attunement Slots 4
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)
Value 2,000 gp (+100gp worth of food per week)

Stone Camouflage. While the Dunebugger remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a rock formation.
Organic Vehicle. The Dunebugger doesn't need a pilot to make saving throws, but can attune to magic items which require attunement from a vehicle.

STATIONS

Ballista x2. Large ranged martial weapon, 3d10 piercing damage, ranged (120/480ft), loading.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Dunebugger makes two pincer attacks.
Pincer. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d8+5) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a large or smaller creature or vehicle, it is grappled (escape DC 15). The crab has two claws, each of which can grapple only one creature.

Withdraw. The Dunebugger shell is reconfigured into a purely defensive posture. It is resistant to all damage threshold until it moves or takes any action.

Personal Vehicles

These vehicles are just large enough for one or two riders, and they don't have any of the amenities that would be required to live on them for extended periods of time. They're deployed from the collective vehicles during battle, because their speed allows them to be more versatile and maneuverable.

Hexcycle [2]

A six-wheeled sleek personal vehicle powered by rune-etched gears and arcane cores. Some resemble serpent-headed sleds or wolf-shaped rides; others mimic racing beetles or warhorses. They're a common choice for scouts, messengers, or lone adventurers.

Hexcycle

Large Vehicle

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 100 (damage threshold 15)
Speed 150ft fly (hover)
Attunement Slots 1
Challenge 1 (200 XP)
Value 500 gp

Arcane Drive. The Weaver has 3 arcane drive points, which it regains if it stays stationary for 1 hour. Arcane Drive Points can be used in various ways

Personal Vehicle. The Hexcycle can be piloted as a bonus action.

Stations

Ballista. Large ranged martial weapon, 3d10 piercing damage, ranged (120/480ft), loading.. Before making the attack, you can choose to spend 1 Arcane Drive Point. If you do, the ttack deals an additional 3d6 lightning damage.

Saddle. Spend 1 Arcane Drive Point. The Hexcycle's speed is doubled until the start of your next turn.

Goblin Crotch Rocket [2]

A single-use, barely-controlled missile with handlebars. A goblin invention that is too fast for safety—but perfect for chaos. Crafted from simple scrap metal and magic crystals, its design makes it a single-use vehicle.

Goblin Rocket

Medium Vehicle

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 10
Speed 0
Attunement Slots 0
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)
Value 30 gp

Personal Vehicle. The Goblin Rocket can be piloted as a bonus action.

Stations

Ignite. The Goblin Rocket gains a flying speed of 600 feet. However, after being ignited, if it moves less than 600 feet on its turn, it explodes. Each creature within 10 feet of it must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

Vehicle Magic Items

Below are a list of example magic items one might find on a ship. Most collective vehicles equipped for battle, such as caravandals for example, will usually include at least one uncommon magic item. Rare and very rare magic items are meant more as quest rewards that the players will have to actively look for.

Arboreal Membrane [N/A]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a gargantuan vehicle.
The membrane permeats the outer surface of the vehicle. The vehicle now counts as a plant creature (as such, it can become the target of spells such as *cure wounds*, *haste*, or *invisibility*). The vehicle now uses the *treant*'s save bonuses if it needs to make a saving throw, and gains access to its' actions.

Arcane Lens [2]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle.
A creature on the vehicle this lens is installed on, can channel any spell with a range of 30ft or more through this magical telescope. If they do, the spell's range is doubled.

Black Star Generator [1]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle
This strange weapon acts as a new Station for the vehicle. A creature can use it to create a black pulsating orb within 30 feet of the vehicle, which stays in place for the next 1 minute. Whenever a creature or object other than the vehicle attuned to this item moves within 30 feet of the orb, the orb detonates in a small supernova.

    Each creature and vehicle within 30 feet of the orb, that is not behind cover, must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d10 force damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save. A huge target takes double damage, and a gargantuan target takes quadruple damage.

Energy Shield [2]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle
The vehicle gains 100 Temporary Hit Points. While it has these hit points, creatures on the vehicle have total cover from all harmful effects originating more than 30 feet away from the vehicle. If the vehicle loses all its temporary hit points, it can regain them by attuning to this item again over the course of 8 hours.

Extradimensional Space [N/A]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle
The vehicle contains one or more doors to a permanent demiplane in another plane of existence. The demiplane is a cube-shaped empty space, up to 100 feet on a side.

Grasping Tendrils [1]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle
This strange weapon acts as a new Station for the vehicle. A creature can use it to grapple a creature or vehicle within 150 feet that is no more than one size larger than the vehicle this is attuned to. A creature can escape this grapple as normal (escape DC 18), and the grapple also ends if the tendrils are destroyed (AC 10, 50 hit points). If destroyed, the tendrils regrow after 24 hours.

Magma Mortar [1]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle.
This mortar acts as a new Station for the vehicle. A creature can use it to shoot a mortar shell at a point within 900 feet of the vehicle. At the start of the creature's next turn, each creature and vehicle within 60 feet of this point must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4d10 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. A huge target takes double damage, and a gargantuan target takes quadruple damage.

Psionic Nexus [N/A]
Large Wondrous Item, Very Rare, requires attunement by a vehicle and a spellcaster.
The vehicle becomes an extension of the creature attuned to it. Whenever the attuned creature casts a spell with a range of self while it is on the vehicle, it can choose to extend the casting time by 1 round. If it does, the spell now originates from the vehicle. For example, if the creature casts *dimension door*, the vehicle and every creature on it are teleported 500 feet away.
(Rules reminder: casting a spell with a casting time longer than 1 action requires concentration)

Storm Generator [1]
Large Wondrous Item, Rare, requires attunement by a vehicle
This strange device can be used to cast *control weather*. Once this ability has been used, it can't be used for the next 24 hours.

Twinned Translocators [3]
Large Wondrous Item, Rare, requires attunement by one or two vehicles.
A pair of runic circles that are magically linked, and whenever a creature steps on one, they are instantly teleported to the other, so long as the other circle is in the same plane of existence.

Spoiler [1]
Large Wondrous Item, Uncommon, requires attunement by a vehicle
The vehicle's speed is increased by 30 feet.

Mounts

These vehicles are equal part monster and machine. Their speed and abilities makes them fierce opponents, and even fiercer companions. Only one or two humanoids can mount these creatures at a time.

Spider Rig [1]

A rare arcane ride that has combined an arcane engine with the planar silk glands of a Phase Spider to allow the Spider Rig to flicker in and out of sight as it skims the battlefield on shadowglass wheels. Used by assassins, spies, or arcane courier guilds to get in and out before anyone can blink.

Spider Rig
Large Monstrosity

- **Armor Class** 13
- **Hit Points** 41 (5d12 + 8)
- **Speed** 90ft fly (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

Saving Throws Dex +7
Skills stealth +5
Attunement Slots 1
**Senses** truesight 60ft. (blind beyond this range)
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)
Value 1,000 gp

Evasion. If the Spider Rig is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it, and the creatures on it, instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Actions

Invisibility (1/short rest). The Spider Rig, and every creature on it, becomes invisible for the next 1 minute. This effect ends early for a creature which moves more than 30 feet away from the Spider Rig, or if the Spider Rig takes any damage.
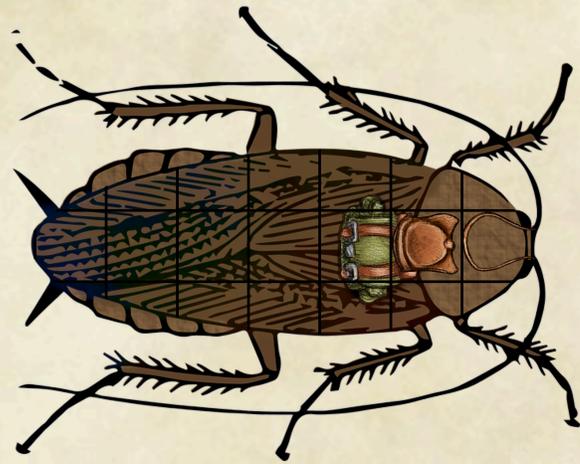
Ol' Buggy Bastard [1]

This twitchy monstrosity is all jagged armor and grime overtop of a giant roach husk. It's cobbled together from discarded war machines and alchemical tubes, always in motion and hard to control. Only the bold (or foolish) dare ride Ol' Buggy Bastard into battle, but those who do are sure to get their money.

Ol' Buggy Bastard
Huge monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 51 (6d12+12)
Speed 90 ft., climb 90 ft., fly 90ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	1 (-5)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances Fire, Poison
Attunement Slots 1
Senses blindsight 30 ft.
Challenge 1 (200 XP)
Value 100 gp

Glide. In an environment with gravity, the giant space roach cannot fly upwards.

Actions

Cannon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) poison damage.

Stations

Saddle. Make a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. On a success, the roach takes an extra action this turn.

Wyrmburner [1]

The elite war-rig: sleek, scaled plating, enchanted engines that snarl like the dragon beast which was harvested to create it. Anyone who wants to drive it must attune to the dragon essence at its' core. The Wyrmburner is a thunderous symbol of power almost impossible to steal yet unforgiving to master.

Wyrmburner

Huge monstrosity, any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 105 (10d12+40)
Speed fly 90ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +8
Damage Resistances one of Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Poison
Attunement Slots 2
Senses blindsight 30 ft.
Languages understands Draconic but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)
Value 2,500 gp

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) damage of the same type the drake is resistant to.

Breath Weapon (recharges 6). The Wyrmburner uses one of the following breath weapons:

Elemental Breath. The Wyrmburner exhales in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) damage of the same type the Wyrmburner is resistant to on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Smoke Screen. The Wyrmburner exhales a thick cloud of smoke in a 30-foot-radius sphere around itself. It and its rider can then immediately take the Hide action.

Stations

Saddle. Make a DC 20 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. On a success, you can roll to recharge the drake's breath weapon one additional time this round, or the drake can take an extra action.

Bonus Class Features

A player character's class features aren't originally designed for mounted combat or vehicle combat. These bonus class features help bridge the gap between regular combat and space combat, by ensuring player characters get to do the things their characters are great at regardless of whether they're in a 20-foot-wide room, or in the void of space.

Artificer

Patch-Up Work 3rd level

When you finish a long rest, if you are on a vehicle, you can repair it. The vehicle regains a number of hit points up to 10 times your Intelligence modifier.

As an action, you can remove one mishap currently affecting a vehicle. Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Barbarian

Air Drop 3rd level

When you jump off of a moving vehicle or mount, your speed and your long jump's maximum distance are increased by half of the vehicle or mount's current speed, until the end of your turn. Additionally, if jumping from a vehicle or mount would cause you to take falling damage lower than twice your barbarian level, you are not knocked prone.

Bard

Battle Ballad 3rd level

Once per long rest when you are on a moving vehicle you can use your an extra Bardic Inspiration as a part of an Attack action, instead of as a bonus action. The creature you inspire can add the die to its next vehicle-based action. At level 5 you can a second extra Bardic Inspiration dice per long rest.

Cleric

Divine Stabilizer 2nd level

When you're operating a vehicle or mount, you can Channel Divinity towards it. As a reaction when the vehicle or mount would fail a handling check or saving throw, you can expend a use of Channel Divinity to succeed instead.

Sanctified Chassis 5th level

You can cast Sanctuary or Shield of Faith on a vehicle or mount, treating it as a valid target. These spells last for their full duration even if the vehicle moves or is piloted by others.

Fighter

Road Sentinel 1st level

While you are the only creature on a mount or a vehicle, the reach of your opportunity attacks increases to 30 feet.

Heave Ho 5th level

When you use your action to use a vehicle's station, you can use that station twice, or use two different stations of that vehicle.

The number of stations you can use increases to three when you reach 11th level as a Fighter, and to four when you reach 20th level as a Fighter.

Monk

Astral Step 2nd level

When you use Step of the Wind in any environment, you gain a flying speed equal to double your speed until the end of your turn.

Deflect Greater Missile 3rd level

You can use your Deflect Missile feature when the vehicle or mount you are on is hit by a ranged weapon attack, protecting it from damage instead of yourself. If you throw the projectile back, it has the same range as the original attack's.

Paladin

Radiating Aura 7nd level

On the vast empty desert planes, your aura radiates without obstruction. While you are on a vehicle or mount, your aura's range is increased to 30 feet. At 18th level, it is increased to 180 feet.

Ranger

Rough Rider 3rd level

If you are mounted on a creature, your mount's speed is increased by 60 feet.

Rogue

Crackshot 2nd level

You can use a bonus action to grant advantage to your next attack if it uses a vehicle's weapon, before the start of your next turn.

Cunning Maneuver 2nd level

Your mount can take a bonus action to take the dash, hide, or disengage action.