

# ORBIT Link

A Skirmish Game by @DonnieDynamo

V2.0 04/2021

## Narrative

The Old Ones have been gone for three thousand years, and with them furthest corners of the galaxy slipped away into darkness. Those that remained are trapped in the core worlds without access to their ancestral homes. The newly developed Bovan Drive will change this. Exponentially extending the reach of space travel, this drive promises to return worlds once lost to time and space.

In the long years since The Going the denizens of the Galactic Core grew factional and greedy. Violent conflict is imminent. The new worlds are too scattered to be policed centrally by the Galactic Navy. A compromise must be made. A decree is broadcast on all channels.

“Hundreds of probes equipped with Bovan Drives and high powered data Uplinks are being sent to the frontier worlds. Each planet and its resources will be managed by the first party to transmit data through the planet’s activated Uplink. A mechanized ground presence will be required to transmit a successful signal.

Any world that is occupied but not registered via the Uplinks is subject to action by the Galactic Navy. Standard taxes and resource allocation legislation applies.”

Colonists, zealots, corporate interests, and paramilitary groups race to dispatch Link Teams to the frontier. Each team requires an automated O.R.B.I.T.s to connect with the G.N. Uplinks being scattered to the stars. These armored robotic frames transport cumbersome communication equipment and provide fire support for the Link Teams caught in armed conflict.

## Overview

O.R.B.I.T. Link is a game for two players.

When rules conflict, maximize damage. The Frontier is a dangerous place and no team is truly equipped to handle the unique combination of opposing interests and an alien biosphere.

## Setup

**Measurements:** All measurements are taken from the base of a game element. If an element does not have a base agree with your opponent on where measurements will be taken from.

**True Line of Sight (LOS):** Line of Sight is determined from the active unit’s perspective. If the target model is at least 50% obscured from view it receives **Cover**.

**The Drop Zone:** The game is played on a 3’x3’ surface densely covered with 8-12 pieces of terrain.

**Terrain:** Any board elements other than Units and Uplink Stations are considered terrain. Terrain may provide cover following the LOS Rules, as well as additional benefits depending on its type and the current scenario. Terrain generally exists in the following varieties though more are possible.

- **Flora:** Any small natural feature or cluster of vegetation. Forests, bogs, small ponds, and logs are all examples of Flora.
- **Structures:** Any equipment or facilities present in the Drop Zone are Structures. These include equipment dropped from the Link Ship as well as any infrastructure created by the planet's original inhabitants.

**Uplink Stations:** Uplink stations can be represented by a token or a physical board element. All Uplink stations must use the same base size. Place an Uplink at the center of the board. Players alternate placing four more Uplinks, each more than 6" apart but within 9" of the center token.

**Link Teams:** Each player's force consists of two O.R.B.I.Ts, one Link Leader, and four troopers. Ideally an O.R.B.I.T. miniature is 3-4 times larger than a Trooper.

**Activation Pool:** Activation Tokens are generated by the units in play at the start of the round. These activations can be freely applied to any friendly unit unless noted otherwise. In addition to the chart below, each player generates a bonus token while they have a link leader in play.

Unit Type	Generated Activations
Trooper	1 Token
Link Leader	1 Token
O.R.B.I.T.	2 Tokens

## Playing the Game

**Drop In:** Players Roll off, the winner choosing a board edge as their deployment zone. Players alternate placing their units wholly within 6" of their board edge.

**Mission:** At the end of each round players get one point for each Uplink they are securing. Round 1 the center token is worth 3 points instead. In later rounds assign each Token a number and roll a D6, the matching token is worth 3 points this round. At the end of Round 4 whoever has the most points wins. A player immediately wins if both opposing O.R.B.I.T. units are destroyed.

**Round Start:** Players roll off, the winner chooses one of their units and activates it. Players alternate activating units until all activations are spent, then the round ends.

**Activations:** Each unit can be activated any number of times in a round by spending an activation token. O.R.B.I.T.S. only take one Action per token. An Infantry activation includes two actions, one of which must be a move.

**Pass:** When a player has fewer activations remaining they may pass, forcing the opponent to take multiple consecutive activations.

## General Actions

- **Move:** The unit moves up to 6" in any direction, vertical moves have a penalty of -1".
- **Attack:** Target a unit within Range (**RNG**) and **LOS**.
- **Coordinate:** The active infantry unit performs a special action with a friendly O.R.B.I.T. The range of this action measures the space between the active unit and O.R.B.I.T.

## Coordinate Special Actions

- **Tether - Range 9":** The unit moves into base contact with a friendly O.R.B.I.T. This can fulfill a mandatory **Move** but requires clear **LOS** to the O.R.B.I.T.
- **Spotter - Range 9":** The O.R.B.I.T. makes an Indirect Fire **Attack**, measuring Range and **LOS** from the active unit.
- **Boost - Range 0":** The active unit in base contact with the O.R.B.I.T. is placed on top of a terrain element within 6" of the O.R.B.I.T.
- **Screen - Range 6":** The active unit's signature is obscured by the O.R.B.I.T.'s energies, it can not be targeted this turn by **Spotter** actions.
- **Tracer:** Place a marker on an enemy unit in range. The next time an O.R.B.I.T. attack that unit they may re-roll 1D6.

**Securing an Uplink:** A player secures an Uplink when they have the most Infantry units within 2" of the Uplink token.

**Shared Data:** When a unit would roll dice, add +1 to the result if there is a friendly unit of the same type within 6" and clear **LOS**.

## Resolving Attacks

When an **Attack** action is taken the following steps apply:

- Confirm Target Type; For Armored the attack is (**AA**) or for Infantry (**AI**)
- Roll 2D6, if the value matches or exceeds the attacking unit's attribute (AA or AI) the attack is a success.
- If the target is in **Cover** it's player rolls a D6. On a 5+ the unit avoids any damage and the attack ends.
- Apply Damage to the target equal to the Attacker's **DMG** attribute. When the damage on a unit meets or exceeds its Frame (**FRM**) attribute the unit is removed from play.

## Melee Combat

When in base contact with an enemy unit an O.R.B.I.T. may use its destructive size for a melee attack in place of shooting.

The following bonuses apply:

- Melee attacks using **(AI)** ignore **Cover** and receive a +1 to the roll. The rest of the attack is resolved normally.
- Melee attacks using **(AA)** receive a +1 to the roll, a successful attack also pushes the target up to 1" away from the attacker.

## Attribute Table

**Attributes:** Attributes are defined by Unit Name. The table below shows the starting Attributes of each unit.

Unit Name	Type	RNG	AA	AI	DMG	FRM
Trooper	Infantry	12	8+	7+	1	2
Link Leader	Infantry	9	7+	7+	2	3
O.R.B.I.T.	Armor	9	6+	7+	2	10

## O.R.B.I.T. Rules and Exceptions

**Move:** An O.R.B.I.T. may never move vertically. It may cross over friendly troopers and small terrain but may never end its movement with it's base overlapping them.

**Cover:** O.R.B.I.T.S. never benefit from **Cover**.

**Indirect Attack:** Indirect attacks are calculated from the position of the **Spotter**. Such attacks suffer a -1 to **AA, AI**, and **DMG** but ignore **Cover**.

**Protect and Support:** Friendly units in base contact with an O.R.B.I.T. are in **Cover**.

## Reactor Meltdown

When an O.R.B.I.T. is destroyed its reactor detonates to prevent enemies from salvaging valuable data banks.

All units with 3" of the destroyed O.R.B.I.T. must roll a d6, on a result of 6 the unit takes **1 DMG**.

## Factions

Each player may choose one of the following factions for their Link team:

### Cult of the Galvan Eye:

Scouring the frayed edges of known space for their long lost prophet, the Galvan Eye invests heavily in optics and sensory devices. Ceaselessly analyzing each new world for traces of The Ringed One, their Link Teams are quick to engage at maximum range to preserve the Drop Zone for analysis.

**Enhanced Optics:** Infantry of this faction add 3" to RNG values when attacking.

**Link Ship Imaging:** Indirect Attack actions do not suffer a -1 AA or AI penalty.

### Heldu Collective:

The banking backbone of the Galactic government was the first to send Link Teams to the frontier. Valuing quantity over quality the Collective deploy robotic Link Teams.

**Spare Parts:** After a friendly infantry unit suffers a 1 DMG attack, roll a d6. On a 6, the DMG is ignored.

**Improved Plating:** Armor Units of this faction start the game with +1 FRM

### Zazz Shadow :

A former security firm turned Link Team for hire, Zazz Shadows leverage their experience defending space stations to deliver deadly assaults at close range. Carrying shaped charges and combat blades, these mercenaries are eager to close with any opposition.

**Shaped Charge:** Infantry units of this faction add +1 DMG to AA attacks against O.R.B.I.T. units within 1".

**Combat Blades:** Infantry units of this faction may reroll AI attacks against units within 1"

### Spawn Seekers:

Some of the galaxy's races require specific conditions to successfully breed and survive. Link Teams from these homeworlds are often called Spawn Seekers. While the individual races may have unique physical traits, the drive to survive lends them all a ferocity in claiming territory.

**Alien Physiology:** Add +1" to Move actions made by infantry of this faction

**Survival Instinct:** Infantry units of this faction add +1 to AI and AA attack rolls while within 2" of the Primary Uplink Station

## Sisyphus Core:

Hiring in experts and veterans from across the Galaxy, Sisyphus Core consistently captures and sells frontier planets to the highest bidder.

**Industry Experts:** Sisyphus Core Link Teams have two Link Leaders, two O.R.B.I.T.s and three Troopers.

- Both Link Leaders are upgraded individually
- A second Link Leader does not generate an additional bonus activation token

## Link Leader Upgrades

Each player may use one of the special upgrades below. These upgrades only affect that player's Link Leader:

**Rail Rifle:** +1 **DMG** for **AA** attacks

**Burst Repeater:** Upon successful **AI** attack, each other enemy infantry unit within 3" of the target rolls a d6. On a 5+ the unit takes 1 **DMG**.

**Heatshield Plating:** The Link Leader is considered Armor instead of Infantry.

**Lead by Example:** When the Link Leader makes a **Coordinate** action, a friendly infantry unit within 6" makes a free **Screen** action.

**Jump Jet:** The Link Leader ignores the height of terrain while moving onto and through it.

## O.R.B.I.T. Upgrades

Each O.R.B.I.T. may have one of the following upgrades. Weapon Upgrades modify the standard attack profile:

**Chain Gun:** You may make two **AI** attacks in one Activation. These **AI** attacks are -1 **DMG**. Can not be used in **Indirect Attacks**.

**Countermeasures:** While active, the O.R.B.I.T. can deploy countermeasures. For the rest of the round attacks targeting this O.R.B.I.T. are -1 **AA**.

**Plasma Glaive:** Melee attacks using **AA** have +1" **RNG** and +1 **DMG**.

**Advanced Tether:** Units using Tether actions with this O.R.B.I.T. may be placed anywhere within 3" of the O.R.B.I.T.

**Force Projector:** Attacks with this weapon are +1 **AI**. Infantry damaged by this weapon are pushed d3 inches away from the attacker.



## Environmental Effects

The Outer Planets vary greatly in climate and composition. Roll a D6 and consult the options below to determine the setting of your battle:

### 1. Alien City:

Many Outer Worlds are inhabited by new civilizations not yet exposed to space travel and contemporary technology. The Galactic Government does not condone violence against indigenous populations.

**Uplink Totem:** The locals have taken the Uplink Stations as gifts from the sky. The Uplinks have been moved into a display at the center of the small city, looming in honor over the area. In the scenario only two Uplink Stations are setup, the others damaged irreparably during their clumsy move into the city. The Uplinks are placed on the centerline of the board 9" apart.

**Devoted Protectors:** The Uplinks are constantly swarmed by missionaries and defenders. Whenever any Unit ends its activation within 1" the Primary Uplink roll a die; on a 6 that unit takes 1 DMG.

**Well Worn Paths:** Units moving directly towards an Uplink add +1" to their Move range.

### 2. Coastal Marshes:

The Coastal Marshes are teeming with natural predators. With every fleeting shadow in the brackish water a potential threat, Link Teams must tread carefully.

**Treading Water:** Any Infantry unit not within 6" of a terrain feature is Treading Water. Infantry Treading Water at the start of a turn **MUST** be activated first. Their first action must be a Move towards the nearest terrain feature.

**Unseen Depths:** Any time a unit ends its activation Treading Water roll a d6, on a +4 they take one point of damage from predators in the depths.

### 3. Igneous Wastes:

The igneous wastes are filled with sharp peaks of lava rock. Obsidian spires and ledges speckle the Drop Zone, silent reminders of the area's instability. The incredible heat of the area makes structures brittle, a fate similarly suffered by the rapidly cooled surface rocks.

**Warping Heat:** After a unit makes a successful **Cover** roll: If a Structure provides the unit **Cover** for the roll, the Structure is destroyed and removed from the game.

**Volcanic Spires:** The battlefield is setup with an additional d6 Structure terrain features

#### 4. Gnarlburr Forest:

The local flora is dense and tangling. Snaking roots slowly ensnare anything that rest for more than a moment

**Snaring Roots:** An infantry unit starting a **Move** within 1" of a **Flora** terrain feature subtracts -1" from the action.

#### 5. Desolate Tundra:

The dead landscape and clear skies make optimal conditions for targeting.

**Targeting Drone:** When an O.R.B.I.T. attacks a unit marked by a **Tracer** token, it may reroll all dice

**Clear Communications:** While their Link Leader is in play players generate one additional bonus activation token.

#### 6. Derelict Ship:

Resupplying is a crucial part of success in claiming multiple Outer Worlds. Opportunistic parties will raid any equipment left in Orbit, often scavenging from the dregs of derelict Link Ships.

**Zero G:** Vertical travel does not cost any Movement.

**Orbiting Debris Storm:** At the start of the second turn roll a die for each Infantry unit not in **Cover**. On a 6, the unit takes 1 DMG.