

REACTIONS

In the chaos of battle, it is not only the will of generals that decides the outcome, but also the reactions of ordinary warriors. As the tide of combat flows about them, some will be caught off-guard while others rise to the challenge of this dark age and refuse to allow the foe to dictate the course of battle.

To represent the fast-paced nature of war during the Horus Heresy, the Age of Darkness rules use Reactions. These are actions that a player may make during the opposing player's turns in an attempt to thwart their onslaught and turn the battle in their favour. Each Phase grants only a limited number of Reactions, each a precious resource that can aid the survival of key units in the line of battle or see the beginning of a decisive counter-attack. Understanding and wise use of Reactions can easily dictate the course of any battle fought in the Age of Darkness.

REACTION ALLOTMENTS

The Reactive player may attempt a set number of Reactions in each Phase of the Active player's turn. This set number is referred to as the Reaction Allotment, and always begins at a base value of one. A player must expend one point of their Reaction Allotment in order to have a unit under their control make a Reaction and once the Reaction Allotment for that Phase is reduced to 0, sometimes referred to as being exhausted, then no more Reactions may be made.

BASE REACTION ALLOTMENT

Any player, unless a special rule or other effect specifies otherwise, may make **one** Reaction in **each Phase** of their opponent's turn.

The Reaction Allotment of any player may be modified by special rules or other effects, granting that player additional Reactions either in every Phase (an increase of the Reaction Allotment) or in specific Phases. This may either increase the base Reaction Allotment, that is the number of Reactions allowed in every Phase, or only grant a bonus to the Reaction Allotment in specific Phases.

For example, a player might have a special rule that states *'This special rule increases the Reaction Allotment to two'*, which would indicate that the player could make two Reactions in **every** Phase of their opponent's turn. However, a special rule that states *'This special rule increases the number of Reactions that may be made during the Assault phase by +1'* would allow a player with a Reaction Allotment of one to make a single Reaction in the Shooting and Movement phases, but two in the Assault phase.

Regardless of any special rules or other effects, no player may ever increase their base Reaction Allotment above three, nor may any player ever make more than three Reactions in a given Phase unless a special rule specifically allows for a number of Reactions above the normal limit of three.

A Reaction may be made with any unit controlled by the Reactive player, though in a number of situations a special rule or condition may deny a unit the opportunity to react. The most common such conditions where a unit may not make a Reaction are:

- It is Pinned.
- It is Falling Back.
- It is locked in combat.
- It has already made a Reaction in the current Phase.
- The controlling player has exhausted their Reaction Allotment for the current Phase.
- Another special rule, effect or condition specifically states they may not (for example, the Fearless special rule and certain effects caused by weapons and Psychic Powers).

ADDITIONAL REACTIONS AND REACTION LIMITS

While the basic Reaction Allotment provides the Reactive player with a single Reaction to use in each Phase, it is unlikely that most players will be limited in this fashion. A number of special rules provide additional Reactions to the Reactive player in specific Phases. The most common of these are Warlord Traits, many of which will provide at least one additional Reaction in one or more of the turn's Phases – these additional Reactions are a key resource for the Reactive player and the choice of Warlord Trait should be carefully considered in order to maximise the benefits on offer.

While Warlord Traits and other rules may offer a player additional Reactions, it should be noted that, regardless of any modifications to a player's Reaction Allotment or special rules granting bonus Reactions, the Reactive player may never make more than three (3) Reactions in any single Phase.

When making Reactions, all armies, regardless of Faction or size, may choose to use any or all of the Core Reactions as presented in this rulebook during a game. Certain armies may gain access to additional Reactions due to Faction rules or special rules. No matter how many different Reactions an army has to choose from, it may still only make a number of Reactions per Phase equal to its Reaction Allotment.

Most Reactions may only be played in a specific Phase, and in opposition to a specific action taken by the Active player. In all cases, the rules for each Reaction will detail when and how they are used. A given Reaction may be used as many times as a player wishes, so long as that player has not exhausted their Reaction Allotment for the Phase – but no individual unit may make more than one Reaction in any one Phase.

Shooting Attacks made as part of a Reaction do not cause Leadership tests due to casualties inflicted upon enemy units, nor do they limit the actions of the Reacting units in future turns or Phases regardless of the weapons used to attack with, although any single use weapons or special abilities that may only be used once are considered to have been expended if used as part of a Reaction. Similarly, units that make moves or undertake other actions as part of a Reaction suffer no penalty or drawback in later Phases or turns for doing so.

Any Reaction that allows a unit to move using its Initiative Characteristic rather than its Movement Characteristic may not be used by units that include any models with either no Initiative Characteristic (such as most Vehicles) or an Initiative Characteristic of 0. In addition, Reactions that allow a Move based on Initiative use the unit's or model's unmodified Initiative and are not affected by Difficult Terrain (but must still take Dangerous Terrain tests as normal).



CORE REACTIONS

The following Reactions are available to all armies regardless of size or Faction.

REACTIONS IN THE MOVEMENT PHASE

During the Movement phase, the Reactive player may declare a Reaction if an enemy unit ends a move within 12" and in line of sight of a friendly unit. Once the Active player has completely resolved their unit's movement, the Reactive player may choose to expend one of their Reactions in that Phase in order to have a unit they control that is within 12" and line of sight of the final position of the moving unit either **Advance** or **Withdraw**.

Advance – The Reacting unit may move a number of inches up to its unmodified Initiative Characteristic directly towards the enemy unit that triggered this Reaction, moving each model in the unit directly towards the enemy unit by the shortest available path. In a unit with mixed Initiative Characteristics, use the highest unmodified Characteristic. Vehicles may pivot once up to 90° and then move up to 6" directly forwards.

Withdraw – The Reacting unit may move a number of inches up to its unmodified Initiative Characteristic directly away from the enemy unit that triggered this Reaction, moving each model in the unit directly away from the enemy unit by the shortest available path. In a unit with mixed Initiative Characteristics, use the highest unmodified Characteristic. Vehicles may pivot once up to 90° and then move up to 6" directly backwards.

REACTIONS IN THE SHOOTING PHASE

During the Shooting phase, the Reactive player may react when any enemy unit makes a Shooting Attack targeting a unit they control. Once the Active player has resolved all To Hit and To Wound rolls, and Armour Saves are made, but before any Damage Mitigation rolls are made or casualties removed, the Reactive player may choose to expend one of their Reactions for that Phase to have the unit targeted by the Shooting Attack either **Return Fire** or **Evade**.

Return Fire – The Reacting unit may make a Shooting Attack, targeting the unit that triggered this Reaction and following all the usual rules for Shooting Attacks. A unit that makes a Shooting Attack as part of a Return Fire Reaction may not make any attacks indirectly (without line of sight) including Barrage weapons or other weapons or special rules that otherwise ignore line of sight, and Vehicles may only fire Defensive weapons. Template weapons may only be used as part of a Return Fire

Reaction if the target unit is within 8" and must use the Wall of Death rule instead of firing normally. Units making a Shooting Attack as part of this Reaction are considered to be Stationary, and may fire weapons of any type as though they had not moved.

Evade – All models in the Reacting unit gain the Shrouded (5+) special rule against all Wounds inflicted as part of the Shooting Attack that triggered this Reaction – if the Reacting unit already has a version of the Shrouded special rule then this does not stack or increase that rule, and the Reacting player may choose to use any one of the Shrouded rules available to them. A Vehicle that has suffered an Immobilised result on the Vehicle Damage table, any unit that includes one or more models with a Movement Characteristic of 0 or any unit that is not allowed to move in this turn for any reason may not make an Evade Reaction.

REACTIONS IN THE ASSAULT PHASE

During the Assault phase, the Reactive player may react when any enemy unit declares a Charge targeting a unit they control. Once the Active player has resolved all Charge Rolls, whether successful or not, but before any models are moved as part of either a Charge Move or Surge Move, the Reactive player may choose to expend one of their Reactions for that Phase to have the unit targeted by the Charge either **Overwatch** or **Hold the Line**.

Overwatch – The Reacting unit may make a Shooting Attack, targeting the unit that triggered this Reaction and following all the usual rules for Shooting Attacks. A unit that makes a Shooting Attack as part of an Overwatch Reaction may not make any attacks indirectly (without line of sight) including Barrage weapons or other weapons or special rules that otherwise ignore line of sight, and Vehicles may only fire Defensive weapons. Template weapons used as part of an Overwatch Reaction use the Wall of Death rule instead of firing normally. The unit targeted by the Overwatch attack may not take Cover Saves against Wounds inflicted as part of an Overwatch Reaction. Units making a Shooting Attack as part of this Reaction are considered to be Stationary, and may fire weapons of any type as though they had not moved.

Hold the Line – The Reacting unit must make a Morale check, if that check is successful and the enemy unit's Charge was also successful then that Charge counts as Disordered. If the Morale check is successful, but the enemy unit's Charge was a failure then any other Charges resolved against that unit by other enemy units in the same Charge sub-phase must be counted as Disordered.