



Archaic Weapons

A Web Enhancement for the "Star Trek Roleplaying Game"

Credits

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At the Point of a Blade

Bob was too keenly aware of the irony of his situation. He was one week from taking command of the Lexington as a full Commodore. If he could last that long, he would be in charge of an entire task force of heavily armed Federation starships, each with hundreds of able-bodied men and women armed with the Federation's most powerful phasers. If he could last that long, he reminded himself. That week may as well have been an eternity.

He had been warned that most of the "forgotten" Vulcan colonies had never adopted Surak's teachings of emotional control and logic. Certainly the two warriors facing him hadn't heard of them. They swung wildly and swiftly, relying on their raw power to cut down the Federation captain.

The Lirpas were Vulcan's answer to the halberd. Until now Bob had only heard rumors of what they were like, and he cursed himself for not expecting them to be used when his ship had found the colony. These offshoots were hostile to outsiders, and the warriors had obviously been trained to kill anyone who had ventured too close to the council's meeting grounds.

But Bob Wesley was a trained Federation officer. He simply had to wait for his opening, and just keep watching the two enemies and how they moved. Sure enough, the next attack was as forceful and as wild as the last, which enabled Bob to close the distance. He pulled the Lirpa harshly forward, tearing it from the Vulcan's over-extended grasp and tossing him to his knees.

Though the weapon was awkward, Bob readied it in a formal stance. The two Vulcans, now taken aback by the move, stepped back, pausing their attack, unsure of what just happened.

"Now," Bob tried again, taking in a ragged breath as he watched his opponents carefully. "My name is Captain Bob Wesley of

the Federation Starship Constitution. We can do this some more if you want," he offered, indicating the Lirpa in his hand. "But we came in peace."

Why Archaic Weapons?

At first glance it may seem odd that modern Star Fleet crewmen should be trained in the use of primitive weaponry. After all, the versatility and power of a charged phaser would seem to be more than enough deterrent to any would-be aggressor in personal combat. To a point, this would be true, but a phaser may not always be available and their use may be decidedly inappropriate.

Many cultures which fall within the Federation's sphere of influence still make use of primitive weaponry. In some cases, such as on Vulcan, this discipline is maintained for spiritual reasons. In other cases, such as Capella (a Federation protectorate), the culture of the world has simply not progressed beyond their use.

Even adversarial powers, such as the Klingon Empire, make use of archaic weapons both in ceremony and in practice. More than one Federation security officer has found himself struggling for his light against a Klingon Bat'leth or a Romulan Teral'n.

What follows here is a listing of some of the common archaic weapons that Federation personnel can expect to find during their adventures. Most of what's described are based on their Terran equivalents (such as swords, daggers, and the like), but should be considered to represent similar weapons found through the galaxy.

Melee Weapons

While melee weapons are not commonly fielded to Star Fleet officers or crewmen, they are indeed commonly found through the Federation frontier. Even hostile rival powers such as the Klingons and Romulans are known to use specialized melee weapons

in combat if the need arises. While Star Fleet personnel may optionally train in any melee weapon that they wish, only the Federation KaBar is considered 'standard equipment', and even then is only assigned for hazardous duty expecting hostile action.

Bat'leth

The Bat'leth is a traditional Klingon weapon that often symbolizes the honor of its wielder. It is a long, four-pronged curved blade. While most Klingon officers view the blade as a ceremonial item, experienced Klingon melee warriors have used this weapon to deadly effect even in modern times.

Blackjack

The blackjack is, in essence, a portable club. The end is a weighted ball, usually filled with a core of iron wrapped in leather. Though ostensibly designed to knock victims unconscious, the sheer weight and force of a blackjack can be fatal. It's a common weapon for ne'er do wells on pre-industrial worlds.

The sap is similar to a blackjack, but uses a flat surface rather than the hard rod of the blackjack and was designed to knock its victims unconscious rather than kill. As such it only causes stun damage.

Bullwhip

The conventional bullwhip is effectively a long heavy-rope (usually made of leather) with a weighted tip. Though the whip does not strike for heavy damage it is very useful for entangling, tripping, or even grabbing opponents. A character using a bullwhip may attempt a grab or trip as a regular attack rather than a special move.

The Ardana "thong" weapon is similar in function and appearance to a bullwhip, and is used in much the same manner. The weapon does not, however, strike for damage and may only be used

Melee Weapon	Fitness Requirement	Accuracy	Block	Damage and Effects	Size and Mass
Bat'leth	N/A	9	+2	5+2d6	116cm length, 5.3kg
Blackjack	N/A	6	0	2+2d6	50cm length, 0.9kg
Broadsword	3	8	+3	4+3d6	100cm length, 1.8kg
Chaka	N/A	7	+2	4+2d6	75cm length, 1.8kg
Club	N/A	9	+2	2+2d6	60cm length, 3.5kg (varies)
Great Sword	4	9	+3	2+4d6	155cm length, 3.6kg
Halberd	N/A	8	+4	3+3d6	170cm length, 3.0kg
KaBar	N/A	6	+1	4+2d6	28cm length, 0.6kg
Knife	N/A	7	+1	3+2d6	20cm, 0.4kg
Lirpa	N/A	9	+3	2+2d6 (Blade), 2+2d6 (Club)	160cm length, 5.6kg
Long Sword	N/A	8	+3	2+3d6	115cm length, 3.2kg
Mortae	N/A	8	+0	5+2d6	25cm length, 0.8kg
Rapier	N/A	6	+2	4+1d6	110cm length, 0.7kg
Spear	N/A	6	+2	2+2d6	250cm length, 2.7kg
Sword	N/A	7	+2	4+2d6	70cm length, 1.2kg
Teral'n	3	8	+3	4+2d6	240cm length, 4.5kg
Bullwhip	N/A	7	0	1d6, +2 Grab	400cm length, 0.9 kg (varies)

to entangle or grab opponents.

Chaka

This Andorian dagger is primarily used in a 'fist-fighting' stance. The main blade protrudes from the center of a clenched fist while the side blades allow for slashing attacks.

Club

Perhaps the most absolutely primitive of all weapons, the club is basically a heavy stick with the gripping-end slightly lighter than the cudgel.

Halberd

The halberd was designed primarily to block and counter against mounted charges. The weapon consists of a long shaft topped by an axe-blade and long spear-point. Though heavy, the halberd was preferred for its superior blocking ability.

Knife

The conventional knife is one of the most common of primitive weapons. It may be made of stone or metal and consists of a handle and short cutting blade. Knives make use of a slashing fighting style, while the dagger (a double-edged knife) is primarily used for stabbing.

KaBar

The KaBar is the standard combat knife for Starfleet personnel in active combat situations. It is a high-quality, lightweight long knife made of modern materials. It derives its name from a historical "KABAR" knife from Terra's old United States military.

Lirpa

The Lirpa is a traditional Vulcan weapon resembling a pole-arm with a heavily-weighted club on the back side. Though Vulcan itself only uses the weapon during ceremonies (and some obscure



THE PRIME DIRECTIVE

"We once were as you are – spears, arrows. There came a time when our weapons grew faster than our wisdom, and we almost destroyed ourselves. We learned from this to make a rule during all our travels – never to cause the same to happen to other worlds." - James T. Kirk

One of the biggest reasons for Federation personnel to not simply resort to using Phasers against every encounter is the existence of the Prime Directive. The Directive prohibits the interference or contamination of a pre-warp society barring extreme circumstances. Any display of obviously alien or advanced technology would be a violation of this direction, and this would obviously include any use of phaser weaponry.

In this situation, then, it follows that landing parties would rely on the weapons and equipment of the local cultures of which they're investigating. Captain Kirk, for instance, may need to rely on using the same sticks and sword that a primitive people on the frontier would, if only to uphold the Prime Directive.

If a Federation Officer chooses to use a phaser in these situations (or introduce any other form of advanced technology), he's virtually guaranteed to face an inquiry into his actions upon completion of his mission. If he's unable to sufficiently justify his actions, he will be removed from his post.

The Narrator should drive home this point to keep his *Star Trek* campaign with the same feel as that found on the television show. The Prime Directive serves not only the purpose of keeping the Federation from playing gods with lesser cultures, but also adds a dramatic imperative for the players and characters, forcing them to find solutions to their problems other than overwhelming force.

rituals), it has also been found in 'regressed' Vulcan colonies.

Mortae

The mortae is an Ardanan 'mining knife' which can be used as a stabbing-type of dagger. It's unusual heft can have it deliver a surprisingly powerful blow for the weapon's otherwise small size, though it is not as graceful to use as a more common knife.

Rapier

The rapier is a small and narrow type of sword from the 18th Terran century. It was commonly used in dueling and fencing and favored a fighting style based on sharp thrusts and quick parries.

Spear

One of the most primitive and most common weapons, a spear is a primitive pole arm which combines a wooden shaft and either a stone or metal striking head.

Sword

Perhaps the most romanticized of melee weapons, the

traditional sword can be found on most worlds that have developed forging. The sword consists of a hilt and long blade which is used for slashing fighting styles.

Swords are typically rated by length and colloquially range from the 'short sword', which is effectively a long dagger, through the long sword, broadsword, and great sword. In general, the heavier and longer the blade, the more damage it can bring to bear on an opponent, though usually at a cost of its overall speed and accuracy.

Teral'n

Effectively a Romulan trident, the Teral'n can be found among some Romulan warriors who specialize in person-to-person combat. The Teral'n has three blades, with the outer blades optionally retractable. It is believed that the use of the weapon is of ceremonial importance, with the legendary Debrune Teral'n passed from Praetor to Praetor.

Ranged Weapons

Archaic weapons are not always up close and personal. Many pre-industrial worlds have harnessed the power of the bow, and of gunpowder, to create lethal weapons with some range behind them. While they are no match for the power and versatility of a phaser, of course, a Star Fleet crewman should be aware of the potential threat of even the most primitive ranged weapons.

Bow

One of the oldest hunting weapons, a bow consists of a length strong wood that is 'bowed' into shape and then secured by a bowstring. The bow uses traditional arrows, using the force of a pulled bow, to deliver its damage. Nearly every society which engages in hunting game will make use of a bow, provided they haven't wholly moved onto firearms.

Flintlock Weapons

The flintlock is a pre-industrial invention for firearms. The flintlock 'locked' a piece of flint in place to be struck by a hammer when the gunman pulled the trigger. The flint would then drop into a 'pan' of gunpowder, which fired the musket ball. Flintlock weapons would be a mainstay of pre-industrial civilizations until the advent of rifling.

The major downside of the use of flintlocks is that the required careful reloading, though this was still an improvement over



earlier firearms. Flintlock Muskets require two combat rounds to be reloaded, while pistols require three combat rounds.

It should be noted that the Klingon Empire will occasionally promote pre-industrial allies (or puppet-state planets) to flintlock weaponry to ensure order and loyalty. As such these weapons appear far more frequently along the Neutral Zone than would otherwise be expected.

Kligat

Similar to the Terran Chakram, the Capellan Kligat is a thrown weapon with three large blades affixed to a circular ring. When thrown, the ring and blades spin to give the weapon higher-than-expected range and accuracy.

Longbow

The longbow is, in effect, a larger and more powerful version of the bow. The construction requires both higher-grade wood (such as the legendary English oak and yew trees) as well as good strength. Longbows would be the effective 'king of ranged weapons' up until the advent of muskets and rifles.

Sling

Perhaps the most primitive ranged weapon, the sling consists of a rope and cradle used to hurl a large stone at the wielder's prey. While primitive, the sling would remain a powerful and cheap ranged weapon for many societies, co-existing well into the age of bows.

Ranged Weapon	Fitness Requirement	Range	Damage and Effects	Ammunition	Size and Mass
Bow	N/A	5/10/20/30	4+2d6	1 arrow	65cm length, 1.33kg
Flintlock Musket	N/A	5/10/25/50	2+3d6	1 ball	130cm length, 3kg
Flintlock Pistol	N/A	5/10/20/40	2+2d6	1 ball	24cm length, 1.4kg
Kligat	3	5/20/50/100	7+2d6	N/A	20cm diameter, 0.5kg
Longbow	3	5/20/50/80	2+3d6	1 arrow	150cm, 1.4kg
Sling	N/A	5/20/50/100	4+1d6	1 stone bullet	80cm length, 2.0kg