

TAU ARMY LIST version 4.1 - T'au Third Phase Expansion Force

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TAU BACKGROUND

THE TAU

The alien race known as the Tau inhabit an area of space near the eastern fringe of the galaxy and are a young, dynamic race, with highly advanced weaponry and technology. Though less than two thousand years old, their fledgling empire is rapidly expanding into space and encountering all the elder races of the galaxy. In galactic terms their empire is small, based around a densely packed globular cluster of stars, which enables the Tau to travel between them without many of the dangers normally associated with warp travel. The Tau empire also encompasses several alien races who have been subsumed into the empire voluntarily or whose services are bought through trade agreements.

Tau civilisation is based around a rigid system of castes, each relating to the four elements of nature - fire, water, air and earth - which dictate a Tau's particular role within their society, be it warrior, bureaucrat, pilot or worker. Their rulers form a mysterious fifth caste, translated as the Ethereals, who bind the other castes together. The Tau empire is underpinned by the concept that it is only right and noble for the individual to set their own desires aside to work together for the greater good of the empire. Overall, they're very good at it too.

Unlike most alien races which Humanity has encountered, the Tau are not overtly hostile, though they will fight fiercely to protect those territories they have claimed as their own. The sheer dynamism of the Tau is pushing them further into occupied areas of the galaxy and this has inevitably brought them into conflict with both Humans and other alien races. Tau space borders on many Ork-held systems and several Imperial sectors. Craftworlds have passed through their space and the first tendrils of the Tyranid Hive Fleets are approaching. The ongoing expansion of the Tau empire ensures that they are frequently encroaching into other races' territories and border disputes are quick to flare up on the frontiers.

The Tau way of war is efficient and deadly, combining the hitech wargear and weapons of the Tau with the aggression and close combat prowess of their mercenary allies, the Kroot. The Tau dislike close combat, preferring to destroy their enemies at long range with hi-tech weaponry as they are neither particularly strong or tough. When the fighting is likely to get close and bloody, the Tau can call upon allies in the shape of the Kroot. The Kroot are ferocious carnivores employed as mercenaries and are capable of holding their own against most opponents. A Tau commander recognises the skills and abilities of all those under his command and uses them to fearsome effect.

THE TAU EMPIRE

„We are not here to bring death and destruction to you, Gue'la. Even though your armed forces have laid waste to our systems, bombarded our cities and slaughtered my fellow Tau, we are not here for revenge. We are here to offer you to share our culture and profit from our technology and protection.

We are not here to take your homes, your families and your beliefs away from you. You can even continue to worship your Emperor-god if you want, you must only swear fealty to the advancement of the Greater Good, which will benefit all members of the empire alike.

We are not here to turn you all into soldiers and demand of you to fight against your former kin. Some of you will be asked to join our armed forces, in return for the protection that we grant to your planet. But if you are unwilling to fight against humans from the Imperium, you will not be deployed against them.

We are not here to enslave you, but to welcome you into our empire, the empire of the Tau“

**Por'vre Dal'yth Jishu'iro,
addressing the human population of Goron Minor**

The Tau are a relatively young, aspiring race, whose homeworld is situated deep in the galactic eastern rim of Ultima Segmentum. The ancestors of the Tau had been discovered by an Imperial exploratory mission several thousand years ago. At that time, they had been a primitive society which was confined to its homeworld of T'au and had achieved a developmental level similar to the Stone Age on Terra. They were earmarked for routine extermination by the Imperial Navy, but before this could happen, the entire region became isolated by unusually strong warp storms - thus the Tau could escape their premature doom.

It was only thousands of years later that the situation began to calm down and soon after, another 'first contact' with the Tau was made - but now they had progressed to a technological level that was comparable, in some instances even superior, to Imperial standards. There are currently many different theories about how the Tau could develop and expand in so little time, but ultimately this question remains a mystery.

The Tau had already established a considerable empire in their sphere of influence as well as diplomatic and economic relations with various alien races, including human dissidents who had separated themselves from the Imperium in the time of turmoil before. All things considered, they are a peaceful and altruistic race and try to avoid bloodshed if at all possible. However, they do have armed forces and are willing to employ military means for their ends. They are a rapidly expanding and colonising race, and wage wars to get their own way if they deem it necessary. They are reasonable, open to new concepts and have a pronouncedly optimistic outlook on the future and the universe. Still, the universe is a big and violent place and there are many factions far more powerful than the Tau, so not even their survival as a race can be considered certain, even if their immediate future looks promising.

It is not the Tau's way to follow a xenophobic policy of conquest and genocide of aliens as the human Imperium does, instead they are willing to integrate alien races into their empire. This was the case with the warrior race of the Kroot who also hail from this region of space. Following a common battle against Orks, the two races forged an alliance which has seen both parties benefiting until today. The Kroot are fierce and relatively primitive but provide excellent close assault troops for the armies of the Tau, who are themselves not really suited for this kind of warfare. In return, the Tau supply the Kroot with weapons and technology which they are unable to produce themselves. Despite the good relations between both races, their differences are a point that has repeatedly caused friction.

„These intolerable savages have jeopardised our entire flank and thus the linchpin of our attack with their uncontrolled bestiality. They fell upon the enemy in an animal rage, even though some of them had already discarded their weapons in surrender. It makes me sick to recall what happened next, the Kroot hacking apart the entire company and feasting on their entrails... with all due humility I therefore beg the Ethereal Council to reconsider their decision to include the Kroot into the armies of our glorious empire. I could never trust them in the midst of battle and was nearly tempted to open fire on them as I witnessed their despicable ways. “

**Shas'el Bork'an Kin'aga Ta,
after the battle of Sheya Fields**

As the Tau influence and encroachment in the Imperial sectors surrounding their empire grew too strong, the Imperium assembled an enormous warhost which became known as the Damocles crusade. Initially, the Imperial Navy was able to remain victorious against several minor Tau colonies, but as the crusade hit the major sept world of Dal'yth, they ran into fierce resistance. After horrendous losses for both sides and reports coming in about the assault from Tyranid Hive Fleet Behemoth, the Imperials were forced to withdraw.

„It rues me that we have to withdraw here and leave this xenos filth victorious, trampling on the Emperor's will in their foul and ignorant ways. However, the orders from Inquisitor Kryptman and Lord Calgar are clear: a new threat has surfaced from the void and is seemingly rampaging its way towards our very homeworld, so this must be countered first. I took a long last look on Dal'yth on the command bridge and swore under the Emperor's eyes that one day we shall return and cleanse these abominations with fire and bolter, as it is His demand and our sacred duty.“

**Personal Log of Captain Lucius Idaeus,
4th Company Ultramarines Chapter**

THE TAU MILITARY

Tau society is separated into five castes: fire, earth, air, water and the mysterious ethereal caste. The fire caste (Shas) are the fighting arm of the empire, providing soldiers and vehicle crews for the military. The earth caste (Fio) are workers and engineers, the air caste (Kor) are responsible for crewing and operating all aircraft and flyers and the water caste (Por) is the caste of the diplomats, judges and politicians. The Ethereal caste or Aun hold the position of ruling caste in Tau society, though what causes the other castes' unquestioning loyalty to them remains unknown.

All Tau are closely linked to each other and have a strong racial conscience. Everyone has his place in society and all work to achieve the same goal, the Tau'va, the Greater Good, which avails all members of the Tau empire. This is also noticeable in their battle tactics, where mutual support and combined arms are prominent issues. The Tau have a more flexible and mobile approach to battle than the Imperium, as they lack the almost limitless personnel resources of the human race. Thus they use mobility to get into position and then employ hi-tech weaponry to eliminate the enemy from afar or in deadly short-range shooting. While Tau do fight close up (a necessity often dictated by terrain, visibility and weapon ranges), they still employ the same doctrine of cautiously moving forward and obliterating the enemy with sustained bursts of suppressive fire instead of storming forwards guns blazing like other, more aggressive races like Humans or Orks. Close combat is generally scorned and left for those with a natural inclination for it, like their Kroot auxiliaries. They also don't employ attrition as the Tau do not recognise the concept of expendable troops. The Tau way of war revolves around relatively small, dedicated specialist teams to hit the enemy with disastrously effective firepower.

Vre'dai'katana completed the final pre-battle check-up of his huge XV8 Battlesuit. His twin-linked plasma rifles were in perfect working order, as was his target lock and his hard-wired drone controller. His two Gun Drones were already hovering close to him, twin-linked pulse carbines swivelling from left to right and up and down, while Vre'dai'katana commanded them around with simple orders articulated by thought impulses. He had learned to use them as if they were his own limbs.

Suddenly he heard a voice in his comm-sys:

„Ui'lyra'sa, all systems go“

Dai'katana turned his head to his Ta'ro'cha member and nodded in acknowledgement.

„Ui'nashido, all systems go“

Dai'katana turned to the other side and repeated his silent gesture. His Ta'ro'cha was ready for battle. More than ready; Shas'vre Vior'la Dai'katana could hear the eagerness for battle in his brothers' voices. He silently smiled to himself. Ta'lissera bonded for five Tau'cyrs now, he has come to understand them and know them.

The huge rear hatches began to open smoothly as they were nearing their drop site. Vre'dai'katana moved to the very brink of the hatch and gazed down at the arid ground racing by below the Manta Missile Destroyer. He could feel his pulse quicken and his temperature rise in glee. Without any further thought, he made the final step and felt gravity pull him down mercilessly, his descent followed by his drones and team members.

To accomplish this, the basis for all Tau strategies and tactics are the two concepts of Kauyon (silent hunter) and Mont'ka (killing blow). Kauyon means getting the enemy to move into a compromising position where he can be picked on and eliminated by the Tau. This is almost invariably achieved by a lure - this might be a Tau formation feigning weakness and retreating to draw the attackers into a well-prepared ambush, an important objective like a city or bridge, or even the demonstrative absence of troops. Mont'ka on the other hand means relocating and deploying the Tau firepower in such a way that the enemy can be destroyed quickly and decisively.

THE THIRD PHASE COLONISATIONS

„Expansion is not a linear process; once started, it advances itself by its own needs: expansion leads to ever more planets and regions being colonised which raises the demand for ever more resources which in turn makes ever further colonisation necessary; once the pendulum is set in motion, it will not stop out of its own accord. This is the equilibrium we ought to strive for: continuous, instantaneous change as the stationary state, yet the entirety remains true to how it has always been. Right now, our Empire is ascendant. Expansion is the only way forward, expansion is inevitable. “

Aun’o Tau’n Min’daka, argument in council

Over the recent centuries, the Tau empire has been continually forcing its expansion, colonising and annexing neighbouring systems. The Imperial response in the form of the Damocles crusade has been the only major throwback, and even this failure was quickly amended as the Tau forces reconquered lost systems practically in the wake of the retiring Imperials. Ever since this clash with the human Imperium, the Tau have been preparing another phase of concentrated expansion.

Then the Despoiler struck at the Cadian Gate, and the ripples of this conflict could even be felt on the eastern fringe. This campaign, the 13th Black Crusade, has seen an unprecedented relocation of troops in the entire Imperium, and the Tau saw their opportunity. The Imperium was weakened and wavering as the Tau Third Phase Expansion hit it full force. The first and strongest attack saw the Tau fleets striking systems in the Damocles Gulf and the Perdus Rift and it was there that the greatest number of planets was conquered. Many human populations chose to pledge allegiance to the Tau’va rather than the distant and abstract Imperium. All in all, the Tau have managed to established five Third Phase (also referred to as Third Sphere) colonies clustered around their existing sept worlds during this period. After this surge of conquest, the Tau empire is currently consolidating its hold on the newly won sectors, preparing for any counter-strikes the Imperium might muster.

„Your claim, Gue’la, is as pointless as your situation here is forlorn. We offer you four further Ro’taa to lay down your weapons and surrender before our armed forces. Nimbosa is, by right of settlement, a planet of the Tau empire. The Imperial attack was unprovoked and unjust, and has cost the life of many of our and your warriors. Any single one of you is welcome in our Empire if he is willing to submit to the Tau’va, but anyone bearing arms against us will be considered an enemy and will be eliminated. We wish you no ill, but do not attempt to hinder our cause. It will not be tolerated“

**Shas’o Vior’la J’kaara Aku’nasha,
final transmission to Imperial forces
before the 2nd Nimbosa offensive**

DESIGN NOTES

Tau Drones: The effect of Drones is built into the shooting values and armour values of Tau units, rather than being listed separately. For example, the effect of Gun Drones is built into the firepower for the pulse weapons used by Tau infantry, and the presence of Shield Drones accounts for the higher than average armour values of Tau infantry and Tau battlesuits.

Tau Miniatures: The Epic Tau miniature range will not be available until the Tau rules are published. Until then, playtesters will need to either use stand-in or scratch-built models, or use the excellent Epic scale Tau models produced by Forge World. You can find out more about the Forge World range at their website at www.forgeworld.com.

Basing Tau Units: Crisis and Broadside Battlesuits, Heavy Drones and Krootox should be mounted 2-4 to a base (in terms of unit characteristics I’ve assumed that Crisis and Broadsides are mounted two-three to a base, while Stealth have four to a base). Fire Warriors, Pathfinders, Stealth, Gun Drones, Kroot, Kroot Hounds, Kroot Master Shapers, Gue’vesa and Gue’vesa’ui Commanders are based like regular infantry. All other units are based individually. Feel free to add a Drone to infantry and Battlesuit stands if you wish (and even to vehicle ‘stands’ if you mount your vehicles on a base), as I have incorporated the defensive benefits of drones into Tau unit’s saving throws.

TAU SPECIAL RULES

COORDINATED FIRE

The Tau are masters of ranged warfare and have several very experienced fighters and specially equipped troops that are able to lead other Tau on an attack, expertly directing their fire against the foe; thus Tau are especially adept at outflanking enemy formations and attacking them from several sides with their deadly coordinated fire.

Some units are noted as being able to call in *coordinated fire*. Those units can order up to two other formations that have not taken an action this turn to follow their own formation when they take an advance, double or sustained fire action, as long as all of the formations have at least one unit within 15cm of the formation of the unit calling for coordinated fire.

Make a single initiative roll for all formations, counting a -1 modifier if any have Blast markers. If the test is failed then the original formation (containing the unit calling for coordinated fire) receives a Blast marker and must take a hold action, but the other formations are unaffected (and may take an action later in the turn).

If the test is passed then all formations concerned are allowed to take either an advance, double or sustained fire action. There is no obligation for all formations to take the same action, but they must all fire at the same target formation. The formations don't have to stay within a given distance of each other and will complete their actions one after the other.

MARKERLIGHTS AND GUIDED MISSILES

Markerlights are devices carried by many types of Tau infantry and vehicles. They allow their user to mark out enemy targets electronically, so that they can easily be targeted and engaged by other friendly units. Seeker, Hunter and the larger Tracer Missiles are self-guided projectiles that can be fired on targets marked by a markerlight. Their robotic brains allow them to independently find their way to their designated target, avoiding any obstacles in the way. Seeker Missiles are readily available in any Tau army, being mounted on tanks, aircraft and support craft. They have a long range so can be fired over considerable distances once a target is marked. The Tracer Missile is similar, but far larger, and carries a much more potent warhead enabling it to inflict crippling damage to even war engines and titans.

All enemy units within 30cm range and LOF of at least one unit with markerlights are considered to be *marked*.

However, Tau units that are broken or have marched that turn cannot use their markerlights. The action the markerlight unit is carrying out does not have any impact on guided missiles (except 'March', as noted above).

Guided missiles must either be *guided* by a markerlight or be fired *unguided*. If they are fired unguided, they follow all the normal shooting rules. If a missile is guided by a markerlight, the firing unit does not need a line of fire to the target unit and receives a +1 to hit modifier. However, hits may only be allocated to units from the target formation that are marked by a markerlight. Apart from that, all the normal shooting rules apply.

TAU TECHNOLOGY

TAU JET PACKS

Tau Battlesuits and Drones make use of powerful and sophisticated jump packs. These allow them to pounce on the enemy and strafe them before retreating again out of range of the survivors' retribution. This makes Jet Pack-equipped troops hard to counter and very difficult to engage.

Tau Jet Packs follow all the rules for Jump Packs. Additionally, units with Tau Jet Packs are allowed to fall back from a charging enemy instead of making a counter-charge move. The units may move 10cm in any direction immediately after the enemy formation has declared an engage or air assault action against their formation (note that falling back happens before a charge is made, not after charge moves as with counter-charges).

TAU DRONES

Tau make extensive use of floating, disc-shaped robots called Drones. In battle, Drones are programmed to shield their controllers by getting in the way of incoming fire or close combat opponents.

Formations containing Drones plus at least one non-Drone unit halve the number of additional Blast markers they receive because of destroyed Drone units (rounding fractions down), and count Drones destroyed in an assault only as half models (again rounding fractions down) when working out who has inflicted more casualties; additionally, Drones in such formations may be allocated any type of hit (AP and AT). Formations consisting entirely of Drones follow the normal rules.

TAU DEFLECTOR SHIELDS

Tau deflector shields work differently to Imperial or Ork shields in that they do not absorb the incoming energy, but are shaped and positioned in such a way as to deflect the incoming fire (hence the designation). A further noteworthy trait is that the shield's response will be proportionally more powerful with the energy of the attack.

Tau deflector shields work like an invulnerable save in all respects, with the single exception that they will not always save on the normal 6+, instead the score is dependent on the impact energy of the hit: The deflector will save on a 4+ against weapons with the Titan Killer ability (roll for variable damage first and then save against each hit separately, as attacks might be only partially deflected), a 5+ against Macro Weapon hits, and a 6+ against AT attacks. It does not work at all in assaults, where the angle of incoming attacks does not allow for deflecting shots completely away from the craft.

SUPPORT CRAFT

Lacking large ground-based war engines like titans, the Tau make use of smaller spacecraft for ground support. Unlike the much faster aircraft, they hover menacingly over the battlefield and act as a high-flying weapons platform.

Support craft remain high up in the air, this means they can always draw a line of fire to any target and vice versa, like aircraft. They also never block LOF to other units, including other support craft. They ignore terrain when moving and never count as being in cover, nor can they provide cover for friendly troops, as they are too far away from the ground. They can only deploy troops immediately after they have performed a planetfall. In an assault, they work exactly like skimmers.

T'AU THIRD PHASE EXPANSION ARMY LIST

Tau armies have a strategy rating of 3. All Tau formations have an initiative value of 2+.

TAU CADRES – Any amount of points may be spent on Tau Cadres. They are independent formations.

Formation Type	Units	Cost
Fire Warrior Cadre	8 Tau Fire Warrior Teams. May additionally have 4 Devilfish Troop Carriers for +100 points. Upgrades: any	200 points
Battlesuit Cadre	4 XV8 Tau Crisis Battlesuit Ta'ro'cha. Upgrades: any	250 points

TAU CONTINGENTS – Up to 2 Contingents may be taken per Cadre in the army. They are independent formations.

Formation Type	Units	Cost
Pathfinder Contingent	4 Tau Pathfinder Teams. May have 2 Devilfish Troop Carriers for free. Upgrades: Pathfinders, Stealth, Drones, Tetras, Piranhas	175 points
Stealth Battlesuit Contingent	6 Tau XV15 Stealth Battlesuit Teams. Upgrades: Stealth, Pathfinders	275 points
Broadside Battlesuit Contingent	4 Tau XV88 Broadside Battlesuit Ta'ro'cha. Upgrades: Broadside, Drones	300 points
Hammerhead Contingent	4 Tau Hammerhead Gunships. Upgrades: Hammerheads, Skyray, Swordfish, Piranhas	250 points
Scorpionfish Contingent	1 or 2 Tau Scorpionfish Super-heavy Missile Gunships. Upgrades: none	200 points each
Stingray Contingent	4 Stingray Missile Gunships. Upgrades: Skyray, Piranhas	200 points
Gun Drone Swarm	4 Tau Gun Drone Squadrons. Upgrades: Drones, Heavy Drones	75 points
Pathfinder Tetra Contingent	6 Tau Pathfinder Tetra Light Skimmers. Upgrades: Tetras, Piranhas, Pathfinders	150 points

TAU UPGRADES - Up to three upgrades can be taken per Cadre or Contingent, note that Contingents have a limited choice of possible Upgrades. Upgrades are not separate formations but are added to the original formation and are counted as part of it in all respects. Each upgrade can only be taken once per formation.

Upgrade Type	Units	Cost
Commander	A formation may have <u>one</u> of the following Commanders: (a Tau army may not include more than one Ethereal and one Shas'o) • add 0-1 Tau Ethereal Caste Member to Fire Warrior Team • add a Tau Shas'el Commander to Crisis Ta'ro'cha • add 0-1 Tau Shas'o Commander to Crisis Ta'ro'cha	+75 points +50 points +100 points
Fire Warriors	+4 Tau Fire Warrior Teams. May have 2 Devilfish Troop Transports for additional +50 points	100 points
Pathfinders	+2 Tau Pathfinder Teams. May have a Devilfish for free	100 points
Gun Drones	+4 Tau Gun Drone Squadrons	75 points
Broadside	+2 Tau XV88 Broadside Battlesuit Ta'ro'cha	150 points
Crisis	+2 Tau XV8 Crisis Battlesuit Ta'ro'cha	125 points
Stealth	+3 Tau XV15 Stealth Battlesuit Teams	125 points
Hammerheads	+2 Tau Hammerhead Gunships	125 points
Skyray	+1 Tau Skyray Air Defence Gunship	75 points
Piranhas	+4 Tau Piranha Light Skimmers	100 points
Tetras	+3 Tau Pathfinder Tetra Light Skimmers	75 points
Heavy Drones	Replace 4 units of Gun Drones with 4 units of Heavy Drones	50 points
Swordfish	Replace 1 Hammerhead with 1 Swordfish	25 points

ALIEN AUXILIARY FORMATIONS – Up to 1 Alien Auxiliary Formation may be taken per Cadre in the army. They are independent formations.

Formation Type	Units	Cost
Kroot Kindred	1 Kroot Master Shaper plus 9 Kroot Carnivore Squads. May additionally have: (each option can only be taken once) +5 further Kroot Carnivore Squads for +75 points +3 Kroot Hound Packs for +50 points +3 Krootox Herds for +75 points +3 Great Knarlocs for +50 points	175 points
Gue'vesa Auxiliary Company	1 Gue'vesa'ui Command plus 12 Gue'vesa Human Auxiliaries Teams. May have 6 further Gue'vesa Teams for +75 points	175 points

TAU AIR CASTE FORMATIONS – Up to one third of the points available to a Tau army may be spent on Tau Air Caste Formations. They are independent formations.

Formation Type	Units	Cost
Fighter Squadron	3 Tau Barracuda Superiority Fighters	250 points
Bomber Squadron	2 Tau Whiteshark Bomber	350 points
Strike Craft	1 or 2 Tau Tigershark Strike Craft	150 points each
Assault Ship Squadron	1 or 2 Tau Moray Assault Ships	300 points each
Ground Support Craft	1 Tau Manta Missile Destroyer	850 points
Orbital Support	1 Tau Hero Class Cruiser	150 points
Dropship	1 Tau Orca Dropship	100 points

TAU UNITS

TAU FIRE CASTE GROUND FORCES

TAU ETHEREAL CASTE MEMBER

Ethereals (Aun) are not members of the Fire Caste, but form a separate caste ruling all others. The loyalty all other Tau display towards them is total, their views and commandments are never questioned, save in council by a fellow Aun. Unsurprisingly, they have a profound psychological influence on fighting troops around them, motivating them to acts of bravery or unflinching defence. However, this does not happen out of fear but out of deep respect. Ethereals sometimes accompany a Fire Warrior Cadre into battle, though whether their presence on the field is to command or to observe their troops is difficult to say.

In battle, they are accompanied by shield drones programmed to protect them by physically getting in the way of incoming shots or blows if necessary, and they carry the ceremonial weapons of the Ethereal caste, the Honour Blade and the Symbols of Office. But these are ritual weapons mainly and more used to denote rank than for actual combat. It is the Ethereals' role to lead and inspire, not so much to fight themselves, even if they are perfectly capable to do so should the need arise.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Honour Blade	(base contact)	Assault Weapon	Extra Attacks (+1)	

Notes: Character, Invulnerable Save, Leader, a formation joined by an Ethereal becomes Fearless. If the Ethereal is killed, his formation breaks automatically

TAU SHAS'EL COMMANDER

Shas'el, the second highest rank of the Shas, are Tau military commanders of the Fire Caste. They are experienced both in battle and in commanding troops, and usually lead by example. All Fire Caste warriors of rank Shas've or higher are equipped with a Crisis Battlesuit, and they actually employ it to support their army in battle, unlike most Imperial officers. They are seasoned fighters and expert suit pilots, making them a fearsome prospect at short ranges as they lead their Ta'ro'cha into attacks.

Tau make almost no use of close combat weapons, instead the most traditional officer weapon is the Plasma Rifle. They are also supported by accompanying shield drones, which protect them from enemy attacks.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Commander Plasma Rifle	30cm	AP4+	-	

Notes: Character, Invulnerable Save, Coordinated Fire, Leader

TAU SHAS'O COMMANDER

Shas'o is the highest rank that a Fire Caste member can attain. Only those Shas'el who have proven themselves worthy by repeated success in the field are considered for promotion. Shas'o do not only lead a Cadre, they are the supreme commanders for an entire Tau army and co-ordinate entire campaigns and planetary annexations. Furthermore, they are battle-scarred warriors, supremely dangerous opponents in their XV8 Crisis Battlesuit.

They have similar weapons and equipment as the slightly junior Shas'el, but their rank and importance often means that they have access to more non-standard equipment, like several different hard-wired support systems, shield generators or upgraded weapon systems.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Commander Plasma Rifle	30cm	AP4+	-	

Notes: Character, Invulnerable Save, Tau Supreme Commander (same as normal Supreme Commander, but with 'Coordinated Fire' instead of 'Commander')

TAU FIRE WARRIOR TEAM

The indisputable mainstay of any Tau army, Tau Fire Warriors or Shas'la are solid and dependable core troops. They are well armoured and equipped with the deadly Pulse Rifles and Pulse Carbines, which provide them with a definitive edge over almost any other type of infantry in ranged combat. They are certainly not the fastest, bravest or most endurable troopers by nature, but their technology and extensive training goes a long way to counter any biological disadvantage they might have compared to Humans or Orks. The result is proficiently deadly infantry.

Shas'la are equally capable of stout defence with their accurate, long-ranged Pulse Rifles as of fighting up close with their Pulse Carbines with built-in Photon Grenade launchers. Together with their tightly-knit nature and 'mutual support' attitude, this certainly makes them a force to be reckoned with.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Pulse Carbines	15cm	AP5+	Disrupt	
Pulse Rifles	30cm	AP5+	-	

Notes: Markerlights

TAU PATHFINDER TEAM

Compared to the Fire Warriors, Tau Pathfinders have a more specialised role on the battlefield. The Markerlight, their main weapon, is not a weapon as such, but instead used to electronically mark enemy units and thus increase the accuracy of their fellow Tau against those targets. This concept of working for the Tau'va at the expense of personal glory is very prominent in Tau society (and also warfare) and makes Pathfinders very popular with other Tau units. In short, Pathfinders are out there to guide their comrades' aim, not to win the battle themselves. However, at the latest since the introduction of Seeker and Tracer Missiles in the Tau armoury, the Pathfinders' role has become very important. The Tau do not employ artillery as it is rather inaccurate, potentially dangerous to friendly troops and prone to inflicting collateral damage. Instead, they use Markerlights to designate targets, and then call down self-guided missiles from tanks, aircraft, spacecraft or fixed installations to take them out with a pin-point strike.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Pulse Carbines	15cm	AP5+	Disrupt	
Rail Rifles	30cm	AP5+	Disrupt	

Notes: Scouts, Coordinated Fire, Markerlights, Snipers

TAU XV8 CRISIS BATTLESUIT TA'RO'CHA

Of all weapon systems employed by the Tau, the Crisis Battlesuit is easily the most distinctive and recognisable. On the battlefields of the eastern rim, enemies have learned to identify and fear the shape of the XV8. It confers exceptional protection to the troopers within, as well as mounting a vast array of deadly weapons. The Crisis' greatest strengths lie in mobility and short-ranged firepower - it is their role to get to the right place and take out the right targets. To this end, they are equipped with a selection of weapons that allow them to engage and damage anything the enemy might have; Crisis are there to tackle any units that the normal Shas'la teams can't deal with - they aren't called 'Crisis' for nothing. Only seasoned veterans are granted the honour of donning a Crisis battlesuit, fighting together as teams of three called Ta'ro'cha ('three minds, one purpose'). Becoming a Crisis pilot is the first step in becoming a Tau officer, which amply demonstrates the significance of the XV8 for the Fire Caste.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	25cm	3+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin-linked Missile Pods	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	-	
Twin-linked Plasma Rifles	30cm	AP4+	-	
Twin-linked Fusion Blasters	15cm (15cm)	MW4+ and Small Arms	-	Macro-weapon

Notes: Tau Jet Packs

TAU XV15 STEALTH BATTLESUIT TEAM

Of all the various Battlesuit variants of the Tau, the XV15 Stealth is the smallest - a Tau in an XV15 is hardly larger than a Fire Warrior in standard armour. However, this perfectly suits their role as infiltrators and saboteurs. In addition to the Tau Jet Pack, which is common to most Battlesuits, the Stealth suit has the unique capability of camouflaging its wearer. This is achieved by a number of holographic disruptors which are arrayed all over the suit and distort the wearer's form, blending him into the background like a high-tech chameleon. Stealth teams either work in support of larger formations or range ahead of the main army, as 'lone wolves' of the Tau. They are encouraged to fight independently and have great autonomy within their mission parameters, as befits their style of fighting. They ambush enemy units and disrupt their supply lines, like vengeful ghosts striking at will.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	25cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Multiple Silenced Burst Cannons	15cm (15cm)	AP3+ and Small Arms	Disrupt First Strike	

Notes: Tau Jet Packs, Scouts, Reinforced Armour, Markerlights

TAU XV88 BROADSIDE BATTLESUIT TA'RO'CHA

The XV88 is a variant of the Crisis, designed for long-range heavy fire support. To this end, the standard Jet Pack has been removed and replaced with even thicker armour and even more, heavier weapons. The main weapon system of the Broadside are its Twin-linked Railguns, linear particle accelerators capable of punching through virtually any amount of armour. The projectiles are accelerated to a substantial percentage of light speed and only leave trails of fire where their passing has ignited the air. Only very few vehicles are able to withstand a direct hit without suffering critical damage.

Broadsides are much more massive and slower than Crisis, so they take up the role of stationary fire support against enemy armoured threats. They are often employed in association with Fire Warriors to form defence lines or solid fire bases for the Tau advance.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	15cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
2 x Twin-linked Railguns	75cm	AT2+	-	
Twin-linked Plasma Rifles	30cm	AP4+	-	

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Walker

TAU GUN DRONE SQUADRON

Tau Gun Drones (Kor'vesa) are small, disc-shaped, semi-sentient robots employed alongside Tau units in battle. They are equipped with a smaller and much modified version of Tau Jet Packs, which allows them to hover over the ground and fly over most obstacles. As weapons they carry twin-linked Pulse Carbines, a formidable weapon for short-ranged firing. Drones are often controlled by a Tau warrior, acting as his robotic bodyguard. To be able to function independently, they need to combine their processors into a network, so only larger groups of Drones are able to fight on their own.

However, their main use is not to fight, but to provide protection for Tau soldiers, especially Battlesuit pilots. Drones are programmed to protect Tau lives with their own 'body' (for want of a better term) by physically interposing themselves between the Tau and incoming fire or assailants.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	30cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Pulse Carbines	15cm	AP5+	Disrupt	

Notes: Tau Jet Packs, Drones

TAU HEAVY DRONE SQUADRON

Heavy Drones are a further development of the basic Gun Drone. They are visibly larger and heavier constructed than standard Drones and carry heavier weapons in the shape of Burst Cannons. On some Drones, one Burst Cannon has been replaced with a Markerlight so the Drones can range ahead of the main army and pick out targets for destruction. They also follow the usual Drone program of protection of Tau life, but are most often employed in dedicated Drone squadrons to actively take part in the fighting. This is a logical step considering the ongoing Tau expansion and the limited number of Tau soldiers at their disposal. They are a relatively new addition to the forces of the Tau and most versions are still undergoing field trials at the moment.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	25cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Multiple Burst Cannons	15cm	AP3+	Disrupt	

Notes: Tau Jet Packs, Drones, Markerlights

TAU DEVILFISH TROOP CARRIER

The Devilfish is the trusty troop transport of Fire Warriors and Pathfinders, able to carry a full squad of them into battle. It is relatively well armoured for a transport vehicle, but only has a single Burst Cannon for self defence. In addition, it mounts Guns Drones in special carriages on the sides, which can be detached in battle to provide support for disembarking teams.

It is based on the same chassis as the Hammerhead, but the greatest part of the tank has been reconfigured to passenger space. It is used to carry Tau infantry to the front, or to evacuate them when the enemy is in a position to overwhelm the Tau line. Seeing as how Tau often have to rely on mobility, the Devilfish is a key element of their armed forces.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Burst Cannon & Gun Drones	15cm	AP4+	-	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Notes: Skimmer, Transport (may carry two of the following units: Fire Warriors, Pathfinders)

TAU HAMMERHEAD GUNSHIP

The Hammerhead is the main battle tank of the Tau Fire Caste, like the Lemn Russ for the Imperial Guard and the Predator for the Space Marines, and it is a close match for both. Contrary to its Imperial counterparts, it is not a tracked vehicle, but a skimmer, which allows it to pass over difficult terrain with impunity. Despite this, it is heavily armoured and carries a lethal amount of firepower.

Its main weapon system is either a Railgun or an Ion Cannon, with the self-guiding Smart Missiles as back-up. The Hammerhead-mounted Railgun differs from the one mounted on Broadside Battlesuits in that it can not only fire a solid slug, but also a bundle of sophisticated submunitions, which proves deadly against massed infantry. The Ion Cannon is a very versatile weapon and can, due to its high rate of fire and the tank's advanced targeting systems, even engage enemy aircraft with some success.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Railgun	75cm	AP4+/AT3+	-	
<u>OR</u> Ion Cannon	60cm	AP4+/AT4+/AA6+	-	
Smart Missile System	30cm	AP4+	Ignore Cover	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Notes: Skimmer, may have either Railgun OR Ion Cannon as main weapon, not both

TAU SWORDFISH GUNSHIP

The Swordfish is also a relatively new addition to the Tau armed forces, being based on the familiar chassis of the Hammerhead and Devilfish. Its defining feature is, without a doubt, the huge twin-linked Railgun mounted on its turret, which makes it extremely effective at taking out enemy armour at great range. This was exactly the role it has been built to fulfil, after the sometimes painful experiences with Imperial armour and heavy armour won during the Damocles crusade.

In typical Tau fashion, it is not a replacement for, but an addition to the Hammerhead, taking on targets that are exceptionally well armoured. However, the design isn't fully developed yet and the Swordfish is suffering from some minor problems as a consequence, especially during long-term campaigns. It requires an extensive amount of maintenance and repair/refit with spare parts, but its impressive fighting capabilities make up for this drawback.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin-linked Railgun	75cm	AP3+/AT2+	-	
Twin-linked Missile Pods	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	-	
Burst Cannon	15cm	AP5+	-	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Notes: Skimmer

TAU SKYRAY AIR DEFENCE GUNSHIP

The Skyray gunship is the Tau version of ground-based air defence. It uses the hull of the Hammerhead as a basis, but doesn't mount a main gun in the turret, but a Hunter Missile Launcher and Markerlights to acquire enemy aircraft. Its targeting systems are very sophisticated and allow it to send Hunter missiles with enormous accuracy against low-flying aircraft from great distances.

It carries Seeker Missiles which can be employed versus tanks, as well as the Hunter missiles which can also be fired at armoured ground targets with good effect, as the targeting systems allow for quick re-calibration. It is therefore a reliable tank hunter / air defence and has become indispensable for the Tau military against opponents with strong airforce, like the Imperium of Man.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	4+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Smart Missile System	30cm	AP4+	Ignore Cover	
Hunter Missiles	75cm	AT6+/AA6+	Guided Missiles	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Notes: Skimmer, Markerlights

TAU STINGRAY MISSILE GUNSHIP

After the Damocles Gulf Crusade, the Tau's contact with former Imperial forces led them to consider the development of a non-line-of-sight and beyond-line-of-sight weapon to break up the waves of Orks rampaging through the sector after the Imperial/Tau ceasefire. A single large warhead, similar to the simple shell used by Earthshaker Cannons, was considered, but was determined to be less effective than a modified Seeker Missile, with a large number of Smart Missiles loaded into the payload bay.

The resulting weapon was first fielded on modified Skyray Air Defence Tanks. The first field tests were promising, but revealed shortcomings in the vehicles used for the test. First among these was the sheer size of the new missile, making it extremely dependent on resupply in an extended battle. A new turret was developed to carry more missiles, which also required changes to the basic hull (reducing armor to allow the unit to keep up with Devilfish and Hammerhead formations). This new version was significantly less dependent on resupply during battle, and the larger turret allowed refinements to the missile itself, increasing the number of Smart Missile submunitions.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Submunitions Missiles	75cm	2 x AP5+	Guided Missiles, Ignore Cover	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	
Smart Missile System	30cm	AP4+	Ignore Cover	

Notes: Skimmer, Markerlights

TAU PATHFINDER TETRA LIGHT SKIMMER

The Tetra also is a two-seated light skimmer, similar to the Piranha, but crewed by Pathfinders. Its armament, in the form of Pulse Rifles, is considerably weaker, but it is equipped with markerlights as a recompense. Thus it can fulfil the same role as Pathfinders on foot, and its extra speed and mobility come in very handy in certain circumstances, for example as the recon section for an armoured cadre. Still it is a rather rare occurrence with most Tau armies, as it's still a relatively new piece of equipment. They are also employed under difficult battlefield conditions, where their mobility and smaller size allows them to go where regular Pathfinder units in their Devilfish would find the going extremely difficult.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	35cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Pulse Rifles	30cm	AP5+	-	

Notes: Skimmer, Scouts, Coordinated Fire, Markerlights

TAU PIRANHA LIGHT SKIMMER

The Piranha is a military adaptation of a two-seated, open-topped light skimmer normally only employed in civilian roles. It has had light armour added, as well as a light armament of a Burst Cannon and detachable Gun Drones, identical to those mounted on a Devilfish. It is mostly being employed for reconnaissance duties, as a platform for launching Seeker missiles, or when there is a lack of battlesuits or vehicles, mostly on only sparsely populated colonies. In the regular army cadres from the main Septs, which do not lack such equipment, they are traditionally employed only to a lesser extent.

However, they have proven to be a real asset to the normally small Tau formations. They are easy to produce and maintain and can be used to perform a plethora of different duties, with remarkable success.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	35cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Burst Cannon & Gun Drones	15cm	AP4+	-	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Notes: Skimmer

TAU SCORPIONFISH SUPER-HEAVY MISSILE GUNSHIP

After the shock of facing Imperial Super-heavy tanks in the Damocles crusade and later conflicts, the Tau have been putting considerable effort in developing their own Super-heavy gunships. Lacking any other large vehicle as a basis, the Orca Dropship has been heavily armed and armoured, effectively reducing its mobility down to being a surface-bound skimmer. This variant is called Scorpionfish Missile Gunship and is carrying no less than a full complement of Hunter, Seeker, Tracer and Smart Missiles, as well as the direct-firing Missile Pods. It has no single main weapon, but rather acts as platform for a number of smaller systems, enabling it to engage any type of threat.

This kind of flexibility has proven to be a major asset in recent Tau campaigns. It may be a bit slower than the majority of Tau units, but it also has skimmer capabilities, so negotiating difficult terrain normally isn't an issue. It forms part of the stout firing line at the back of the Tau army, anchoring the defences like a solid rock.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	20cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
2 x Twin-linked Missile Pod	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	Fixed Forward Arc	
2 x Smart Missile System	30cm	AP4+	Ignore Cover	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missiles	
Hunter Missiles	75cm	AT6+/AA6+	Guided Missiles	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Damage Capacity 3. Critical Hit Effect: The Scorpionfish's Missile stockpile explodes. The Scorpionfish is destroyed, and any units within 5cm of the model suffer one hit on a D6 roll of 6.

Notes: Skimmer, Reinforced Armour, Markerlights

ALIEN AUXILIARY FORCES

KROOT MASTER SHAPER

Master Shapers are the leaders of Kroot kindreds, they oversee the genetic development of their kindred as well as felling any important decisions together with the other senior Shapers of the tribe. Their main duty is to lead their tribe to new prey species that can be assimilated into the Kroot genome so that the kindred evolves, gaining new abilities and traits (hence the designation of 'Shaper').

Kroot normally hire themselves out as mercenaries, and it is the Master Shaper's business to negotiate the terms of the contract with the employers. They also lead their tribe in battle, using their superior physiology, numerous evolutionary adaptations (enhanced reflexes, being able to spit venom, etc.) as well as the exotic and deadly weaponry gifted by their employers in exchange for their service.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	6+	4+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Gifted Mercenary Weapons	(base contact)	Assault Weapons	Macro-weapon, Extra Attacks (+1)	
Kroot Rifles	(15cm) <i>and</i> (base contact)	Small Arms <i>and</i> Assault Weapons	-	

Notes: Leader, Infiltrators

KROOT CARNIVORE SQUAD

Kroot are a relatively primitive race, but excellent infiltration and close combat troops. Their arboreal origins means they are experts in fieldcraft, as well as tracking and ambushing enemies in dense terrain. Though Kroot are fierce and skilled fighters in close combat and short-ranged firefights, they lack armour and must rely on the protection of their surroundings. They fight using their Kroot rifles, originally very primitive but now adapted and upgraded by the Tau Earth Caste. However, the rifle's main use is in close combat, where the numerous blades attached to it make it an effective weapon, used in the manner of the traditional Kroot fighting staves of old.

They are carnivorous and devour their victims after a won battle, as, according to their beliefs, this will confer their enemies' strength and courage to them. In fact, they are able to assimilate part of their prey's genetic make-up and learn new abilities in this way or even provoke artificial evolutionary leaps. But unsurprisingly, this behaviour is a constant cause of friction between them and the Tau, who deeply despise such acts of savagery.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	-	4+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Kroot Rifles	(15cm) <i>and</i> (base contact)	Small Arms <i>and</i> Assault Weapons	-	

Notes: Infiltrators

KROOT HOUND PACK

Kroot Hounds are a different evolutionary branch of the Kroot Carnivores, a Kroot form that has evolved into a four-legged hunting beast. Hounds are exceptionally ferocious and vicious and need handlers to take care of them, lest they turn on other Kroot or Tau. This makes them somewhat troublesome to take along into battle and is the reason why they are singularly detested by the Tau.

They are a very animalistic, non-sentient life form exclusively used for battle and hunting purposes. They cannot make use of any weapons or equipment, but their sharp fangs are adequate weapons for tearing apart enemies in close combat and mercilessly pursuing any survivors.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	-	4+	-
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Fangs	(base contact)	Assault Weapons	-	

Notes: Infiltrators, Scouts

KROOTOX HERD

Krootox are another Kroot form that has evolved from the main branch of the humanoid Carnivores. They, too, are stuck at a lower level of evolutionary development, being essentially lumbering herbivores. However, they have a strong bond to their Kroot masters and will fight alongside them savagely.

In battle, the Kroot lash a heavy weapon version of the Kroot Rifles, the Kroot Gun, to the Krootox's back so they gain some sort of fire support for their kindred. Krootox are very large and strong and can rip apart most enemies in close combat, while able to absorb heavy return blows.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	4+	4+	4+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Claws	(base contact)	Assault Weapons	Extra Attacks (+1)	
Kroot Guns	45cm	AP5+/AT6+	-	

KROOT GREAT KNARLOC

The Kroot Great Knarloc is a massive beast native to the Kroot homeworld of Pech. It is physiologically obvious that it shares some ancestors with the other Kroot forms, but it is very unlike any of the current ones. It is omnivorous, but can prove a skilled hunter when in the need of fresh meat. Especially its hyperactive nymune organ, which gives it astounding speed for its size, is a major help in this.

Its huge mass and strength means it is often used as beast of burden by the Kroot, but can also be unleashed as fighting beast in battle. Like the Krootox, it is not predestined for violence, but it can be goaded into aggression by its Kroot handlers, though these are always careful to direct its anger towards the enemy and not themselves.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	10cm	4+	4+	-
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Massive Beak & Claws	(base contact)	Assault Weapon	Macro-weapon, Extra Attacks (+1)	

Notes: Walker, Infiltrator

GUE'VESA'UI HUMAN AUXILIARIES COMMANDER

The Tau are prudent enough to give their auxilia formations their own leaders and commanders, and the human Gue'vesa formations are no exception. They are frequently led by the most veteran and combat-experienced individuals who have attained the rank of Gue'vesa'ui, and are formed into some sort of command squads.

These command their company and keep it fighting under fire, leading from the front. They are often gifted superior pulse weaponry and other high-tech equipment by their Tau masters, both to increase their firepower and as an indication of rank.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	6+	6+	4+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Pulse Rifles	30cm	AP5+	-	

Notes: Leader

GUE'VESA HUMAN AUXILIARIES TEAM

Whenever conquering a new planet, the Tau do not exterminate the population but offer them to join the Tau empire. Some accept that offer. Especially in the wake of the failed Damocles crusade, a lot of human soldiers were left stranded as their fleet hastily withdrew. Some of those agreed to work for the Tau'va and were given their place in the empire. The offspring of those soldiers are now serving in the Tau armies as Gue'vesa ('human helpers'), alien auxiliary troops for the empire.

Humans are frequently recruited into the Tau forces as they are both numerous and militant. As the human worlds have basic production capabilities, they are able to manufacture their own standard-issue lasguns, only a small proportion of them is equipped with the more high-tech Pulse weapons of the Tau. They are mainly there to bolster the Tau lines and supply something the Tau are lacking: strength in numbers. They can hold or capture objectives and lend their support to any actions within reach. They are seldom fighting in any decisive role, but they certainly are a welcome addition.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	-	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Lasguns	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	
Pulse Rifles	30cm	AP6+	-	

Notes: The Pulse Rifles of the Gue'vesa have an inferior to hit value as Gue'vesa teams include a far smaller proportion of them than for example Fire Warrior teams

TAU AIR CASTE NAVAL FORCES

TAU BARRACUDA SUPERIORITY FIGHTER

The Barracuda is the Tau standard fighter plane employed by the Kor (Air) Caste for space and aerial combat missions. It carries a wide array of weapons and is therefore able to attack enemy aircraft as well as ground targets, however its main role is combat air patrol to secure air superiority.

It is a very agile and manoeuvrable craft, and the Tau Air Caste pilots are physiologically better adapted to air and space combat than most other races, as they spend practically their entire life in space or at least airborne. Until the introduction of the Skyray Gunship, the Barracudas have been solely responsible for air defence of Fire Caste ground forces. It is only now that they are slowly adapting for other roles as well, like ground support with their Ion Cannons and Burst Cannons. Their primary weapon for aerial combat is a modified version of the Hunter missile (used by Skyrays) called Interceptor missile, which doesn't require a markerlight to lock on to a target but is self-guided, but also shorter-ranged as a consequence.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Aircraft	Fighter	6+	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Ion Cannon	30cm	AP4+/AT4+/AA6+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	-	
Interceptor Missiles	30cm	AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

TAU WHITESHARK BOMBER

The Whiteshark is a modified version of the Tigershark, built in response to the demands of the Fire Caste for a dedicated tactical support aircraft with enough firepower to take out armoured opponents. The entire drone cargo bay has been replaced by capacitors and ammunition stores, and the bomber has been upgraded to carry a railgun under each wing. This makes it a formidable attack craft with enough firepower to engage and damage any kind of opponent, though it is certainly specialised for tank hunting. The field trials to date have proved very promising and the Whiteshark looks set to become a regular unit of the Air Caste. A modified version for space combat is also currently in development, to assist the Manta Missile Destroyers in their role of heavy bomber in space.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Aircraft	Bomber	4+	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
2 x Railgun	45cm	AT3+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Ion Cannons	45cm	AP3+/AT3+/AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	-	
Interceptor Missiles	30cm	AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missiles	

TAU TIGERSHARK STRIKE CRAFT

The Tigershark is not a dedicated bomber, but fulfils the dual role of bomber and drone transport craft. In addition to its usual board weapons, its bays can hold a great number of Gun Drones that can be dispersed during flight. This allows the Tau to drop small formations of (relatively expendable) troops in the back of the enemy where they can sow confusion, simulate offensives and generally cause havoc.

But even without its Drone cargo, the Tigershark is a solid bomber aircraft that can effectively counter ground formations with its twin-linked Ion Cannons, Burst Cannons and Markerlight-guided Seeker and Tracer Missiles, as well as mounting the same Interceptor missiles as Barracudas for self-defence. Sometimes they are the only support for Pathfinders working deep behind enemy lines, increasing their firepower with their Tracers that can be carried to a marked target within a moment's notice.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine, Aircraft	Bomber	5+	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin-linked Ion Cannons	45cm	AP3+/AT3+/AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	-	
Interceptor Missiles	30cm	AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missile	

Damage Capacity 2. Critical Hit Effect: The Tigershark's control surfaces are damaged. The pilot loses control and the Tigershark crashes to the ground. The Tigershark and all models on board are destroyed.

Notes: Transport (may carry four of the following units: Gun Drones, Heavy Drones); the Tigershark cannot land (and hence not air assault or embark troops) but can disembark Drones in the normal way after its approach move is completed

TAU ORCA DROPSHIP

The Orca is a dropship, normally used to carry Tau troops from orbiting spacecraft to a planet's surface. It relies more on its massive engine power than aerodynamics to keep it airborne, as it's usually dropped from larger craft and only uses its thrusters to slow its descent. Tau planetary landings can take the form of a massive, concerted drop of whole cadres, or the insertion of small, infiltrating teams into enemy-held territory.

To fulfil this role of troops shuttle, the Orca has a large troop carrying capacity and can even hold the larger battlesuits. However, it is only lightly armoured and is not partially suited for combat drops during battle, where it runs risk of being shot down. Usually, the landing zone is being prepared either by bombardment from other aircraft or infiltrators on the ground, so the Orca can disembark its cargo in relative safety.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine, Aircraft	Bomber	4+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin-linked Burst Cannon	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Missile Pods	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	Forward Arc	
Seeker Missiles	75cm	AT6+	Guided Missiles	

Damage Capacity 2. Critical Hit Effect: The Orca's control surfaces are damaged. The pilot loses control and the Orca crashes to the ground. The Orca and all models on board are destroyed.

Notes: Planetfall, Transport (may carry eight of the following units: Fire Warriors, Pathfinders, Stealth, Gun Drones, Heavy Drones, Crisis, Broadsides; Crisis and Broadsides take up two spaces each)

TAU MORAY ASSAULT SHIP

The Moray is a relatively new addition to the armies of the Tau, in response to the need for heavy fire support without having to send a full Manta Missile destroyer. The Moray is very similar to the Manta in appearance, but is much smaller and cannot carry any troops, but still packs a very serious punch. Its main weapon is either the Railcannon, a macro-version of the Railgun mounted on Tau tanks, or a phalanx of Heavy Ion Cannons firing in unison.

Unlike the Orca, which only drops in to embark or disembark troops before disengaging again as fast as possible, the Moray hovers slowly above the ground and maintains a constant presence on the field. It is a mixture between high-flying heavy skimmer and slow aircraft, much like the larger Manta Missile Destroyer, and can be regarded as the Tau answer to enemy Super-heavy tanks and Scout Titans, in a similar way as the Scorpionfish.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	20cm	5+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Railcannon	75cm	MW2+	Titan Killer (D6), Slow Firing, Fixed Forward Arc	
<u>OR</u> 2 x Heavy Ion Phalanx	60cm	3 x AP3+/AT3+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Interceptor Missiles	30cm	AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missiles	

Damage Capacity 3. Tau Deflector Shield. Critical Hit Effect: The Moray's fire control systems are damaged. No weapons may be fired at ranges greater than 45cm, and the Moray suffers an additional blast marker. Further Critical hits will cause an additional point of damage.

Notes: Support Craft, Planetfall, Reinforced Armour, Fearless. May have either Railcannon OR 2 x Heavy Ion Phalanx as main weapon, not both

TAU MANTA MISSILE DESTROYER

Instead of Titans, Tau make use of small spacecraft as heavy support units to their battle lines. Fighting so close to the surface, the greatest part of their energy must be expended to keep them airborne, so they are not capable of fast manoeuvres once they are committed to ground combat. The ubiquitous Manta Missile Destroyer is the most commonly used of these, and can be employed as transport craft to land troops as well as dedicated support craft. Its firepower is withering and easily a match for the largest Imperial Titans or Ork Gargants, as it sports a pair of Railcannons as main armament, as well as Heavy Ion Phalanxes, scores of heavy Tracer Missiles and smaller defence weapons for close range. The Manta is also widely employed in space engagements as bomber craft, where it mainly relies on its Tracers and guided munitions fired by its Railcannons to damage enemy ships, hence its designation as 'Missile Destroyer'. In addition to its impressive armament, the Manta can transport a full fighting Cadre with support vehicles into battle and deploy them under heavy covering fire. It is heavily constructed with reinforced armour and even has a powerful deflector shield (akin to those installed on the major Tau Spacecraft) to absorb incoming fire.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	20cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin Railcannons	75cm	MW2+	Titan Killer (D6), Fixed Forward Arc	
2 x Heavy Ion Phalanx	60cm	3 x AP3+/AT3+	Fixed Forward Arc	
4 x Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+/AA6+	-	
Interceptor Missiles	30cm	AA5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missiles	

Damage Capacity 8. Tau Deflector Shield. Critical Hit Effect: The Manta's fire control systems are damaged. No weapons may be fired at ranges greater than 45cm, and the Manta suffers an additional blast marker. Further Critical hits will cause an additional point of damage.

Notes: Support Craft, Planetfall, Reinforced Armour, Fearless, Transport (may carry 16 of the following units: Fire Warriors, Pathfinders, Stealth, Gun Drones, Heavy Drones, Crisis, Broadsides; Crisis and Broadsides take up two spaces each; additionally, up to four of the following vehicles may be carried as well: Devilfish, Hammerhead, Swordfish, Skyray, Stingray, Piranha, Tetra)

TAU HERO CLASS CRUISER (VASH'YA CONFIGURATION)

The Hero class is the pinnacle of Tau spaceship construction. Though not a full battleship, it is a very powerfully gunned cruiser that can take on most opposition in space, as it is the first spaceship the Tau built for the sole purpose of combat. In addition to its numerous weapon systems, it has troop transport capabilities and can deploy several Moray assault ships, Orca dropships or even the huge Manta Missile Destroyers by planetfall. Tau don't use massed barrages of orbital bombardment during ongoing ground battles, to avoid friendly fire accidents and collateral damage, as they normally don't wish to destroy what they are fighting for. They employ highly accurate pin-point attacks, though, to take out single enemy units with high precision.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Spacecraft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
2 x Pin-point attack	n/a	MW2+	Titan Killer (D3)	

Notes: Transport (may carry up to 6 Morays and/or Orcas plus any troops carried in them; Mantas (plus any troops in them) can also be carried but count as three craft for transport capacity purposes)

TAU COLLECTOR'S MODELS

TAU DRONE SENTRY TURRET EMPLACEMENT – counts as Crisis Ta'ro'cha

Drone Sentry Turrets are a rare example of Tau stationary defence. They are roughly as large as a warrior in a battlesuit and consist of armoured body, weapon, and ammo / energy supply. It has no crew but is drone controlled and fully automated. Its weapon is normally kept inside the main hull, only in case of firing is the top armour raised and the weapon elevated and brought to bear. Drone Sentry Turrets are usually deploy by Orcas and then remain stationary until picked up again. They are mostly employed to protect important installations, reinforce defence lines or form expendable pockets of resistance that are used as a lure.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	0cm	4+	-	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Twin-linked Missile Pods	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	-	
Twin-linked Plasma Rifles	30cm	AP4+	-	
Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+	-	

Notes: Up to four turret emplacements may be carried in an Orca and may disembark within 15cm as if they had jump packs. From then on they are immobile and cannot change their position until the conclusion of the game

ALTERNATIVE HAMMERHEAD MAIN WEAPONS – counts as Hammerhead with Ion Cannon

Before the current weapon fits of Ion Cannon and Railgun had been developed, the Hammerhead tanks had been equipped with enhanced, upsized versions of the weapons used by Crisis Battlesuits. While these are now not produced anymore, several of the old "Alpha" Hammerheads are still in use with many Septs.

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Twin-linked Long Burst Cannons	30cm	AP4+/AA5+	-
2 x Missile Pod	45cm	AP5+/AT5+	-
Twin-linked Plasma Cannons	45cm	AP4+/AT4+	-
Twin-linked Fusion Cannons	30cm	MW4+	-

Notes: A Hammerhead can only ever carry a single main weapon, this may either be the regular Ion Cannon or Railgun, or one of the weapon fits listed above

TAU DRAGONFISH COMMAND VEHICLE – counts as Scorpionfish

Since the earliest times of Tau expansion, the core military formation has always been the Hunter Cadre. Its flexibility and its capacity to adapt to, and triumph over, a vast array of different obstacles has caused to remain. However, as the size of the military engagements the Tau Empire were involved in grew, it became obvious that larger forces were needed.

Whilst a Shas'o or Shas'el in a Crisis Suit could manage a single Hunter Cadre, which numbered less than a hundred warriors, it was impossible for him to lead larger forces without being overwhelmed.

As such, the Joac'mol Shas'ar'tol Command Vehicle (designated the Dragonfish by the Imperials) was introduced, based on the Orca chassis. Troop carrying capacity was sacrificed for a command and control room and a superb ability to process battlefield sensory inputs. From here, a Shas'o or Shas'el could lead far larger forces, up to twelve Hunter Cadres and the Auxiliary troops associated with them.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	25cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Ion Cannon	60cm	AP4+/AT4+/AA6+	-	
2 x Twin-linked Burst Cannons	15cm	AP4+	-	
Tracer Missiles	75cm	MW6+	Guided Missile	

Damage Capacity 3, Tau Deflector Shield. Critical Hit Effect: The communications array is severed and the Dragonfish loses the Battle Matrix ability for the rest of the game.

Notes: Skimmer, Reinforced Armour, Battle Matrix (same as normal Supreme Commander, but allowing two re-rolls per turn instead of one, and with 'Coordinated Fire' instead of 'Commander')

TAU EXPLORER CLASS CARRIER (VASH'YA CONFIGURATION) – counts as Hero Cruiser

The Explorer is the largest of all Tau star ships, and was one of the first vessels used by the Kor'vattra to bridge the distance between stars. It has been successively replaced by modern ships which are faster, better armoured and have more firepower, but is still being employed as a dedicated attack craft carrier and colony ship, due to its immense transport capacity. It is often being used for concerted orbital drops, as it can launch great numbers of Mantas and Orcas to land ground troops of the Fire Caste.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Spacecraft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
None	n/a	n/a	-	

Notes: Slow and Steady, Transport (may carry up to 24 Morays and/or Orcas plus any troops carried in them; Mantas (plus any troops in them) can also be carried but count as three craft for transport capacity purposes)

TAU ORBITAL BOMBARDMENT

Tau generally refrain from using massed orbital barrages, as they are very destructive and cannot be employed selectively, but will effect everything in the target area. They never use it during ground battles, but sometimes to soften up ground defences before dropping in troops from orbit. Under these circumstances, there is no chance their own ground troops could suffer from friendly fire.

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Explorer (Vash'ya or Bork'an)	n/a	3BP	Macro-weapon
Merchant (Ke'Ishan or Dal'yth)	n/a	3BP	Macro-weapon
Hero (Vash'ya)	n/a	2BP	Macro-weapon
Hero (T'olku)	n/a	6BP	Macro-weapon

Notes: A Dal'yth Merchant would also have a single pin-point attack (see Vash'ya Hero)