

HEAVY WEAPONS

By Bill Gant, December 1998

MELEE WEAPONS

Any weapon with a typical mass of 3 or more pounds may be made into a *Light* or *Heavy* version. *Light* weapons weigh 25% less; *Heavy* weapons weigh 25% more. These adjustments affect weapon Impact.

A character who is extremely strong may wield exceptionally large and heavy weapons that inflict enormous damage and, depending on their Weight Class, are classified as *Massive*, *Huge* and *Giant*.

Melee Weapon Weight Class	Minimum Mass	STR Req'd	Weapon Impact	Weapon Mass
Light	--	1-7	Avg ×0.75	Avg ×0.75
Average	--	8-13	Avg ×1.00	Avg ×1.00
Heavy	3.8 lbs	14-20	Avg ×1.25	Avg ×1.25
Massive	8.8 lbs	21-28	Avg ×1.50	Avg ×1.75
Huge	17.5 lbs	29-37	Avg ×1.75	Avg ×2.50
Giant	24.5 lbs	38-47	Avg ×2.00	Avg ×3.50

Minimum Mass: This is the lightest mass a melee weapon can have for it to be grouped within a particular Weight Class. This means that an *Average* melee weapon must mass 3+ lbs to be made into a *Heavy* weapon, 5+ lbs to be made into a *Massive* weapon, and 7+ lbs to be made into a *Huge* or *Giant* weapon.

STR Req'd: This is the Strength required to optimally wield the weapon. Weaker characters may use the weapon, but the base Impact may not exceed their normal maximum (e.g. 75% of *Average* Impact if the character has 1-7 Strength, even if the weapon being wielded is *Heavy*).

Weapon Impact: To determine the base Impact aspects of a weapon, multiply the base values for an *Average* weapon of the same type by the listed factor. For example, a *Heavy* Broadsword's Edge aspect is equal to 5 (the base value for an *Average* Broadsword) × 1.25 = 6. This is the weapon's maximum base Impact; it may not be exceeded even if the weapon is wielded by a stronger character.

Weapon Mass: To determine the mass of a weapon, multiply the mass of an *Average* weapon of the same type by the listed factor. For example, a *Heavy* Broadsword's mass is equal to 3 (the mass of an *Average* Broadsword) × 1.25 = 3.8 lbs.

BOWS & CROSSBOWS

Bows and crossbows have slightly different Strength requirements. A *Shortbow* requires 8+ Strength to use, and a *Longbow* and *Medium Crossbow* require 10+ Strength. See page 2 for more details.

WEAPON QUALITY

The Weapon Quality of a heavier weapon is likely to be superior to that of a weapon of *Average* weight, by virtue of its greater mass. Conversely, the WQ of a *Light* weapon is likely to be inferior to that of an *Average* weapon. See below for a list of modifiers to Weaponcraft EML:

Weapon	EML Modifier
Light	-10
Average	+0
Heavy	+10
Massive	+30
Huge	+50, +1 SI
Giant	+50, +2 SI

When making a *Huge* weapon, the Weaponcrafter's Skill Index is considered to be one level higher than normal, for the purpose of determining Weapon Quality. The bonus is +2 levels to Skill Index when making a *Giant*-sized weapon.

HAND MODE

A weapon's Hand Mode Penalty is increased by 5 per Strength range *lower* than the optimum. For example, a *Heavy* battlesword will have a Hand Mode Penalty of –20 if wielded by a character with 14-20 Strength (optimum). However, if wielded by a character with 8-13 Strength, the penalty becomes –25, and if used by someone with 1-7 Strength, the penalty becomes –30.

Conversely, the penalty is reduced by 5 per Strength range *higher* than the optimum; in the above example, a character with 21-28 Strength will have a Hand Mode penalty of only –15 instead of –20. The base Impact remains unchanged, however: it is already at its maximum.

TIME & COST TO MAKE

The time and cost needed to manufacture heavier weapons are greater than for *Average*-sized weapons. Conversely, a *Light* weapon's manufacture time and cost are less.

The following is a list of multipliers to the time and cost of manufacture:

Weapon	Time/Cost Multiplier
Light	×0.75
Average	×1.00
Heavy	×1.25
Massive	×1.75
Huge	×2.50
Giant	×3.50

BOWS

The strength of a bow is determined by its pull. A typical *Longbow* has a pull of nearly 100 lbs (archers need to be strong!). A *Shortbow* has a pull of 75 lbs, a *Heavy Longbow* would have a pull of about 150 lbs, and a *Strongbow* would have a pull of over 200 lbs. Only characters possessing at least the Strength Required (see below) can optimally use a bow of a particular draw-strength; weaker characters may (at GM discretion) use the bow at a Special Penalty of EML –5 per point of Strength below the STR Req'd.

A bow's range is determined by its draw-strength. The maximum ranges (in 5-foot hexes) and base Impact – assuming a typical 1.6 oz (0.1 lb) arrow – for each range class are shown below:

BOW	STR Req'd	Weapon Mass	SHORT Hexes / Imp EML +0	MEDIUM Hexes / Imp EML –20	LONG Hexes / Imp EML –40	EXTREME Hexes / Imp EML –80
Light Shortbow	3-7	1.5 lbs	15 / 5p	30 / 4p	60 / 3p	120 / 2p
Light Longbow	5-9	2.3 lbs	20 / 6p	40 / 5p	80 / 4p	160 / 3p
Light Hartbow	7-11	1.5 lbs	25 / 7p	50 / 6p	100 / 5p	200 / 4p
Shortbow	8-13	2.0 lbs	20 / 6p	40 / 5p	80 / 4p	160 / 3p
Longbow	10-15	3.0 lbs	25 / 8p	50 / 7p	100 / 6p	200 / 5p
Hartbow	12-17	2.0 lbs	30 / 9p	60 / 8p	120 / 7p	240 / 6p
Heavy Shortbow	14-20	2.5 lbs	25 / 8p	50 / 7p	100 / 6p	200 / 5p
Heavy Longbow	16-22	3.8 lbs	30 / 10p	60 / 9p	120 / 8p	240 / 7p
Heavy Hartbow	18-24	2.5 lbs	35 / 11p	70 / 10p	140 / 9p	280 / 8p
Strongbow	23-30	5.3 lbs	35 / 12p	70 / 11p	140 / 10p	280 / 9p
Greatbow	31-39	7.5 lbs	40 / 14p	80 / 13p	160 / 12p	320 / 11p
Heavy Greatbow	40-50	10.5 lbs	45 / 16p	90 / 15p	180 / 14p	360 / 13p

CROSSBOWS

A crossbow is a stored-energy weapon, which can be kept in a loaded state without effort from the user. With the aid of mechanical spanning devices, a powerful crossbow can be shot and loaded by a person lacking the strength demanded by a conventional bow of identical draw-strength. Because of this, it is possible for an ordinary man to operate an Arbalest.

Extra-large crossbows are classified as Arbalests, Heavy Arbalests and Siege Arbalests. Any crossbow bigger than a Siege Arbalest is classified as a siege engine and requires different skills (and a crew) to use.

It should be noted that crossbows are generally loathed in Hârn, and the use of these “demonic” devices against people is punishable by death. No military force employs the crossbow anywhere in Western Lythia, and its use is limited to a few hunters with a warped sense of sportsmanship.

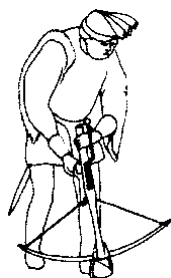
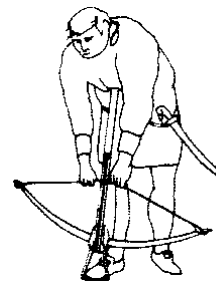
A crossbow’s range is determined by its draw-strength. The maximum ranges (in 5-foot hexes) and base Impact – assuming a typical 2.0 oz (0.1 lb) quarrel – are shown below:

CROSSBOW	STR Req'd	Weapon Mass	SHORT Hexes / Imp EML +0	MEDIUM Hexes / Imp EML –20	LONG Hexes / Imp EML –40	EXTREME Hexes / Imp EML –80
Light Crossbow	5-9	3.8 lbs	15 / 6p	30 / 5p	60 / 4p	120 / 3p
Medium Crossbow	10-15	5.0 lbs	20 / 8p	40 / 7p	80 / 6p	160 / 5p
Heavy Crossbow	16-22	6.3 lbs	25 / 10p	50 / 9p	100 / 8p	200 / 7p
Arbalest	23-30	8.8 lbs	30 / 12p	60 / 11p	120 / 10p	240 / 9p
Heavy Arbalest	31-39	12.5 lbs	35 / 14p	70 / 13p	140 / 12p	280 / 11p
Siege Arbalest	40-50	17.5 lbs	40 / 16p	80 / 15p	160 / 14p	320 / 13p

SPANNING DEVICES

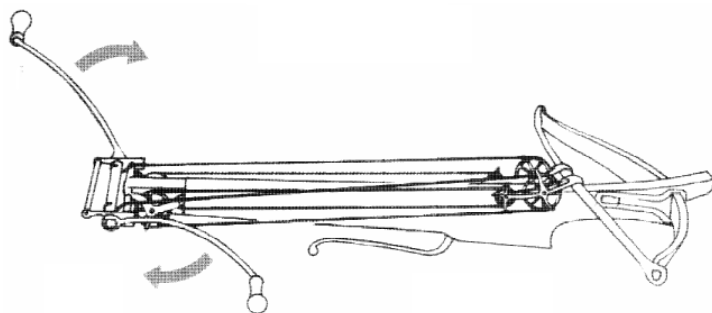
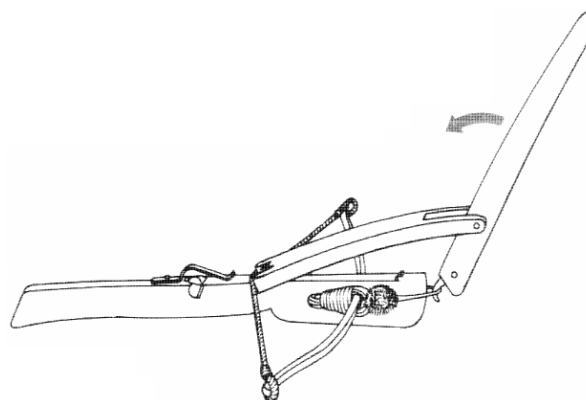
Spanning involves drawing the bowstring back until it is held by the crossbow’s nut. Weaker crossbows can be spanned by hand, but more powerful ones require the assistance of mechanical devices.

If the bowman’s Strength is *equal to or better than* the STR Req’d (e.g. he possesses 10-15 Strength and is using a *Medium* or *Light Crossbow*), he may span the string by *Stirrup and Hands*. This involves placing a foot in the stirrup at the front of the weapon, and drawing the string back with both hands. This is the default method, and a quarrel may be shot once every **2** rounds.



If the bowman’s Strength is **1 level below** the STR Req’d (e.g. he possesses 10-15 Strength and is using a *Heavy Crossbow*), he must use a *Belt and Claw*. This involves the bowman bending down and attaching a claw at his belt to the bowstring, and as he straightens his back the bow is bent. This simple device weighs 1 lb and costs 10d. A variant is the *Cord and Pulley*. Using the Belt and Claw limits the rate of fire to one shot every **3** rounds.

If the bowman’s Strength is **2 levels below** the STR Req’d (e.g. he possesses 10-15 Strength and is using an *Arbalest*), he must use a *Push Lever*. This item hooks onto the stirrup, and gives the user’s arm a mechanical advantage as he pulls back the upper limb of the lever, which in turn causes the string to be pushed back to the nut. This clever device weighs 2 lbs and costs 25d. A slightly more sophisticated variant is the *Goatsfoot Lever*, which pulls the string back instead of pushing it. Using the Push Lever limits the rate of fire to one shot every **4** rounds.



If the bowman’s Strength is **3 or more levels below** the STR Req’d (e.g. he possesses 10-15 Strength and is using a *Heavy Arbalest*), he must use a *Windlass*. This item uses a system of pulleys and a pair of rotating arms that are attached to the butt of the weapon, which winds the string back to the nut. This brilliant if cumbersome device weighs 4 lbs and costs 60d. Using the Windlass limits the rate of fire to one shot every **6** rounds.