



GLAIVE Mini v1.0 by T Bone

GURPS Light Arms Invention Expansion

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GLAIVE for GURPS is a complete design system for low-tech melee and ranged weapons of any size, generating stats for Min ST, thrust/swing damage, readying time, balance, and more.

The melee-only GLAIVE Mini you're reading is far less ambitious but still handy. It offers quick damage and ST for a Giant's club or a character's invention. Its results aren't carefully calculated from complex inputs; they don't hew to any physics-based goodness. But they *do* mesh pretty well with existing GURPS weapon stats!

Super Simple Melee Weapon Stats

Really basic Damage Add

At the simplest, you don't even need GLAIVE Mini. On GURPS' Size and Speed/Range Table, read Linear Measurement as weapon weight in lbs. and Size as Damage Add, i.e., the bonus to thr or sw damage. (For weights in between listed values, use the lower listed value, e.g., treat 13 lbs. as 10 lbs.) You now have weapon damage.

Convert bonuses to dice: a 50-lb. weapon adds 2d+1 to damage.

Fudge all results wherever you like – say, +1 sw damage for a mace. It's crude but easy. That's all there is to it!

Really basic weapon ST

The Size and Speed/Range Table doesn't give us weapon ST. Set ST to 6 + weight if one-handed, or 6 + (weight / 2) if two-handed.

Further fudging (should you care): Add 1 to ST if an unbalanced weapon. Subtract 1 if thrust only. Subtract 1 if Range includes C.

The GLAIVE Mini Table (GMT)

For more detail, use the GLAIVE Mini Table (GMT) at right, with its added rows. Read weight on the left to find Dam Add *and* ST.

Example: 13 lbs. (treat as 12 lbs.) means thr+4, sw+4, and ST 14.

If you like, tweak results using the ideas above. You're done!

The GLAIVE Mini Weapon Builder System

Here's where the real GLAIVE Mini begins. Get ready to build:

First take weight and find its row on the GMT. Now, for each appropriate item on the Modifier Table below, modify the weight row to find Dam Add (mods may differ for thr and sw), then to find ST.

Row mods are cumulative (+2 rows and -1 row combine to +1 row).

Example: From the GMT, a 7-lb. weapon starts with Dam Add +3 (thr+3 and sw+3) and ST 12. Our weapon also sports these mods:

- Long (-1 Dam Add row, as it's a Reach 2 weapon)
- Two-handed (+1 Dam Add row, -2 ST rows)
- Unbalanced (+2 Dam Add rows for swings, +1 ST row)

Net mods are +2 (sw) Dam Add rows and -1 ST row. Treat weight as 2 rows heavier (10 lbs.) for sw dam, and 1 row lighter (6 lbs.) for ST.

Final stats: thr+3, sw+4, and ST 11. That's the whole system!

Modifier Table

modifier	Dam Add rows	ST rows	notes
Long	-1		For all weapons with max Reach 2.
Very Long	-2		For all weapons with max Reach 3 and longer.
Two-handed	+1	-2	For any weapon used two-handed.
Unbalanced	+2 (sw)	+1	For Axe/Mace & Flail (1- or 2-hnd) and Polearm weapons. Adds U to Parry, ‡ to long weapons.
Semibalanced	+1 (sw)		New, optional replacement for Unbalanced (see page 2). Adds S to Parry, § to long weapons.
Center Grip		-2	For any weapon used with Polearm, Spear, or Staff skill.
Thruster	+2 (thr), -2 (sw)		For balanced weapons with Reach C or 1 and poor swing: Knife weapons, saber, and smallsword.
Long Thruster	+3 (thr), -3 (sw)		Version of Thruster for Reach 2 and longer: rapier, spear, long spear, and lance.
Stabber	+2 (thr)		For thrusting broadsword, thrusting bastard sword, and smallsword.
Pick	-1 (sw)		For pick, warhammer, and swung impaling halberd.
Stick	+2		For baton, short staff, wooden stake, and quarterstaff.
Chuk		-2	For nunchaku. Could be used for any light flail inflicting lesser defense penalties.

Additional notes on the modifiers

Unbalanced: For unbalanced weapons and unbalanced skills, not balanced weapons with an odd U on Parry (e.g., one-handed bastard sword).

Semibalanced (SB): A new option (see page 2).

Center Grip: One-hand grip near the weapon's center, or wide two-hand grip, for easy wielding.

Thruster and Long Thruster: For balanced weapons specialized for thrusts but not swings. Good for knives, spears, and fencing weapons!

Stabber: For swords with exceptional stabbing ability. Suggested criteria: Impaling point; thr Reach limited to max Reach only, and no closer; weapon takes U on Parry if Reach 2+ and used one-handed; cost \$120 x (weight + 1) or more.

Stick: Because simple, balanced wooden sticks inflict oddly high damage in GURPS. Suggested criterion: Cost \$10 or more (no cheap clubs!).

Recreating Existing Weapons

Many redesigns will yield stats that perfectly match GURPS; others will vary by just a point of damage or ST. A few notables and design tips:

- Used two-handed, the katana gains +1 thr damage, the greatsword sheds 1 ST, and the spear and long spear each shed 2 ST.
- The maul, great axe, and glaive each gain +1 sw damage – arguably a realistic and welcome counterpoint to their great slowness!
- Give the dagger Stabber (granting a special-case waiver to the cost criterion). Give both the dagger and blackjack Thruster. (Blackjack damage is thr, even if usage is swing-like).
- The lance can be built with Very Long, Long Thruster, and a special Braced mod (+1 thr Dam Add row, +1 ST row, no Parry).
- For weapons requiring only a *touch*, not a blow (stun gun, force sword, and cattle prod), use GURPS rules for damage. To get ST from the GMT, halve weight, find ST, then halve ST (e.g., a 2-lb. prod halves weight to get ST 6, then halves ST 6 to get final ST 3).

Wrapping Up

GLAIVE Mini (like GURPS) doesn't answer how to set length for a Giant's club, or why one sword gets a U Parry and another doesn't, or how to use a greatsword one-handed, etc. Use the full GLAIVE for those! But for cheap & quick, GLAIVE Mini is plenty fun.

GLAIVE Mini Table

lbs.	Dam Add	ST
0.25	-3	5
0.35	-3	5
0.5	-2	5
0.75	-2	5
1	-1	6
1.5	-1	7
2	+0	8
2.5	+0	9
3	+1	10
4	+1	10
5	+2	11
6	+2	11
7	+3	12
8	+3	12
10	+4	13
12	+4	14
15	+5	15
17	+5	16
20	+6	17
25	+6	18
30	+7	20
40	+7	22
50	+8	25
60	+8	27
70	+9	30
85	+9	35
100	+10	40
125	+10	45
150	+11	50
175	+11	55
200	+12	60
250	+12	65
300	+13	70
400	+13	75
500	+14	85
600	+14	90
700	+15	100
850	+15	110
1000	+16	125
1250	+16	135

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Designer's notes, examples, and uninvited solicitations

Building Realistic Designs

More interested in "realism" than in compatibility with existing stats? While that's a tricky goal, here are tentative ideas for mods:

- Long and Very Long are harsh on big weapons (though in reality, long things *are* hard to swing fast). They exist to rein in damage to GURPS-like levels. Likewise, Pick, Stick, and Chuk exist only to help match GURPS stats. Experiment with dropping these mods.
- Two-handed offers a scant +1 Dam Add rows, to match GURPS' modest damage for big weapons. Try +2 instead for more oomph.
- Long Thruster exists to make two-handed spear/long spear match GURPS damage. Consider using only Thruster, for any Reach.
- Stabber criteria are devised to include the listed weapons while purposely excluding the katana and greatsword, to match GURPS damage. Tweak the criteria and apply the mod wherever you like.
- Keep the mods Unbalanced, SB, Center Grip, and Thruster as is.

Experiment with all mods, rules, and even the GMT – but be prepared for very different results, especially with large weapons!

Note that for any rigid weapon these rules give both thr and sw dam, though one may be typically ignored for the weapon or invalid for its skill. *Example: A rapier uses Long and Long Thruster, for thr+1 imp, sw-2 cr, and ST 9. An axe uses Unbalanced, for thr+1 cr, sw+2 cut, and ST 11. You can swing with a rapier and thrust with an axe, though their skills may or may not cover these inefficient actions!*

Balance, Readiness, and Number of Hands

First, a review of the apparent effects of balance and length in GURPS, as gathered from its weapon tables and rules:

- Any weapon 1 hex and unbalanced takes a U Parry.
- Any weapon 2 or more hexes and balanced (except the rapier) requires two hands (‡). (Some can also be used one-handed, often with drawbacks: reduced Reach for spear, and U Parry for bastard sword and long spear, though no one-hand drawback for katana.)
- Any weapon 2 or more hexes and unbalanced takes a U Parry, requires two hands (‡), and becomes unready if swung (‡ → †).

B270 outlines how a high wielder ST as a multiple of weapon ST lessens the two-hand and the unready requirements for long weapons. The Table below summarizes this (adding conditions for one-hand unready use of unbalanced weapons, apparently left out of the B text). The Table also slips in a third *semibalanced* (SB) option.

Long weapons: ST, balance, hands, and effects after swing

ST multiple	‡ 2 hands balanced	§ 2 hands semibalanced	† 2 hands unbalanced
1	2-hnd, ready	2-hnd, unready	2-hnd, unready
1.25	2-hnd, ready	2-hnd, ready	2-hnd, unready
1.5	1-hnd, unready	2-hnd, ready	2-hnd, ready
1.75	1-hnd, unready	1-hnd, unready	2-hnd, ready
2	1-hnd, ready	1-hnd, unready	1-hnd, unready
2.5	1-hnd, ready	1-hnd, ready	1-hnd, unready
3	1-hnd, ready	1-hnd, ready	1-hnd, ready

Building semibalanced weapons

1. Use the Semibalanced modifier: +1 (sw) Dam Add row.
2. Mark Parry with S (for semibalanced). An S Parry weapon *can* be used on the same turn after an attack (or vice-versa) like a balanced weapon, but at -2 on the Parry (or -4 on the attack).
3. Replace ‡ on a long unbalanced weapon's ST with §. (Per the Table above, § falls between † and ‡ in the effect of wielder ST.)
4. Option: For any weapon with U Parry (e.g., unbalanced halberd), only sw uses U Parry, while thr gets S Parry. For any weapon with sw S Parry (e.g., SB halberd), thr gets normal Parry.

Skills for semibalanced weapons

Use unbalanced skills normally, or balanced skills at a default: Axe/Mace (or Broadsword or Shortsword at -2); Polearm (or Spear or Staff at -2); Two-Handed Axe/Mace (or Two-Handed Sword at -2).

Option 1: Use an Average technique to remove the penalty for using a semibalanced weapon with a balanced weapon skill.

Option 2: Use balanced skills at no penalty, but with +1 ST row for suboptimal handling. (This avoids any messing with skill defaults.)

Ideas for using semibalanced weapons

- Create heavy, chopping versions of balanced weapons.
- Create more agile versions of heavy polearms, axes, etc.
- Option: Eliminate the Pick mod, and build picks with SB instead.
- Use SB for GURPS weapons with apparent "in between" balance, like the hatchet (which has no U on Parry) and naginata (below).
- Out of combat, consider an all-round bonus for unbalanced weapons vs objects (doors, tree limbs, etc.) and a lesser bonus for SB.
- Optionally, apply other sensible-sounding effects of SB: +2 on ST rolls to unstick a SB pick; -2 TH (not -4 TH) to use a broken-off SB weapon head as a clumsy axe/mace per B485; etc.

Examples of semibalanced weapons

Example: A 2.5-lb. SB machete uses SB for +1 (sw) Dam Add row. Final stats: thr+0, sw+1, ST 9, Parry 0S (optionally, sw Parry 0S, thr Parry 0). Use Axe/Mace normally, or Shortsword at -2.

Example: An 8-lb. SB glaive uses Very Long, Two-handed, SB, and Center Grip for net -1 (thr) and +0 (sw) Dam Add rows, -4 ST rows. Final stats: thr+3, sw+3, ST 10§, Parry 0S (optionally, sw Parry 0S, thr Parry 0). Use Polearm normally, or Spear or Staff at -2.

Odds and Ends

- Notes on the GMT: ST values in human ranges are arbitrary, set to match GURPS stats reasonably well. At higher ranges, ST rises at half the rate of weight, meaning Basic Lift rises at the same rate as weight. Further progression of the GMT should be obvious.
- GURPS' two-handed flail lacks the expected ‡. Call this a special effect of long flails? Or redesign the weapon with SB and add §? Or stick with Unbalanced and just add the missing ‡? It's your call.
- Here's a naginata re-design with SB to explain its lack of ‡: Long, Two-Handed, SB, and Center Grip (but not with sword form), for thr+2, sw+3, ST 9§, and Parry 0S (optionally, sw Parry 0S, thr Parry 0). It's fast with thrusts, though still a 6-lb. polearm; unless wielded with ST 12 or more, it becomes unready after a swing.
- What's that strange U Parry on the one-handed bastard sword? You could change it to sw Parry 0U and thr Parry 0S. Or make it sw Parry 0S and thr Parry 0. Or just make it all Parry 0. It's your call.
- Kusari uses Very Long and Unbalanced. Normal whips do too, but also apply -3 ST rows, and get Dam Add from *one quarter* weight.
- The oddball scythe has unusually poor stats in GURPS. Perhaps it calls for a mod named Not A Real Weapon, which both lowers damage and raises ST?
- Shields, futuristic whips, and chainsaws aren't covered in these rules. Apologies to all Viking dominatrix lumberjacks hewing the zombie hordes. (*Why is this not a movie?*)

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