

GLAIVE Mini v2.3 by T Bone

GURPS Light Arms Invention Expansion

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GLAIVE Mini (GMI) is a simple melee weapon creation system for *GURPS* 4e, yielding quick **dam** and **ST** for a Giant's club, a PC blacksmith's invention, or any other design. Like *GURPS*, it doesn't address how to set length for that Giant's club, or how to calculate a weapon's cost, or why *this* sword gets a U Parry and *that* sword doesn't. Its output isn't carefully calculated from complex inputs or physics formulae. But its results *do* mesh very well with existing *Basic Set* (and *great* with *Low-Tech*) weapon stats!

Designing a Weapon in Two Steps

- Find the row for the weapon weight on the GMT. (Use the next *lower* value: 8 and 9 lbs. use the 8 lb. row.)
- For each appropriate item on the Modifier Table below, modify the weight *row* to find each of three stats: **thr Dam Add**, **sw Dam Add**, and **ST**. (Row mods are cumulative: +2 rows and -1 row combine to +1 row.)

With a few short notes (below), that's the whole system!

Example: Let's make a sledgehammer weighing 11 lbs. That's the 10-lb. row on the GMT, which suggests **Dam Add +4** and **ST 13**. But first we add a few modifiers:

- **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 unchanged for thr dam, 2 rows heavier (15 lbs.) for sw dam, and 1 row lighter (8 lbs.) for ST.

Final stats: thr+4, sw+5, and ST 12½. Done!

Notes on the modifiers

Use the notes in the Modifier Table, plus the following:

- **Unbalanced:** Intended for true unbalanced weapons using appropriate skills, not balanced weapons with an odd U on Parry (e.g., 1-hnd bastard sword).
- **Semibalanced:** A new (*not* official *GURPS*!) option for tip-heavy swords, agile polearms, and other designs "in between" balanced and unbalanced (page 2).
- **Center Grip:** A one-hand grip near the weapon's center, or a wide, two-hand grip, for easier wielding.
- **Thruster** and **Long Thruster:** For balanced weapons specialized for thrusts but not swings. Good for knives, spears, rapiers, or any "thrust-only" weapon.
- **Stabber:** For swords and knives with exceptional impaling ability. Suggested criteria: thr **Reach** equals max **Reach** only (no closer); usable 1-hnd but with U Parry if max **Reach** 2+; can't combine with Thruster/Long Thruster if 2+ lbs.; min. cost \$600 if 3+ lbs.

GLAIVE Mini Table (GMT)

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



Notes on specific weapons

- **Blackjack:** Use Thruster (as damage is thr, even if swung).
- **Dagger:** Use Stabber and Thruster.
- **Lance:** Use Very Long, Long Thruster, and a special Braced mod: +1 thr **Dam Add** row, +1 **ST** row, no Parry.
- **Kusari:** Use Very Long and Unbalanced.
- **Whips:** As kusari, plus a special rule: Apply -3 **ST** rows, and get **Dam Add** using only one-fourth weight.
- **Touch weapons (stun gun, force sword, 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).

Other notes

- **Differences:** GMI re-creates many *GURPS BS* designs right on the nose, but differences crop up. (Examples: With GMI, the *BS* katana gains +1 thr **dam**, greatsword sheds 1 **ST**, and spear/long spear each shed 2 **ST** if used 2-handed.)
- **Cost:** How mods affect cost is up to you. (At the least, Stabber and Poor Stabber suggest modified blade costs.)
- **Versatility:** For any rigid weapon, GMI offers both thr and sw **dam**, even if usage or skill typically ignores one of these.

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. Normal usage notwithstanding, GM willing, you *can* swing with a rapier and thrust with an axe!

Use with Other GURPS Supplements

Martial Arts (MA) and **Low-Tech (LT)** offer more weapons to play with. (Some may call for new mods!) *LT* also gives a few *BS* weapons new stats – which work *great* with GMI:

- The shortsword and cutlass are candidates for Stabber. This would give them +1 thr **dam**, matching their new stats in *LT*.
- *LT* offers new stats for an axe used with two hands. GMI recreates *BS* and *LT* stats, for 1-hnd and new 2-hnd use.
- *LT* and GMI both grant the maul, great axe, and scythe +1 sw **dam**. (GMI, but not *LT*, also gives the glaive +1 sw **dam**.)
- A GMI-built warhammer sheds 1 **ST**. (But boosting weight to 8 lbs. gives it *BS*'s **ST** 12½ and *LT*'s new higher **dam**.)
- *MA* and *LT Companion 2* offer hooks, hammerheads, and other add-ons that modify weapon weight and cost. Ignoring those books' methods for determining **ST**, you can use GMI as-is to get **dam** and **ST**, using the modified weapons' final weights. (At your discretion, weapon *balance* may also change. Heavy add-ons at the tip could shift balanced to semibalanced, or semibalanced to unbalanced. Add-ons near the hilt could do the opposite, even while adding weight.)

Modifier Table Mods noted as "Replaces..." cannot be combined with the named mod. Other mutually exclusive choices are as suggested by notes.

modifier	Dam Add rows	ST rows	notes
Center Grip		-2	For any weapon used with Polearm, Spear, or Staff skill.
Chuk		-2	For nunchaku or other light flails that inflict lesser defense penalties than normal flails.
Long	-1 (thr, sw)		For all weapons with max Reach 2.
Long Thruster	+3 (thr), -3 (sw)		Replaces Thruster for weapons with Reach 2 or longer: rapier, spear, long spear, and lance.
Pick	-1 (sw)		For swung impaling weapons: pick, warhammer, and halberd.
Poor Stabber	-2 (thr)		For blades with short, broad, highly curved, or otherwise less effective stabbing points.
Semibalanced	+1 (sw)		Replaces Unbalanced . Mark Parry with S. Change any † to § if Reach 2+ and swung (page 2).
Stabber	+2 (thr)		For superior impaling blades: thrusting broadsword/bastard sword, dagger, and smallsword.
Stick	+2 (thr, sw)		For balanced, wooden weapons: baton, short staff, wooden stake, and quarterstaff.
Thruster	+2 (thr), -2 (sw)		For balanced weapons with Reach C or 1 and weak swings: all knives, saber, and smallsword.
Two-handed	+1 (thr, sw)	-2	For any weapon used two-handed. Mark ST with †.
Unbalanced	+2 (sw)	+1	For use with unbalanced skills. Mark Parry with U. Change any † to ‡ if Reach 2+ and swung.
Very Long	-2 (thr, sw)		Replaces Long for weapons with max Reach 3 and longer.

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Options, examples, and designer's notes

New Option: Semibalanced Weapons

Balance, readiness, and number of hands

Below is a summary of the apparent effects of balance and length in **BS**, as gathered from its weapon tables and rules:

- An **unbalanced** weapon (except the hatchet) takes a U on Parry.
- A **balanced Reach 2+** weapon (except the rapier) uses two hands: mark ST with †. (Some can also be used 1-hnd, often with drawbacks: reduced Reach for the spear and U Parry for the bastard sword and long spear, though no 1-hnd drawback for the katana.)
- An **unbalanced Reach 2+** weapon requires two hands: mark ST with †. If swung, it becomes unready: change † to ‡ for sw ST.

High wielder ST (**BS** 270) can eliminate unreadiness (though not U Parry) and even 2-hnd requirements. The Table below summarizes this and adds (1) conditions for 1-hnd but unready use of ‡ weapons (a detail missing in **BS**) and (2) an original *semibalanced* (SB) option.

Minimum hands required, and readiness after attack

wielder ST‡	mark on ST		
weapon ST	† (balanced)	§ (semi-balanced)	‡ (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 (SB) modifier (for +1 (sw) Dam Add row).
2. A semibalanced weapon takes an S on Parry. An S Parry weapon *can* Parry and attack on the same turn, but at -2 on the Parry (or -4 on the attack, should attack follow Parry that turn).
3. A semibalanced Reach 2+ weapon requires two hands: mark ST with †. If swung, it becomes unready: change † to § for sw ST.

Thrust! Parry! Option

Apply the normal U and S to a Parry used with *swings*. Lessen each by a level with *thrusts*: U becomes S, and S becomes normal.

Example: *In the same turn, an unbalanced axe can't swing and Parry (0U), but using this option can thrust and Parry (0S; see penalties above). In the same turn, a semibalanced axe can swing and Parry with penalties (0S), or can thrust and Parry without penalties (0). Whichever axe you use, this option gives axe thrusts a reason!*

Skills for semibalanced weapons

Decide whether a semibalanced design's natural handling uses a balanced or unbalanced skill, with the *other* defaulting at -2. For example, choose Two-Handed Axe/Mace or Two-Handed Sword, or choose Polearm or Spear, and so on, with the other skill at -2.

GM willing, buy off the -2 defaulting skill penalty with an Average technique. (Alternately, as a kludge to ignore defaults entirely, add +1 ST row to the build and rule that, with a little extra muscle, this particular semibalanced design is freely usable with *either* of the skills.)

Ideas for using semibalanced weapons

- Set a design's balance as you like. Use SB for "chopping" swords and knives, more agile polearms and axes, or any existing **GURPS** weapon with apparent "in-between" balance, like the hatchet (which has no U on Parry) and the naginata (see example below).
- Out of combat, consider a damage bonus for unbalanced weapons vs objects (doors, tree limbs, etc.), and use a lesser bonus for SB.
- Optionally, apply other sensible-sounding effects to SB: Allow +2 on ST rolls to unstick a SB pick; apply -2 TH (not -4 TH) to use a broken-off SB weapon head as a clumsy axe/mace (**BS** 485); etc.

Examples of semibalanced weapons

As SB weapons, these examples all have Parry 0S. (If you use the above Thrust! Parry! Option, they have sw Parry 0S, thr Parry 0.)

- A **2.5-lb. machete** is a simple build, using *Poor Stabber* and SB for net -2 (thr) and +1 (sw) Dam Add rows. Final stats: **thr-1, sw+1, ST 9**. Use *Shortsword* skill, or *Axe/Mace* -2. (Make that *Axe/Mace*, or *Shortsword* -2, for a machete with more axe-like handling.)
- *Rebuild a 6-lb. naginata* using *Long*, *Two-handed*, *Center Grip* (not with sword form!), and SB (to explain the lack of ‡) for net +0 (thr) and +1 (sw) Dam Add rows, -4 ST rows. Final stats: **thr+2, sw+3, ST 9†** (sw ST 9§). Use *Polearm* skill, or *Spear* or *Staff* at -2.
- An **8-lb. glaive** with SB uses the same build as the above naginata but replaces *Long* with *Very Long*, for net -1 (thr) and +0 (sw) Dam Add rows. Final stats: **thr+3, sw+3, ST 10†** (sw ST 10§).
Both polearms become unready after a swing unless wielded with x1.25 ST (a modest ST 12 for the naginata, ST 13 for the glaive).

Customizing GLAIVE Mini's Mods

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

- **Two-handed** offers a scant +1 Dam Add rows, to match **BS'** modest damage for such weapons. Try +2 instead for more oomph.
- **Stabber's** complex criteria are set to include the noted weapons while excluding katana, greatsword, rapier, saber, and cavalry saber, all to match **BS**. Include shortsword and cutlass if you like (see page 1), or tweak criteria to encompass even more weapons.
- **Poor Stabber** could be given a *variable* (thr) Dam Add row, from a modest -1 up to -3 or more (for a low-cost point barely fit to poke).
- **Long** and **Very Long** exist to rein in dam for long weapons (which are hard to swing fast). Likewise, **Long Thruster**, **Poor Stabber**, **Pick**, **Chuk**, and **Stick** exist to achieve **BS** stats for the appropriate weapons. Experiment with dropping some of these, or set new criteria (such as a minimum \$10 cost for Stick – no cheap clubs!).
- **Unbalanced**, **Semibalanced**, **Center Grip**, and **Thruster** feel right to the author as they are – but these, too, are at your whim.

GLAIVE Mini Odds and Ends

Oddities: A few **BS** (and **LT**) weapons raise questions, including:

- **GURPS 2-hnd flail** lacks the expected ‡. Is this a special effect of whirling? Or should you redesign the weapon with SB and add §? Or stick with Unbalanced and just add the missing ‡? It's your call.
- What's that odd U Parry on the **1-hnd bastard sword**? You could change it to sw Parry 0U and thr Parry 0S. Or sw Parry 0S and thr Parry 0. Or just use a sword-like Parry 0 all around. It's your call.

GMT progression: The GMT's human-range ST values are arbitrary, set to reasonably match **BS** stats. Above that, ST rises at half the rate of weight (meaning that Basic Lift rises at the same rate as weight).

Future work: Shields, futuristic whips, and chainsaws aren't covered in GLAIVE Mini. Apologies to all Viking dominatrix lumberjacks hewing the zombie hordes. (*Why is this not a movie?*)

Alternate Versions of GLAIVE

GLAIVE Nano

Is GLAIVE Mini *still* not quick & easy enough for you? Try this:

- **Really instant weapons:** Get Dam Add and ST from the GMT, as above. Just tweak dam by feel from there: +1 sw for smashy stuff (a mace), +1 thr for stabby stuff (a sword), etc. Do the same for ST: +1 if unbalanced, -1 if thrust only, -1 if Range includes C, -2 or so for using two hands. Or otherwise just wing it. Now go fight!
- **Lost your GMT?:** Use **GURPS'** Size and Speed/Range Table in a pinch. Read Linear Measurement as weapon weight in lbs. and read Size as Dam Add. Set ST to 6 + weight if 1-hnd, or 6 + two-thirds weight if 2-hnd. Tweak dam and ST if you like, as above. Done.

GLAIVE for GURPS 3e

GLAIVE for GURPS 3e, an old predecessor to GMI, is a full system for designing melee and ranged low-tech weapons of any size. It generates stats for Min ST, thr/sw dam, readying time, and more. While not updated for 4e, it may hold some good ideas for tinkerers.