

# Community Integrated Development

Welcome to CID! The development team at Privateer Press is excited to be working with our community to ensure that WARMACHINE and HORDES are the best games they can be. Before you get started, let's talk about playtesting and the CID process.

## What is playtesting?

The word playtesting is kind of a misnomer. Good playtesters are not really playing a game so much as they are running an experiment. The goal of this experiment is to test model balance and rules interactions. Winning or losing these games is not important at all. In fact, the proper mind-set for playtesting is that both players win if they generate useful feedback, and both players lose if they do not.

Indeed, playtesters must work together as partners during a playtest session. Playtesting is not a competition, and the skill of the individual players is not being tested. Participants need to work as a team, reminding each other of relevant rules and discussing their tactics openly to ensure an accurate test of the rules in question. Playtesters need to be willing to rewind the game state, discuss the situation with their partners, and approach each issue from multiple directions. While it can also be fun, playtesting is hard work, with the ultimate goal and responsibility of helping to create a superior finished product.

## How do I register to participate in CID?

You can find information about the registration process for CID in [this Insider](#). New user accounts for CID are manually approved. New accounts will generally be approved on Mondays but can take longer if there has been a surge of new applications.

## Where do I find the rules to be playtested?

When a testing cycle begins, rules and concepts for the models will be posted on the CID forum in the Models & Rules Reference sub-forum. Playtesters can then download the rules and test them at their convenience.

## How long does a playtest cycle last, and what happens during each cycle?

A standard playtest cycle will run for four to six weeks. As the dev team gathers data during each cycle, they will evaluate it, make changes accordingly, and post an updated rules file for further testing.

In addition, there will be weekly updates of the feedback form (see below) and the sub-forums for the current cycle. These updates will usually occur on Wednesdays. When an update is posted, all of the sub-forums related to that cycle will be locked, and a new sub-forum will be created to

replace them. This will ensure that all of the posts in each section of the forums are up to date and relevant.

The feedback form will be closed every Monday so that we can extract and correlate the data. A new feedback form will be made available the following Wednesday.

## How do I submit feedback?

There are several ways to submit feedback on the CID forum:

- 1) The feedback form is a survey embedded in the CID forum. This form provides playtesters with a quick and easy way to submit feedback after their playtest games. The information we gather through the feedback form will be viewable only by the development team. This ensures that the feedback form is a safe way for playtesters to submit their feedback even if they disagree with popular opinion. Playtesters should use the feedback form only after completing a session of playtest games. *Please fill out the feedback form only once each day; any additional submissions will be deleted.*
- 2) You can post battle reports in the Battle Reports sub-forum. A template pinned at the top of the sub-forum illustrates the preferred way to format your battle reports. Filling out a battle report takes some effort but is by far the best way to submit feedback, as it provides context, reasoning, and evidence to back up your opinions. Other users are welcome to post questions and comments for the original poster, but conversations on the battle reports forum must remain focused on the specific game(s) in the OP's report.
- 3) If you need clarification about the new rules being tested, or if you find any typos or notice an inconsistent or redundant name for a weapon or ability, please post on the Playtest Rules Questions forum. *This forum is for active playtest rules only.* Any questions about existing rules in WARMACHINE and HORDES should be posted on the Rules sub-forum on our main forums.
- 4) If you have feedback about playtest models/rules that is not based on actual playtesting (i.e., theory only), you must post it on the Theory & List Building forum.

## What is good feedback?

Without good feedback, a playtest session is worthless. Playtesters should discuss their observations during and after the game, come to conclusions, and submit their feedback while it is still fresh in their minds.

Feedback needs to be constructive and objective and must clearly state the strengths and weaknesses of the models along with any recommended changes. Every opinion needs to be explained with reasoning and evidence. Your feedback should be concise and clearly organized. The formatting and organization of your feedback can greatly influence how beneficial it is to the development team.

*Not all feedback is equal.* A new ability that could wreak havoc on the tournament meta is a much bigger concern than the difference between DEF 9 or DEF 10 on a new colossal. Make sure you organize your feedback with a clear indication of its importance.

*Be clear but concise.* Playtesters need to balance being clear with being concise. It is not necessary to write a novella explaining every tiny detail of your battle report just to prove that RAT 4 is too low for a new shooty unit. In a similar vein, saying that something is “bad” or “overpowered” without further explanation doesn’t give development anything to work with. Playtesters should clearly explain the root of an issue without getting buried in the details.

*Rein in randomness.* We learn nothing from “gotcha” moments, misjudged distances, or lucky dice rolls. Capitalizing on your partners’ misunderstandings or mistakes does not actually teach us about the models and rules in question. On a similar note, rolling above average does not prove a model is overpowered any more than rolling below average proves it is weak. Playtesters must work together to ensure the feedback they are generating is based on the rules of the models in question rather than their personal capabilities or the randomness inherent in a dice game.

*Theory is not testing!* We encourage group discussions and debate, but analyzing and theory-crafting will only get you so far. While it is easy to demonstrate a hypothesis anecdotally, we learn *much* more from seeing these theories played out in a variety of different circumstances.

*Avoid hyperbole.* Using exaggerated emotional words or bad math will only hinder your argument. We are looking for logical and constructive feedback. We are all passionate about WARMACHINE and HORDES, but staying calm and objective will enable you to provide feedback that will be taken seriously.

*Stick to the concept.* A concept brief (with artwork) will be provided for each model being tested. Any feedback you submit needs to fit within the framework of that concept. We will not change the art, sculpt, base size, or weapon types of models that have already been designed. We will not turn a melee berserker into a spell-slinging shaman. The purpose of CID is to vet new rules shortly before a model is released, not to design entirely new models from scratch.

## Forum Behavior

Online communities are notoriously toxic and nasty to deal with. This is partially because humans are naturally more motivated to complain about things they don’t like than they are to praise the things that they enjoy. It is further compounded by what is known as the *online disinhibition effect* (the abandonment of social restrictions and inhibitions found in normal face-to-face communication when using remote electronic communications). The anonymity provided by the Internet makes it very easy to dehumanize and disrespect people who are not in the room with you. It is easy to forget that the “they”—often used in a condescending manner—is actually referring to real people, most of whom are sharing an office while we read your feedback.

For the protection of PP staff members and the overall health of the community, there is a **zero tolerance** policy regarding toxic behavior on the CID forum. You may be entitled to an opinion but *you do not have the right to verbally abuse other people*. On these forums you are *required* to be respectful and constructive. Acceptable behavior on the CID forum is strictly moderated and anyone who breaks the Terms of Service can be banned without warning.

## Civil Discourse

The nature of playtesting a competitive game like WARMACHINE and HORDES means there will be disagreements. The first step for engaging in a healthy argument is to acknowledge that your own opinions can be proven wrong. Only by working together and exposing ourselves to a large variety of perspectives can we truly come to the best conclusions.

*How* you say something is just as important as *what* you say. Taking an aggressive tone with others will immediately put them on the defensive and makes them less receptive to your feedback. So think before you post—take a few moments to reread what you have written and be sure that you are treating everyone in a positive and civil manner.

## Constructive Criticism

*NOUN: criticism or advice that is useful and intended to help or improve something, often with an offer of possible solutions.*

Whether you’re at work, dealing with personal relationships, practicing for an upcoming tournament, or participating in CID, giving and receiving constructive criticism is essential for improvement. When giving criticism, it is important to remember that you are trying to help someone. Condescending or offensive language will undermine your efforts by putting the other person in a defensive position. If you legitimately want to help someone, your words should carry that message. If you find yourself merely venting or trying to boost your own

ego, stop immediately and consider whether or not you actually have anything helpful to say.

*Constructive criticism must be detailed.* You need to explain the reasoning behind your opinions if you want someone to understand your critiques. It is often easy to be snarky and vague, and people often try to disguise their passive-aggressive insults as intelligent commentary. Unfortunately, these kinds of comments are never useful. No one will learn anything from your criticism if you don't explain *why* you think that way.

Examples:

**Constructive:** *I believe the Marauder could have been finished off by the Firefly instead of Maddox. This would have allowed Maddox to stay a few inches further away from Butcher3 and avoid the assassination on the following turn.*

**NOT Constructive:** *Why did you leave your warcaster within 15" of Butcher3?*

**Constructive:** *With RAT 5, this model feels underpowered for its point cost. Based on this model's most common targets, I would recommend increasing its RAT.*

**NOT Constructive:** *I can't believe they gave this model RAT 5. IT IS LITERALLY UNPLAYABLE! Do the developers even play this game?!?!?!?*

## Don't Vent

There is a common misconception that "blowing off steam" by freely expressing negative feelings to other people will reduce one's anger through catharsis. This concept is very old, and modern research has found plenty of evidence to the contrary. Venting can feel good for the individual in the short term, but those feelings are fleeting and are usually replaced with guilt and anxiety after the fact.

While you might feel some temporary relief, expressing negative emotions toward other people will actually make the subject of your venting feel worse. It is also likely to lower the other person's inhibitions against expressing anger, which can provoke retaliation. Venting is a lose-lose endeavor. Nobody benefits from the verbal abuse and negative feelings being expressed, and those banned because of this behavior will be unable to contribute anything constructive for the rest of the playtest cycle or possibly longer.

This does not mean you can never express your feelings. Holding in all your emotions is certainly not a healthy or viable solution. Instead, you simply need to express yourself without hostility, blame, or entitlement.

## Playtest Exemplars

Community members who consistently submit high-quality feedback may be promoted to Exemplars. The Exemplars are a user group on the CID forum made up of people that the development team trusts to provide excellent feedback. These users do not receive any special benefits or treatment. The purpose of the Exemplars is simply to be a positive example to the community for how to submit useful feedback.

When CID begins, the Exemplars will include members of our current playtest programs. Moving forward, the development team will take note of community members whose contributions stand out during a testing cycle and ask them to become an Exemplar. We will be looking for people who provide well-organized, constructive, and respectful feedback. Prospective Exemplars should display a competent understanding of the rules along with a willingness to question their own decisions and reevaluate their previous conclusions.

## Welcome Aboard!

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. After reading the CID Terms of Service, you should be ready to start testing and submitting feedback! If you have any questions about the CID process or playtesting in general, we will be happy to provide answers in the New Playtester Area on the CID forum.

You will find all of the playtest rules and concept briefs in the Models & Rules Reference sub-forum. We look forward to reading your feedback!