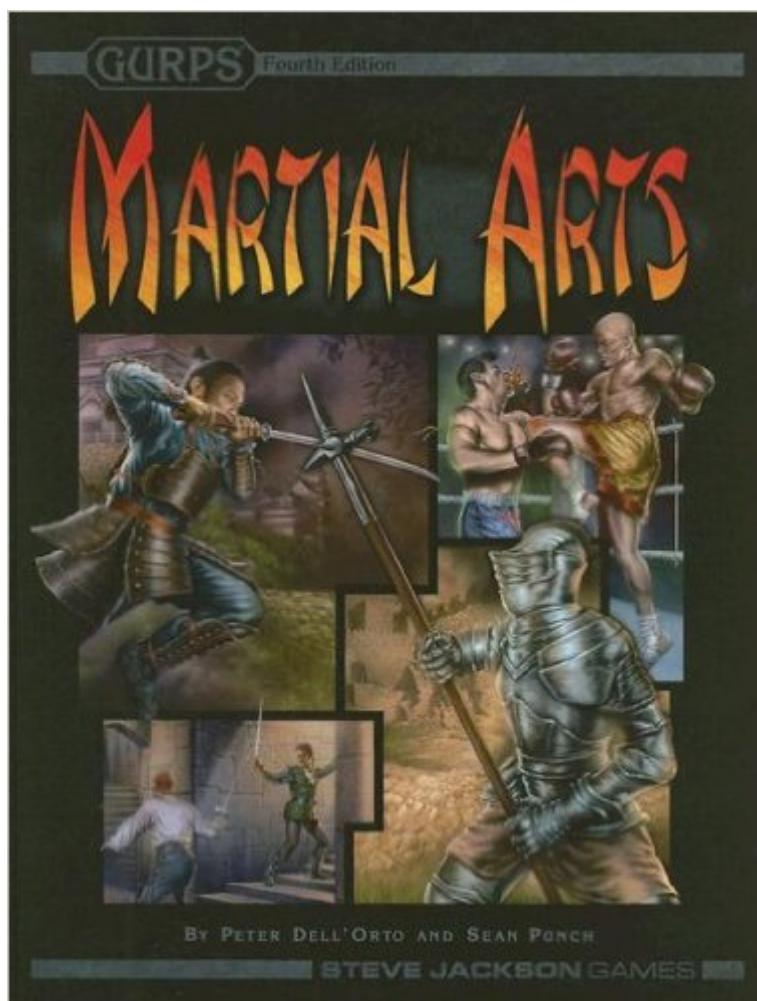


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GURPS Martial Arts



Synopsis

Inscrutable masters from hidden temples. Special Forces soldiers. Swashbuckling pirates. Bare-chested brawlers. GURPS Martial Arts brings fighting styles from throughout history to Fourth Edition. From popular Asian bare-handed techniques to European combat arts to fantastic non-human training, this book balances realistic historical schools with cinematic feats from Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Hollywood. Recreate the greatest fighters in the world, or create a style to fit a new campaign, Martial Arts has the techniques and guidelines you need. Not all combat options map to techniques and styles, however. Many require extensions to the combat system itself, so Martial Arts expands on the combat and injury rules from GURPS Basic Set. Some of these additions are highly realistic, while others are extremely cinematic - but they're all optional, allowing the GM to decide which rules apply. Customizing the GURPS combat system has never been easier. This book replaces and expands on the information and rules from the previous edition of GURPS Martial Arts for Third Edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I can't possibly do this book justice. I've barely skimmed the sections on martial-arts history, campaign ideas, or sample characters: all my time has been spent thinking about tactics with the new combat possibilities. New rules come mostly in the form of new combat techniques and options (Committed Attack, Defensive Grip, etc.) and are nicely modular so you can use only the ones that support the flavour your group is looking for (cinematic, chambara, unarmed, etc.) without an combinatoric increase in complexity. The new techniques are intended primarily as new combat options and only secondarily as something to spend points on--Jeet Kune Do specializes in feints

and counterattacks, for instance, but it's made clear that that's as much a combat-roleplaying guideline as a rule for point-allocation (you may choose to just raise Karate instead of Karate/Counterattack technique, and that's fine). The section on Style Perks is really neat, and fixes some GURPS Basic annoyances (in Basic, buying Off-Hand-Weapon technique is crazy because it's always cheaper to buy ambidexterity; in GURPS: MA e.g. Off-Hand-Shortsword is a perk costing 1 point instead of a technique) as well as having some cool new perks (shtick: flicking blood off your sword as a free-action Intimidation attempt). In several cases, GURPS: MA supplies optional rules that let me throw out my house rules by providing the flavour I was looking for but couldn't create with GURPS: Campaigns rules (heroic D&D-style combat, for instance, with Chambara rules + Combinations + Counterattack + Targetted Attack + Multiple Blocks + Special Exercises for extra HP).

I can't say enough about this book. First, the content is incredibly well researched. Martial Arts is one of those great supplements you find yourself turning to in almost any RPG setting. It gets its history right, and that alone makes it a unique gem compared to most RPGs. But it goes on to explain how important concepts are presented in the relevant fiction, including movies, TV, literature, and even other RPGs. It manages to give the reader exactly the level of detail they want. Happily, the book gives a nice balance of historical, mythological and modern styles. You've got the usual suspects (different brands of kung fu and karate), but also Islamic and European medieval styles, several schools of fencing, ancient greek and roman sports, (Asian) Indian martial arts, modern MMA styles, military styles like Krav Maga, and much more. This includes an exhaustive weapons directory, a catalog of styles, historical information, and more. Many popular myths are identified, explained and corrected. The bibliography alone is amazing. If you're a gamer, this is the book for you. Actually, if you're looking for a good introductory reference and can stomach the fact that this is a roleplaying supplement, this is the book for you. Taken strictly as a game supplement for GURPS, I'd call it a must-have. The new rules are optional but well-thought out and mesh well with the existing system. A few rules from Low Tech (e.g. scabbards) didn't make it into Martial Arts, but there is a still fair degree of duplication. (The scabbards rule seems to be intended to bring weapon weights in the Basic Set into line with historical weapons and probably SHOULD have been reprinted here). The style rules don't just add flavor, they make the existing system more structured and comprehensible for newbies.

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