

HEXAGONAL SPELL TEMPLATES

by Zinovia

For those of us who prefer using a hex grid when gaming, it can sometimes be a bit tricky figuring out which hexes are affected by a spell and which are not. The benefit of the hex grid is that it allows a closer approximation of the “real” shape of the spell. Instead of fire cubes, we have fire hexagons! They are at least closer to circular than the cubes, and I have always preferred hex grids to square for a variety of reasons.

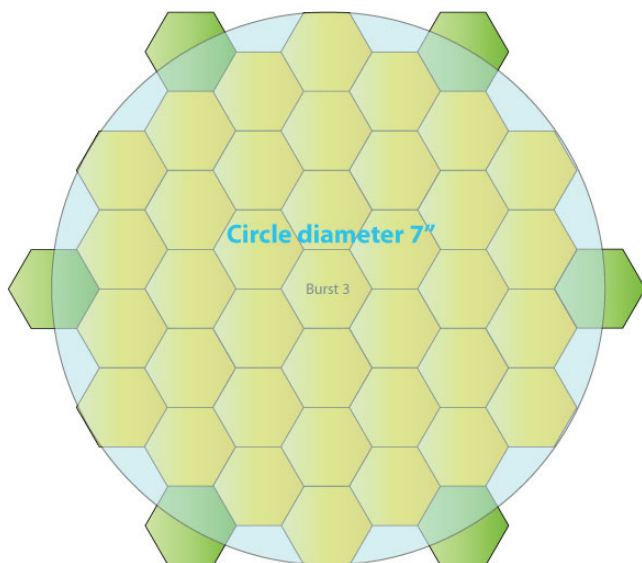
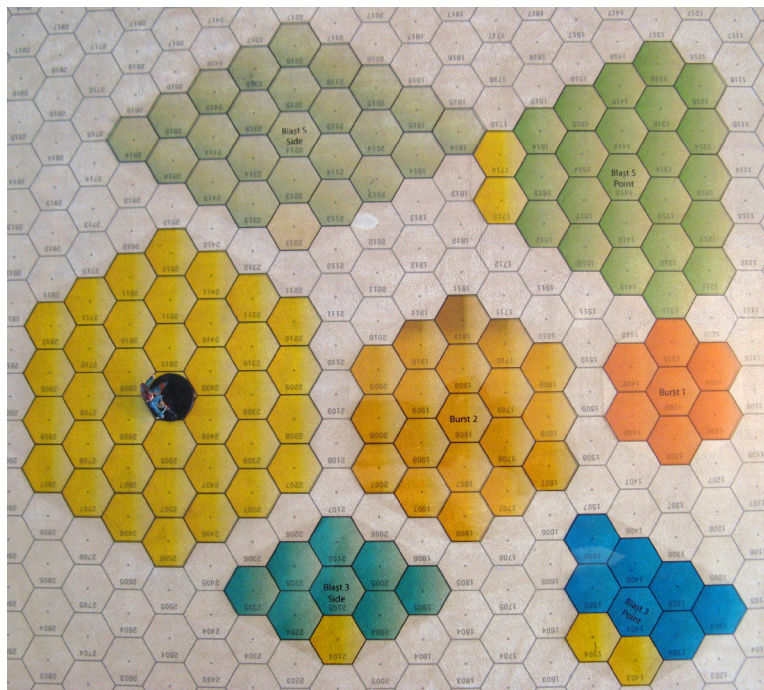
I have created a number of templates to be used for different spells in D&D 4E. These include what I feel to be the most common areas: blast 3, blast 5, burst 1, burst 2, and burst 3. Larger bursts wouldn't fit on a single piece of paper and are less common, so I feel they are better measured out directly on the mat. The templates can be printed on either cardstock or transparency film using any color printer. If you are printing with an inkjet, make sure you use transparency films designed for use with inkjet printers, otherwise you'll wind up with a smeared mess.

BURSTS

Bursts are nice and easy to count, and you don't necessarily need a spell template at all, but it can be convenient holding it over the figures to determine where exactly you want to drop the spell so that it toasts the minions and not your party.

The primary issue I found when creating these is that there's no good way to make the spell the stated diameter and still cover the same number of hexes as the original square version would. Circles are just smaller than squares of the same width. A burst 3 square covers an area of 7×7 squares, or a total of 49. The hexagonal version is only 37 hexes, but still affects the central hex, plus 3 in every direction outwards.

The choices here are either to make the spells larger, which makes them no longer intuitive to count, or to just accept the fact that the hex version covers fewer “squares” than the fire cube version. I went with the second option when creating my templates. You can see by looking at the figure, that there is a green hex on the center of each side that is about 50% covered by the circle. You could add those six hexes into the affected area of the spell, but that ruins the symmetry of both the shape and how it is counted out (central hex plus 3 in every direction). The benefit of adding those is that it brings the total hexes affected closer to the original cube shape. I prefer symmetry, so did not include them.



In this burst 3 spell, the diameter should be the central hex, plus 3 hexes in every direction, which adds to 7 hexes wide. The 7" circle overlaying it shows that it is a close, but not exact fit. The green hexes on each side could be included, but make it less natural to count and make the template a funny shape.

BLASTS

For blast spells, I have assumed a 90° cone as the intended shape. I tried fitting it to 60°, but it was more difficult coming up with a regular shape that affected the same number of hexes as the square version did. For example, a blast 3 spell should affect an area that is 3x3 on a square grid, or 9 total squares. My hex version is a cone shape rather than a square, but still affects 9 hexes. You will note that due to my like of symmetry, that the blast spells vary a bit in shape depending on whether you are shooting off the point or the side of the hex, as shown in the neighboring figure. I have made templates for each instance.

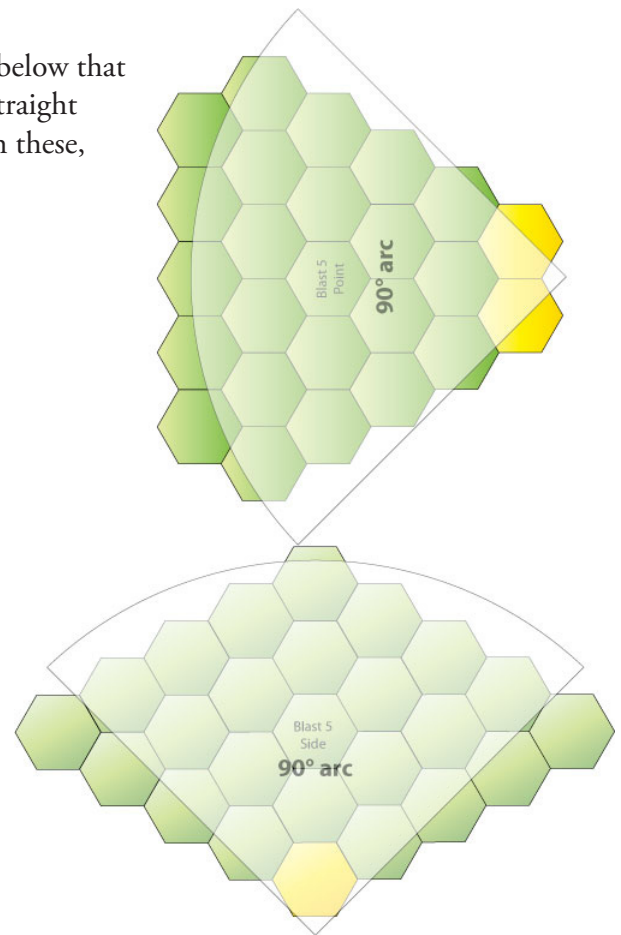
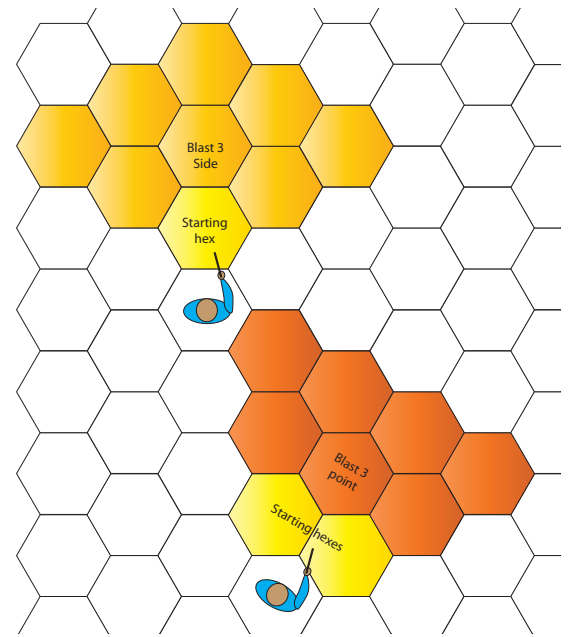
INSTRUCTIONS

The templates on the following pages include sets with both normal and reversed text labels. The reversed images are for printing on transparency films, since you will print on the rough side and see the text through the film. I like having the rough side of the film down on the mat. You'll need to print pages 3-6 if you are using transparencies, or pages 7-10 if you are using cardstock. When printing, be sure to select the correct type of media so that there isn't too much ink. Use whatever settings give you good color output.

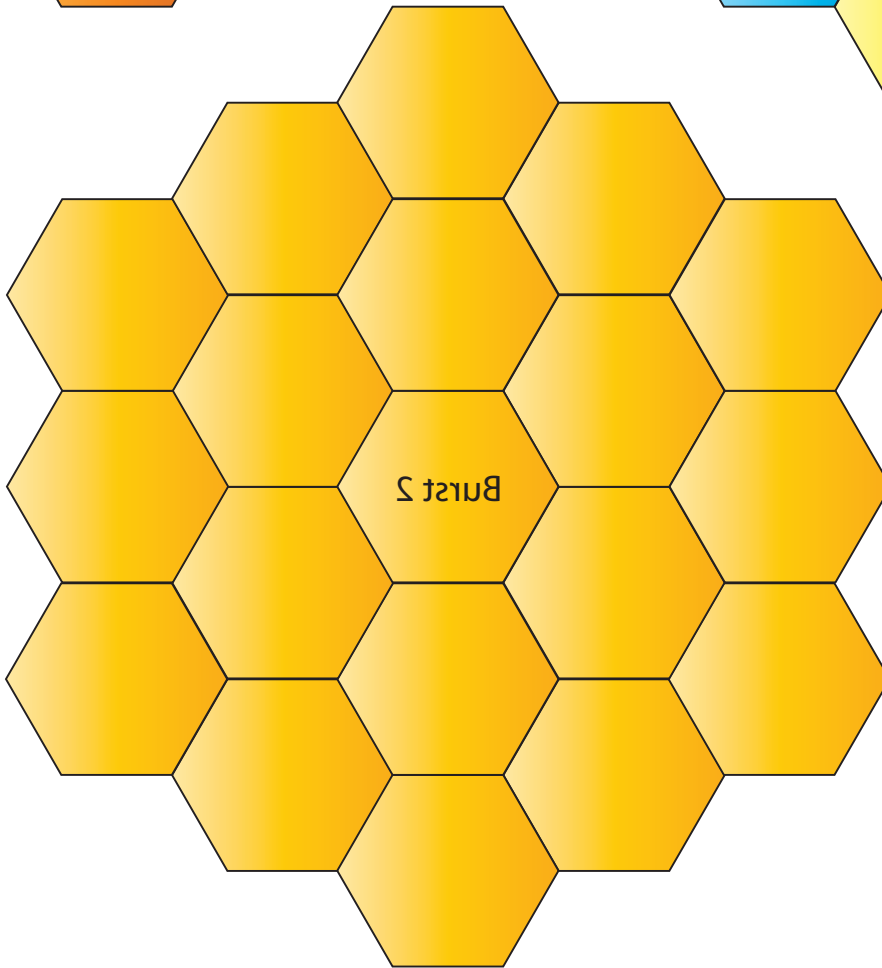
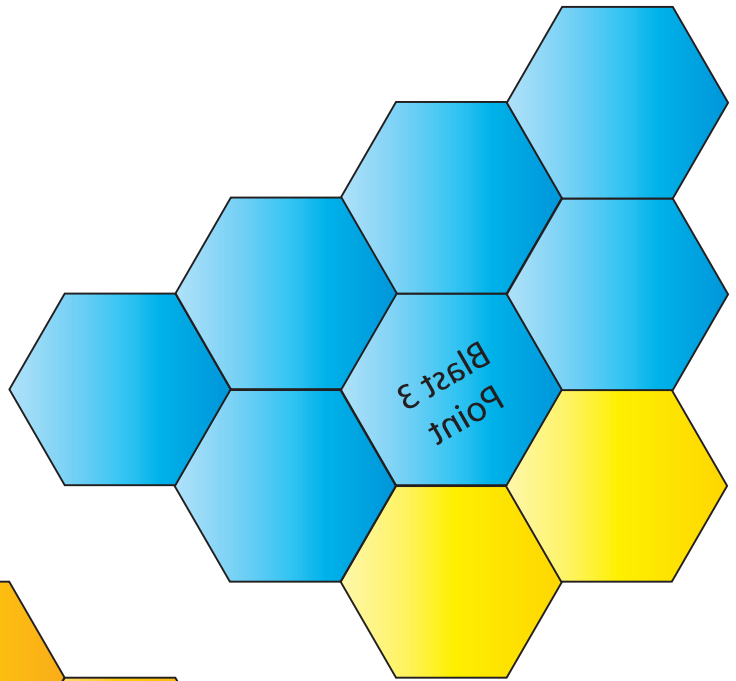
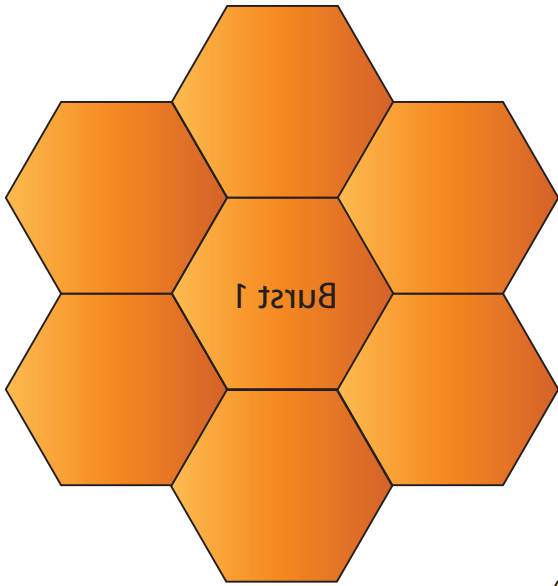
After printing, trim the shapes. You can see from the closeup shot below that I didn't try and trim right next to every little notch. Instead I cut straight across the sides to make the shape easier to handle. Good luck with these, and have fun with those area spells!



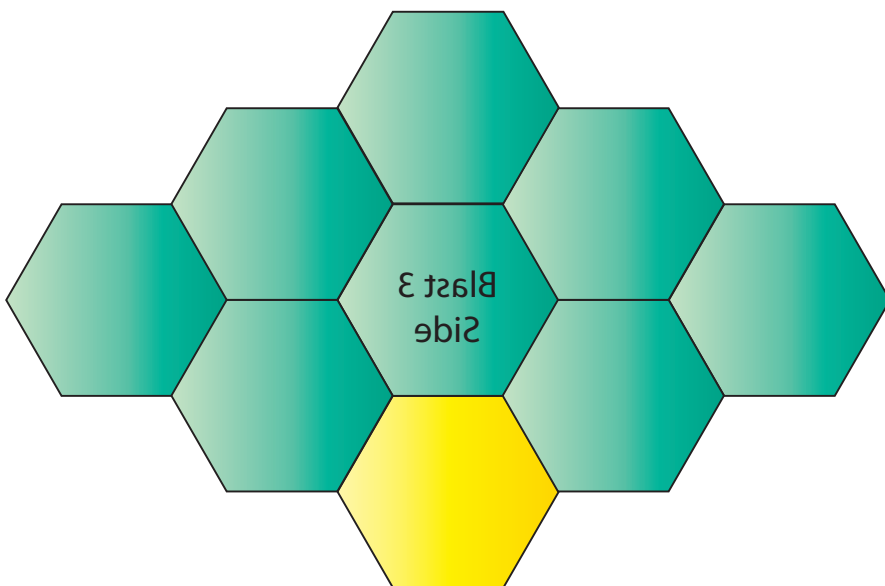
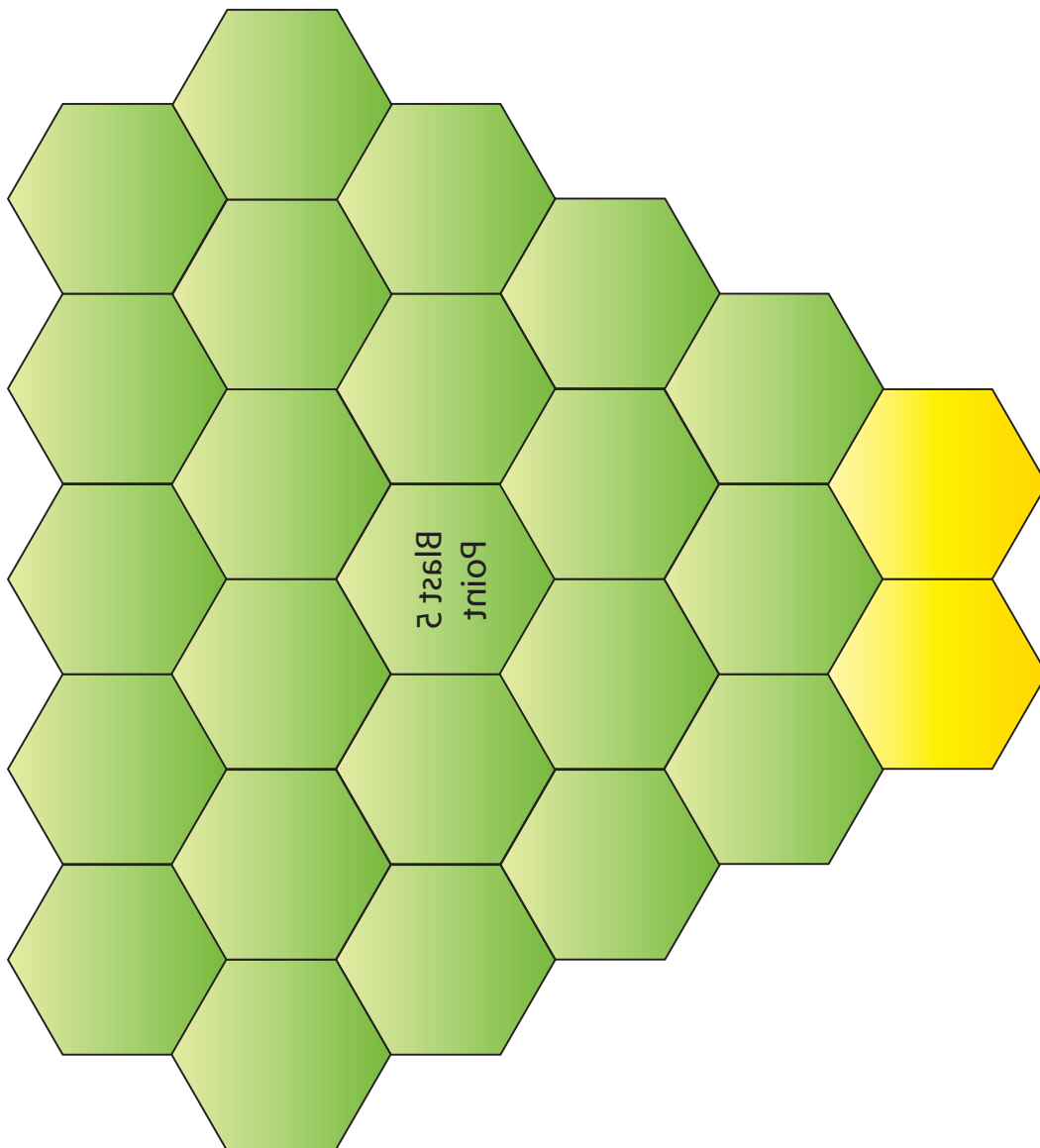
The template has been placed over the top of the minis to determine the best location for the spell. The transparency film lets the figures and grid lines be clearly seen through the template.



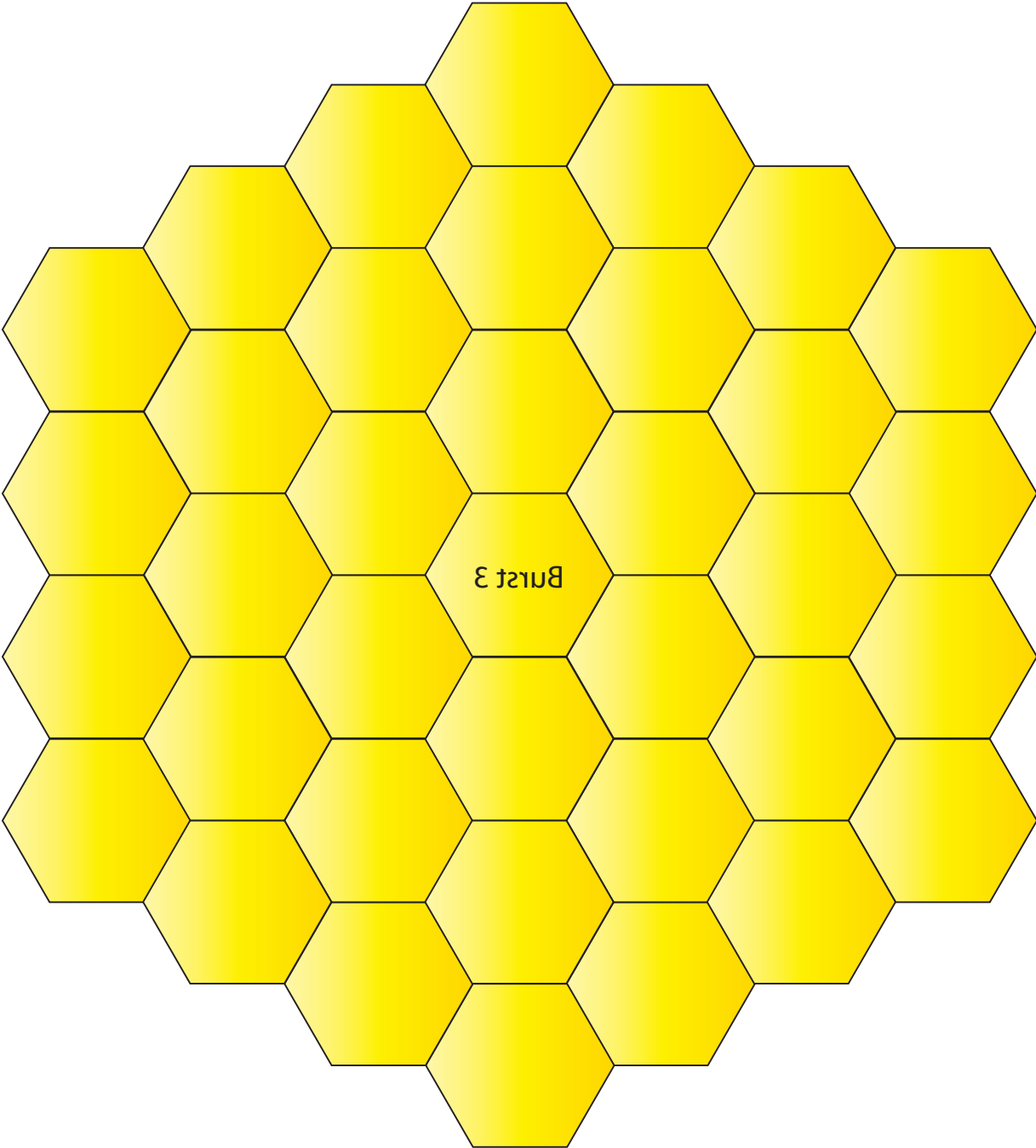
The blast is a bit longer and narrower when cast from the "point" of the hex, and a bit wider when cast off the side. In both cases, 25 hexes are affected and the shapes are still a good approximation of the 90° cone.



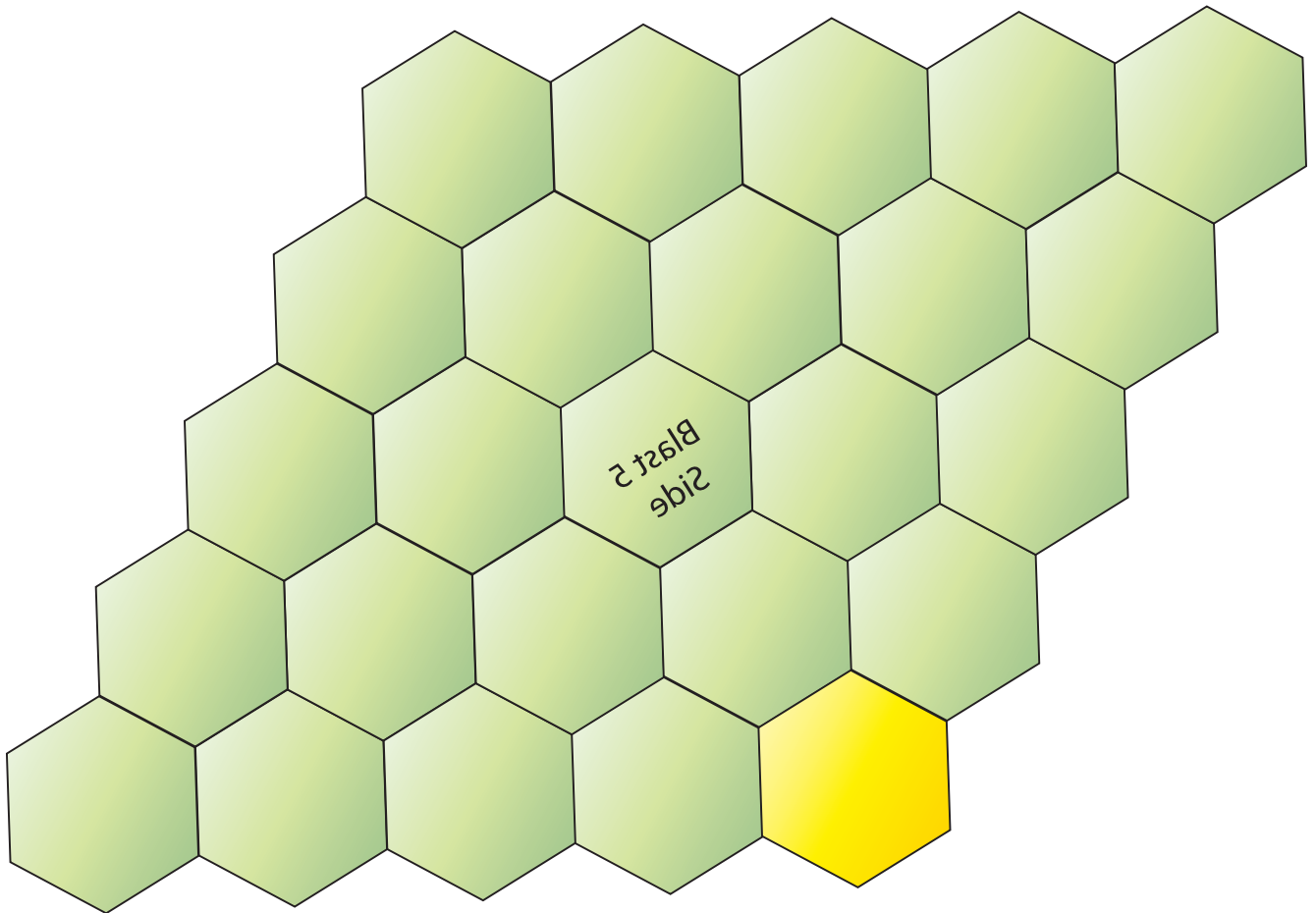
Transparency templates 1



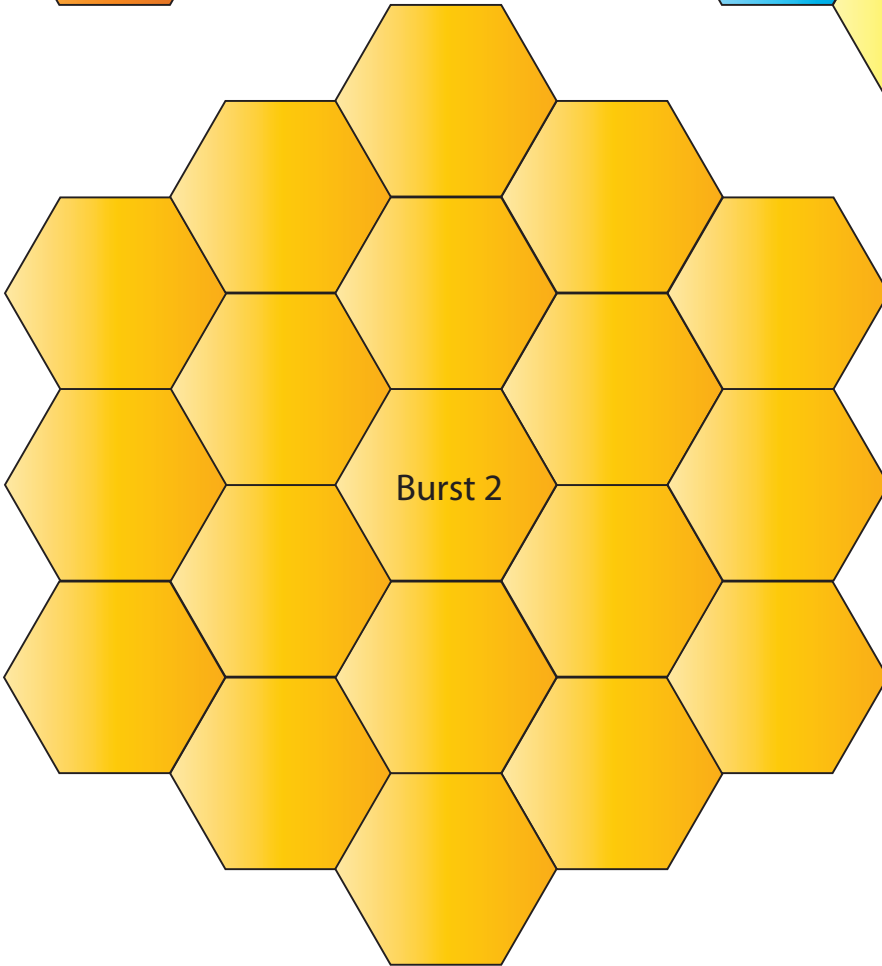
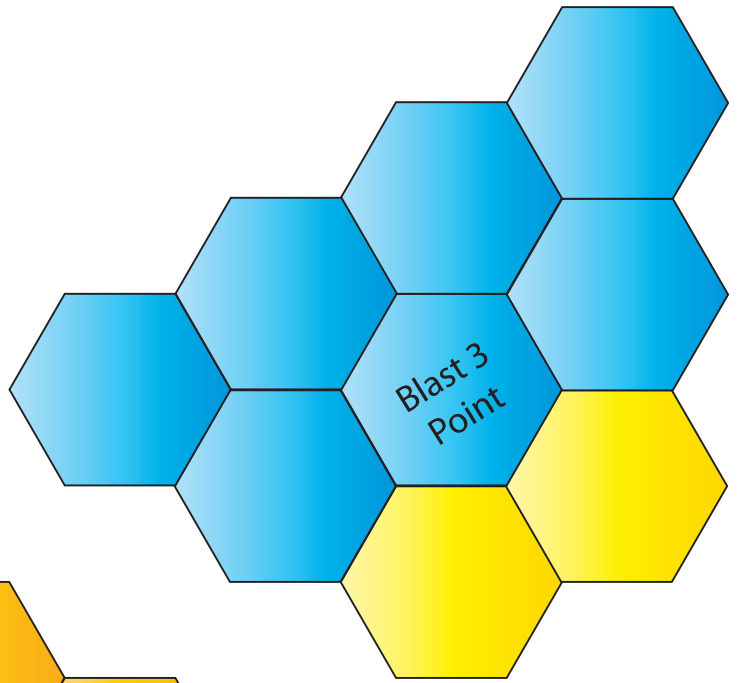
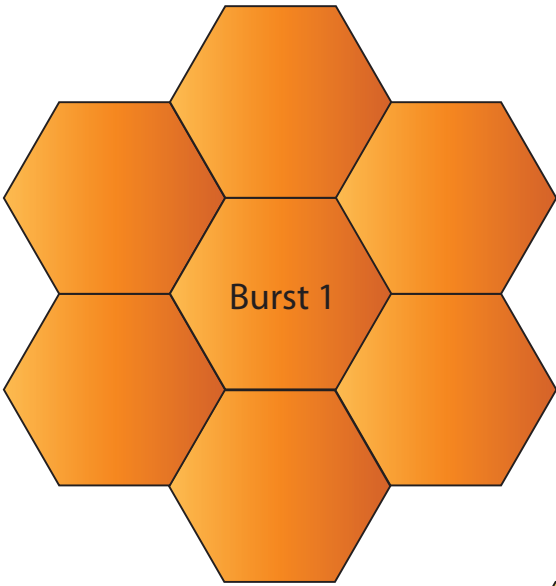
Transparency templates 2



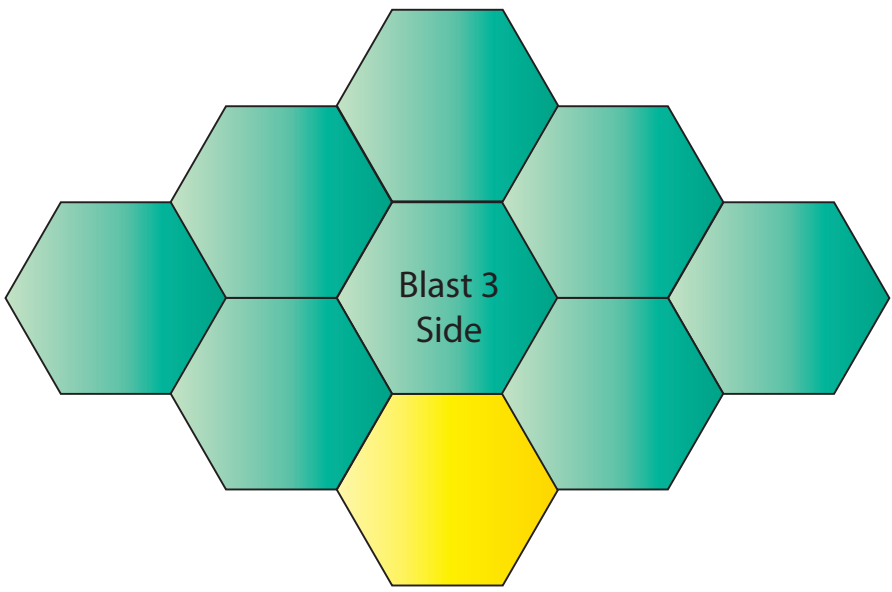
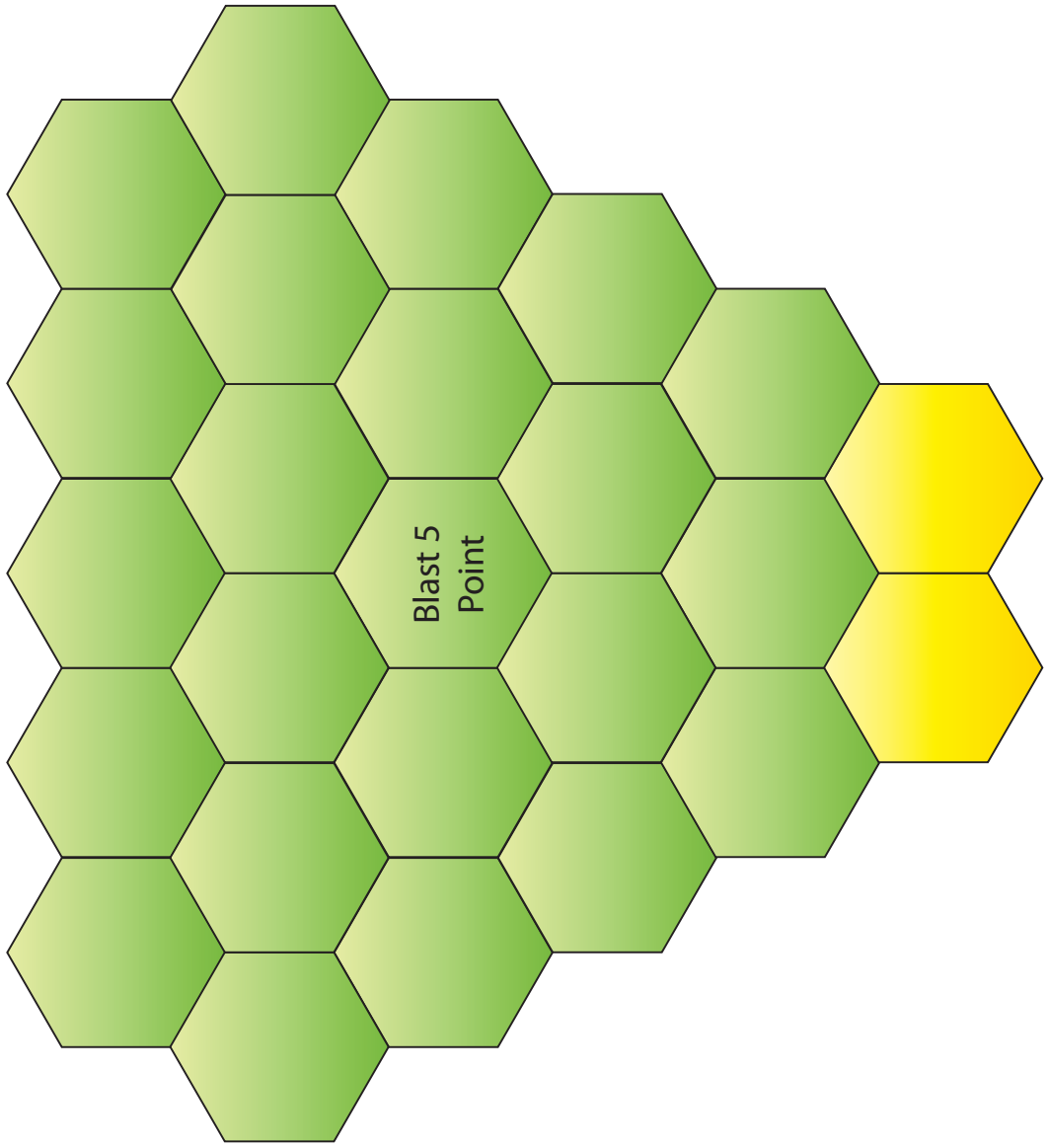
Transparency templates 3



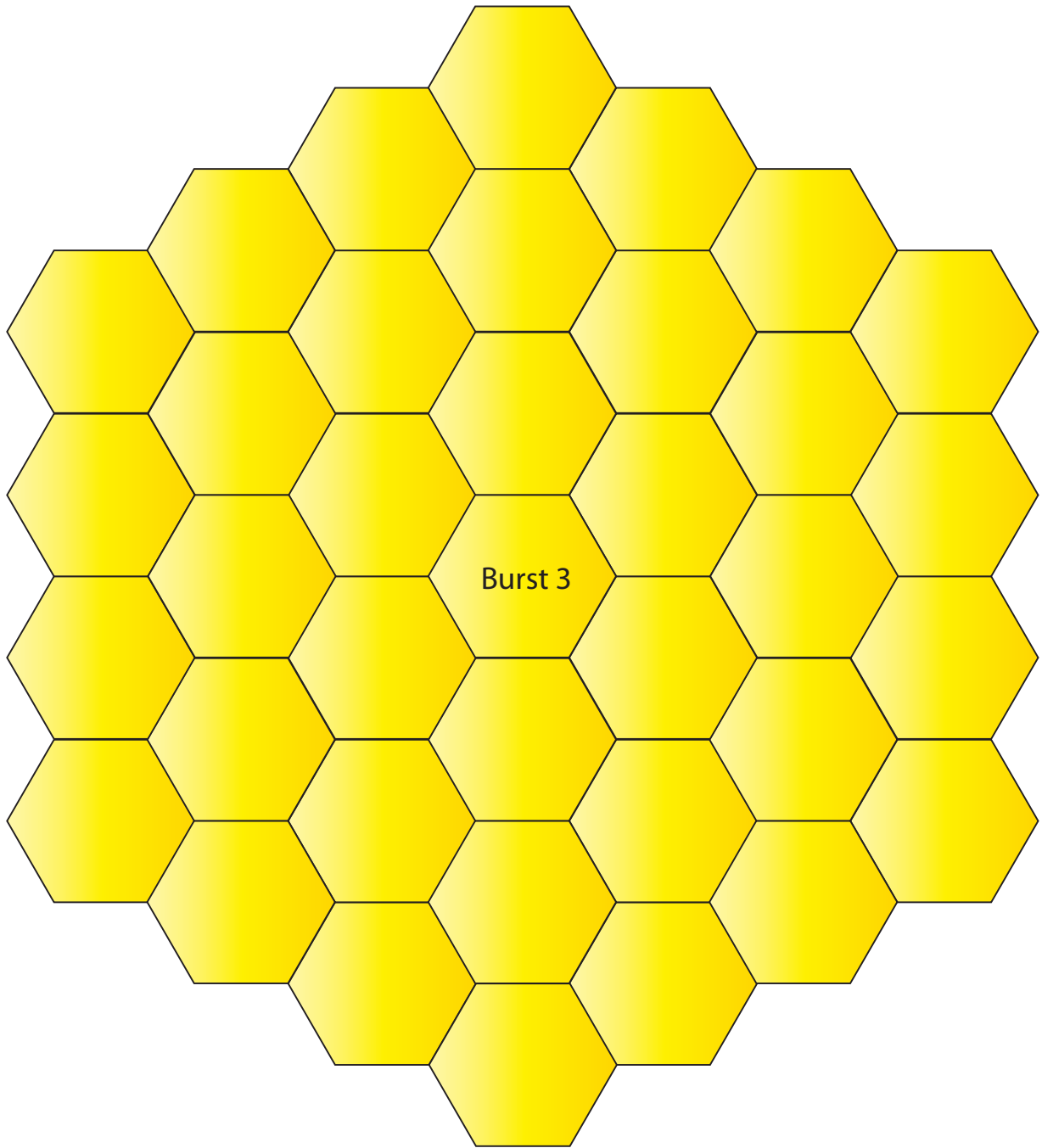
Transparency templates 4



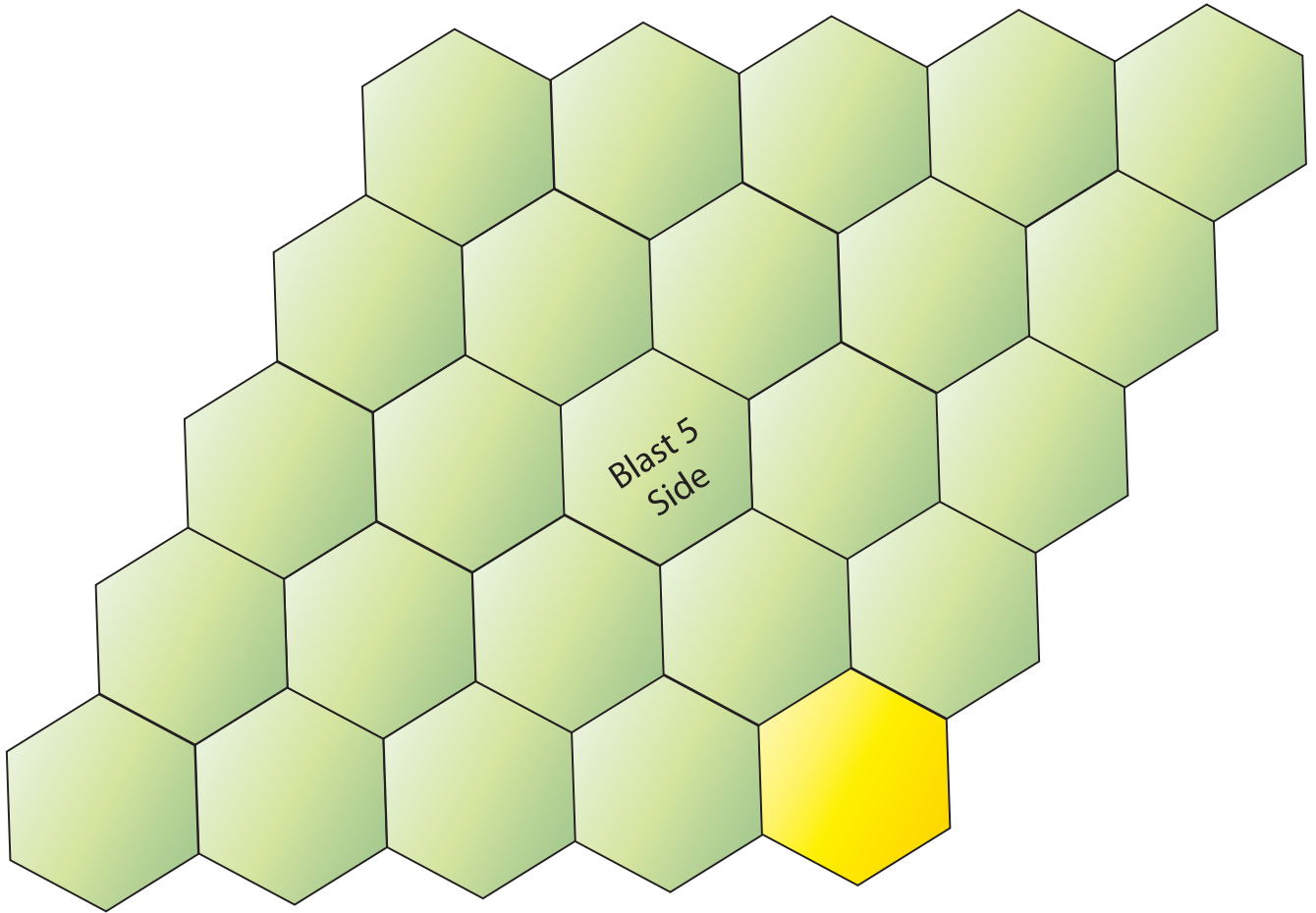
Cardstock templates 1



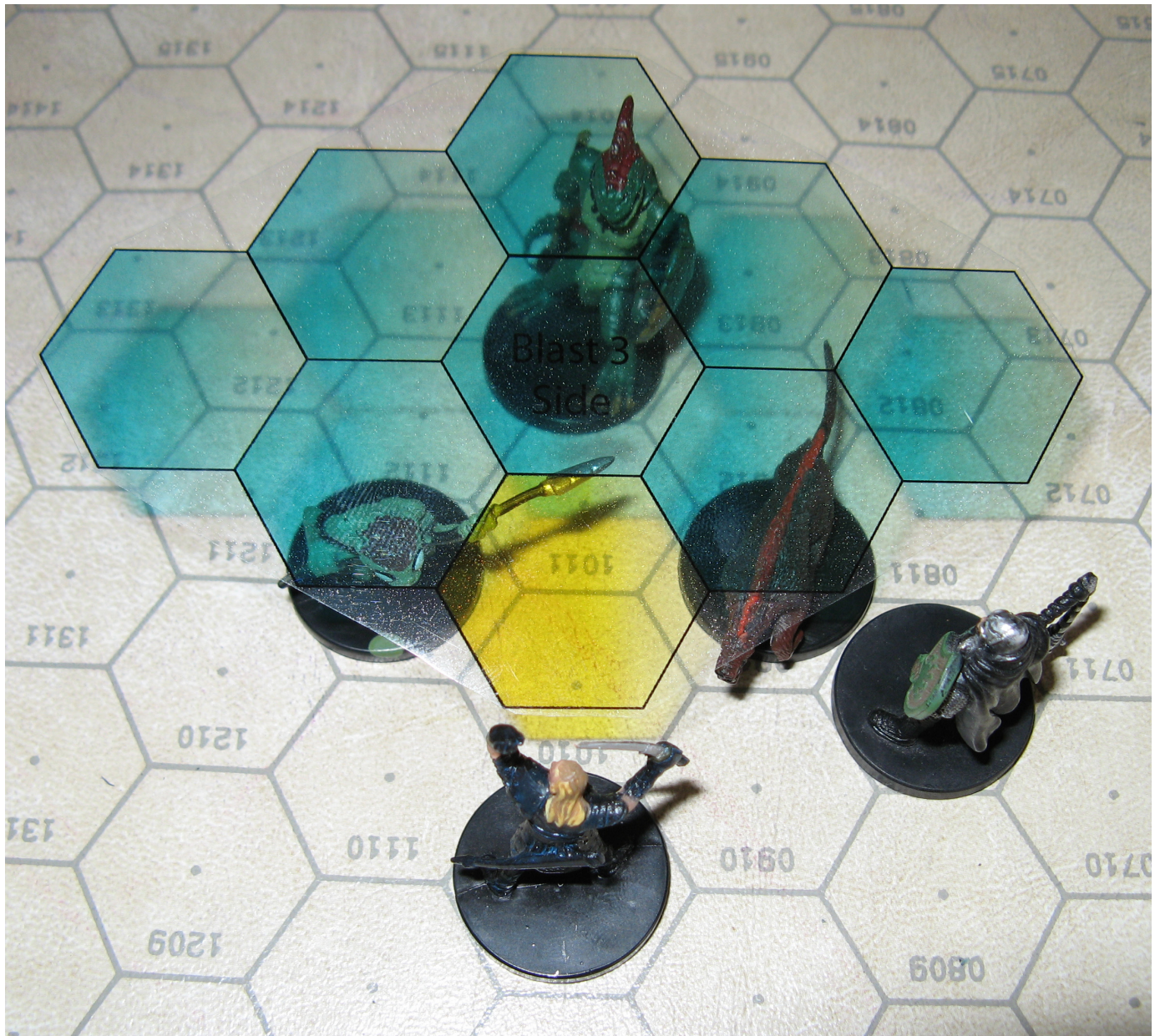
Cardstock templates 2



Cardstock templates 3



Cardstock templates 4



I hope this proves useful for someone out there. Comments and suggestions are welcome. You can find me at EN-World or on the WotC forums as Zinovia.

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