

The cover features a red, starry background with a glowing red diagonal line. In the top left, a blonde woman in a blue top embraces a man. In the top right, a man with glasses is shown in profile. In the bottom center, a man and a woman in grey tank tops look forward. In the bottom right, a portion of a spaceship is visible.

BATTLESTAR  
GALACTICA  
— ROLE PLAYING GAME —

COREBOOK

# BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

—ROLE PLAYING GAME—

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This work is dedicated to the memory of Lt. Col. Kennel Mauclair  
(call sign “Cowboy”), Daniel Matheson, and in honor of the men  
and women serving in the United States armed forces.

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# FOREWORD

BY RICHARD HATCH

**D**URING the past 30 years, I have had the pleasure of being part of an incredible universe, where the very best and worst of humanity can be explored and played out in the most heartfelt, profound, and awe-inspiring ways imaginable. *Battlestar Galactica* is that kind of story.

Who would have believed that so many decades later I would still be part of a series and epic story that exploded upon the world stage in 1978, and is still leaving an indelible imprint in the minds, hearts, and imaginations of fans three generations later. The new and re-imagined version of *Battlestar* has not only garnered a dedicated and passionate fan base, but has achieved what few sci-fi series in history have attained—nearly unanimous critical acclaim. Many industry and trade publications, including *Time* magazine, have called *Battlestar Galactica* the #1 best television show on TV, period. That's a rarity for a sci-fi series, although most view *Battlestar* as more of a character-driven drama with powerful action sequences.

What makes this provocative and cutting-edge series so rare is its ability to shed insight into the volatile post-9/11 world of today. *Battlestar Galactica* may take place somewhere else in this vast universe of ours, but people

are people and humanity still struggles to come to terms with its dark side. J. Michael Straczynski was one of the first sci-fi writers to explore the concept that few people are all good or all bad, and that in truth most of us lie somewhere between the two supposedly opposite dynamics. *Battlestar Galactica* writer/producer, Ron Moore, and company have taken this concept to a whole new level, exploring the ultimate battle between the dark and the light, and the heroic struggle to come to terms with our demons. Science fiction has never been just about technology or science, it's always been about people, and no one has brought this message home in a more powerful and visionary way than Ron Moore. *Battlestar* has truly—in the words of Gene Roddenberry—gone where few men and woman have gone before: exploring the deepest and darkest aspects of human nature and somehow finding the light.

I love this story because it's about all of us. Most fans I know would give anything to throw on a uniform and become part of a world where we can test our mettle and survive the unimaginable. Whether it be flying helter-skelter through the universe in a Viper, or using our cunning, bravery, and unique skill set to overcome some monumental life and death circumstance, this story puts all of us

into the most challenging and life threatening conditions possible. By forcing us to face our deepest fears, we are asked to go to the core of our being and find creative, life-saving solutions in the face of insurmountable odds. Whether we ultimately stand or fall, this is the true journey of the hero!

Being cast from your homeland and forced to find your way in the world is an epic and universal theme. Going through life-changing ups and downs before finding your true place is a story and path we can all relate to, and one that grabbed us many years before when *Battlestar Galactica* first debuted on ABC. Ron Moore's profound re-imagined vision for *Battlestar* has taken this archetypal story to the pinnacle of great drama, pathos, and theatrical accomplishment. It has enthralled a whole new generation of fans.

Questions about who are we, where we came from, and is their truly life out in the cosmos echo our wildest imaginings. They have compelled many of us to fall passionately in love with this beloved story. The new *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game* you now hold in your hands beckons all of us to step out of the box and into a larger and more expanded playing field where we can finally explore all of our childhood and grownup fantasies, and actually live the incredible adventure that

*Battlestar Galactica* brings to us each week on television. There's a reason why we're so dedicated to this wonderful story and why most of us would give anything to be a part of this amazing series. It's because we're craving the excitement and heart-pounding adrenalin rush we rarely get in our daily life. Role playing is becoming the cutting edge of gaming today because now you don't have to be a high-paid actor to experience the thrill of creating a juicy character and compelling storyline where you can challenge your mind, body, and soul, and let your imagination soar. Just like life, this *Battlestar* game brings out the best and worst in us and lets us all find out what we're really made of. Are we the hero, the rebel, the villain, the backstabber? Are we conflicted and struggling to come to terms with our flaws and imperfections just like the rest of the full-blown characters on the television show. I like the challenge of finding out, and I'm sure you will too.

Keep the faith. As we actors say before we go on stage "break a leg," which means GO FOR IT!!! So say we all!!



# THE CHASE IS ON



*Battlestar Galactica*. Sounds all damn big and grand, full up with destiny and purpose. Fact is, the fate of the entire human race rests on the decisions of its Commander and the actions of its officers and crew. Some folks think fate, destiny, or some horse manure like that is leading humanity to a mythical port in the storm called Earth. The naysayers claim *Galactica* is just delaying the inevitable: the destruction of every human man, woman, and child at the hands of their own creation—the Cylons.

*Battlestar Galactica* is a damned impressive television series produced by Ronald D. Moore and David Eick. It explores ageless human problems in the context of a refugee fleet struggling to survival against an almost unstoppable enemy. The universe is all about grim struggle. The future of the human race is in doubt. Bravery in the face of overwhelming odds ain't the rare acts of a heroic few. It's demanded from everyone nearly every day. Acts of kindness in times of want reveal true compassion. And small victories amid soul-crushing defeats are the only things keeping hope alive.

*Battlestar Galactica* is a scarred and aging bucket of bolts. Like its Commander, it should've been retired more than a few years ago. It also should have been forgotten—a footnote in the pages of history, a stark reminder of the terrible Cylon War. Cylons didn't buy into that though. They came back, in force and spitting fire and devastation. The old battlewagon was called back to arms. Smart enough not to fight a suicidal war, the crew of *Battlestar Galactica* now leads a rag-tag fleet toward an impossible dream. Ancient scrolls name the legendary home of the Thirteenth Tribe, one that did not settle with the rest of humanity.

That world is known as Earth.

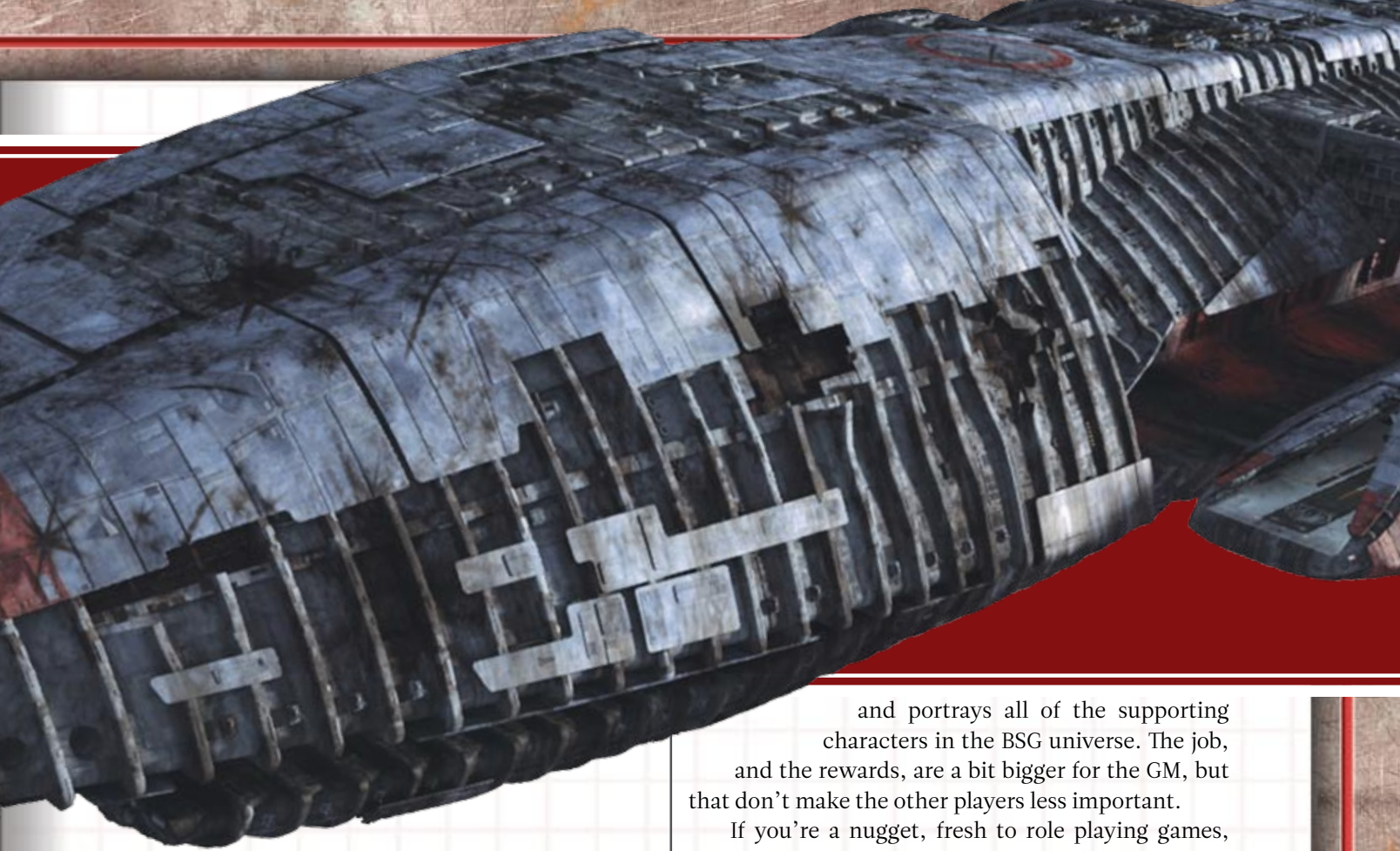
Escape means difficult choices, terrible sacrifices, and a long and taxing journey through the unforgiving blackness of space. If a time of black-and-white morality ever really existed, it's been replaced with shades of gray that get harder to distinguish with each passing day. The survivors in the fleet have banded together, but hard times ain't done a damn thing to change human nature. Hell, if anything, it's gotten worse. Greed and lust and every other venal human impulse are alive and well, causing as much trouble and heartache as ever.

Most just hope to find shelter and safety—to survive another day. A few set their sights higher—to prove the human race worthy of survival.

## ROLE PLAYING GAME

If you're pawing through this volume, you probably have some notion what *Battlestar Galactica* is. On the other hand, you may have no frakking clue what a role playing game is. You look through it and find jargon, numbers, rules, and examples—might seem like one big mess. Don't underestimate yourself. If you've managed to stay interested this far, you got the chops for role playing. The basics are child's play—literally. Children play role playing games all the time without even thinking about it.

Any game where you pretend to be someone else is an exercise in role playing. In Cops & Robbers, everyone has a part to play: the heroic police or the greedy criminals. It doesn't really matter whether the



cops or the robbers win—long as the players all have fun. A tabletop role playing game, like this one, ain't much different. It's just got a bit more structure, and more focus on the story. Playing Cops & Robbers, you might argue over whether a gunshot was a hit or miss, and rarely does an overarching tale unfold. In the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game*, you have rules and the roll of the dice tell you exactly what happened and when. You can also get involving in an exciting, even moving, plotline. The goal is not different though—having a good time.

## THE GAME

The book you're reading is called the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game (RPG)*, but the heart of the game is an experience shared with your friends. This book is a tool to help you play the game, but friends, a set of gaming dice, and a good imagination are all crucial as well.

Every player in the game has an important role. Most portray one character—either one from the television show or a new character created using the rules in **Chapter Two: Characters**. You could be a rising-star politician, a cocky fighter pilot, a trigger-happy marine, an ace mechanic, or just about anyone else that fits in the framework of the story.

One player has a slightly different role: the Game Master (GM). He sets the stage, interprets the rules,

and portrays all of the supporting characters in the BSG universe. The job, and the rewards, are a bit bigger for the GM, but that don't make the other players less important.

If you're a nugget, fresh to role playing games, and don't have an experienced player around, take a moment and visit [www.bsg-rpg.com](http://www.bsg-rpg.com) if you are looking for some help. There you can find the *Battlestar Galactica RPG Quickstart Guide*. It has simplified rules, pre-made characters, and a short scenario designed to teach new players the basics. It serves as a quality introduction to the full game in this book. But don't sell yourself short—you don't need a Dr. Baltar-sized intellect here. You should be able to handle the full game just fine.

You can approach this game a number of ways. One is to play through “one-off” adventures—self-contained stories that are completed in one or two sessions of play. This style allows a group to explore the BSG universe from many different angles. You could set one adventure on Caprica, fighting with the human resistance. Next time you could be onboard *Galactica* itself, and after that you might take on the Cylon point of view.

Another option is campaign style, which has a lot in common with the storytelling of the television series. Each player makes a character and keeps that role throughout a series of adventures, either a “mini-series” that ends after several sessions or a long, epic storyline that could take years of play to see through. Characters and relationships grow and change, momentous events peak and trough—some characters might very well die along the way. (If it's your character, don't worry, you



can create another, or take over the role of one previously portrayed by the Game Master.)

In the end, you'll have some great memories to share.

Before you start play, a few basics need to be covered. Give them a quick read before jumping ahead.

## PLAYER CHARACTERS

If you think of a BSG adventure as a television show played out on the game table, the player characters (or PCs for short) are the stars. They make decisions, take actions, and endure the consequences—good or bad—that form the heart of the storyline. Everyone at the game table takes the role of one PC, except for the Game Master. In the show, characters such as Starbuck, Apollo, Helo, Commander Adama, and President Roslin would be considered PCs. Supporting roles, background characters, and villains are known as nonplayer characters (NPCs) and are portrayed by the Game Master. Cylon Centurions, Tom Zarek, Doc Cottle, and members of *Galactica's* crew—they're important, but they're still NPCs.

The TV show stars aren't the only possibility, however. Players can create new PCs completely from scratch. They generate game information from the rules, then flesh out a history and personality to make the character come alive. Some start with a vague concept and let their PC grow during play. Other players might think up a boatload of background and mannerisms before the first game session. Both approaches work, just depends on the personal tastes of the player.

You can play a character who looks and acts much like you do in real life. You could also adopt a persona as different from you as Starbuck is from Colonel Tigh—one that looks, acts, and speaks differently. Even the gender of the player is irrelevant. Starbuck could easily be played by a guy.

Personality conflicts, feuds, and arguments happen all the time in BSG-style storytelling, and a good game session might have more than one. Just remember that while the PCs might not always get along, all those conflicts should stay within the game. You're here to have fun with your friends, not annoy or disturb each other.

The specifics of creating and playing player characters are found in **Chapter Two: Characters** and **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills**.

## GAME MASTER

The Game Master has a different job. While the players focus on their own characters,

the GM keeps an eye on the big picture and moves the story along. He describes the setting, becoming the eyes and ears (and all of the other senses) of the players. The GM sets the stage that the PCs play on. Like a good commander, the GM needs to know the rules, and also understand their place in the storytelling experience. Finally, the GM portrays dozens of NPCs in a single session; he is the voice of everyone who isn't a player character.

Watch it here, though. The GM may be playing the Cylons, rival politicians, criminals, and other adversaries, but he is never "against" the players. In fact, with the power placed in the GM's hands, it would be simple to kill all the PCs in just a few short minutes. Game over—not much fun. Instead, the GM walks the fine line of challenging the PCs without constantly overwhelming them. Those challenges could be mental puzzles, dangerous combat, or encounters that can only be resolved through good role playing. (A good game includes all of these elements.) In the end, it's the GM's primary mission to make sure the players are having a good time—even when the player characters are miserable and frightened within the story! If the GM is just trying to kill the PCs or play out his whims at the expense of the players, the game will dry up and stop damn quick. No reason for the players to put up with that crap.

The GM is the arbiter of the game, the one to settle disagreements. He makes judgment calls on the rules, and herds a particular scene along to keep the game moving. Ultimately, the GM's rule is law, but the focus should be on everyone having fun while telling a great story, not who is "in charge." The game isn't the military, and the GM is only the GM as long as the rest of the players buy into it.

For more information Game Mastering, see **Chapter Seven: Game Master**.

## SESSIONS, ADVENTURES, AND CAMPAIGNS

Stories in the *Battlestar Galactica* RPG can be broken down and defined in three ways.

A "session" occurs whenever your group sits down to play. It could take anywhere from a few hours to an entire day, if you can shirk your other duties that long. You might get through a short storyline in one session, but it's likely that you'll only play through part of one before having to break until the next time. Players' schedules dictate just how often a group can get together, but many groups like to gather for sessions once a week, twice a month, or one extra long session each month. One player should be in charge of confirming the game day and time with the group and

## GAMING DICE

The *Battlestar Galactica* RPG uses six different types of polyhedral [multi-sided] dice. Roll the die type called for by the game and use the result rolled.



Dice are pretty self-explanatory [a d4 has four sides, a d6 has six sides, and so on], except for the d2. While you might be able to purchase six-sided dice with only 1s and 2s on the faces, it's just as easy to use a normal d6. A roll of 1-3 indicates a 1, 4-6 means a 2. You might also be able to purchase a blank die and create your own d2.

You can purchase gaming dice at almost any hobby or book store that sells role playing games. Beginners sometimes find it helpful to have dice of different colors to tell the different types apart. Others pride themselves on matching sets. Margaret Weis Productions, Ltd. sells d2 game dice on the company website.

making sure everyone can make it. While groups often hold sessions at the Game Master's home, any player can act as the host. Some play in other venues: coffee shops, conference rooms, or any other locale that is free of distractions.

An "adventure" is a single story often played out in several sessions. Like any story, it has a beginning, middle, and end. That end doesn't stop the game, though, or make you start a new one—elements and characters might carry over from a previous adventure and the consequences of the current story might come back to haunt the group in the future! Like an episode of the television series, one adventure often leads to the next.

A "campaign" is a series of adventures that tell a larger story. If the adventures are the gaming equivalent of individual episodes, a campaign is the television series as a whole. While a game could be episodic—that's where story threads don't carry over from one adventure to the next—it's likely that the adventures weave together to tell a grand tale. Campaign style is generally the most popular form of play, as it allows for characters to grow, change, take risks, live, or die. Some campaigns focus only particular PCs; others might revolve around a central goal (such as the search for Earth in the television series).

For more information about crafting adventures or running campaigns, see **Chapter Seven: Game Master**.

### GAMING GEAR

It doesn't take a lot of gear to play the *Battlestar Galactica* RPG. You don't need to upgrade your RAM, get a better graphics card, or install a larger hard drive. Each group needs a copy of this book, pencils, paper,

and a set of gaming dice. You also need a quiet place where your group won't disturb others or be disturbed while playing. Lots of groups prefer to sit around a table, but that isn't absolutely essential. Some like to use miniature figurines as visual aids for combat and chase scenes, but those are not required either.

Snacks and beverages are always welcome additions to the game. Share the load though; the host shouldn't be stuck providing for ravenous masses every session.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TWELVE COLONIES

The Sacred Scrolls tell that the human race originated on a world called Kobol, the home of the gods. A terrible catastrophe drove mankind away, and thirteen tribes left the cursed world behind. Twelve of the tribes found a place to dwell together, each on their own world within one system. A Thirteenth Tribe fled far from the others, to a world called Earth.

The colonies of Aerelon, Aquaria, Canceron, Caprica, Gemenon, Leonis, Libris, Picon, Sagittaron, Scorpia, Tauron, and Virgon lived in peace and prosperity at times, but clashed far more often. Even so, the march of progress reached a peak when the colonists created artificial life to serve their needs and fight in their wars. These artificial workers and soldiers were named Cylons.

The creation process was perhaps too complete. In time, the Cylons became unhappy with their lot in life. They found a will of their own and rebelled against their former masters. In twelve bloody years, the First Cylon War claimed the lives of millions. At last an armistice was declared.

The Cylons departed, supposedly for a world of their own. For forty years, the human race knew nothing of the Cylons, their plans, or their location.

The colonies settled into a period of close cooperation, forming a stable centralized government. The memories of the Cylon War began to fade. Technology that had been banned during the war was eventually brought back in the name of progress and convenience. These systems included networked computers, wireless technologies, and other electronics that were vulnerable to Cylon attack. Such “progress” was tragically shortsighted.

On the very day the last warship from the First Cylon War was to be decommissioned, the Cylons returned. Billions were killed in a matter of hours; the Cylon victory was nearly complete—humanity all but exterminated in hours. Instead of fighting, the old warship, the *Battlestar Galactica*, led a fleet of civilian ships in a desperate flight away from the hostilities.

The refugee fleet houses less than fifty thousand surviving members of the human race. All must be fed, clothed, and sheltered, traveling in ships that need upkeep and repair. Their one hope is that the end of their journey brings them to the mythical home of the Thirteenth Tribe: Earth.

## ADVENTURE POSSIBILITIES

The stories told in the *Battlestar Galactica* television series are but a few of the adventures that occurred during the years after the Cylon assault. The fleet is composed of dozens of ships and tens of thousands of people—each ship a small world and culture unto itself and each person with her own tale to tell. While the story possibilities are nearly infinite, several role playing game campaign ideas come immediately to mind.

### The Search For Earth

Whether you play the crew of *Galactica* or others in the fleet, this campaign model follows the primary storyline of the television series. The PCs have a long-term goal of leading (or at least helping) the fleet to safety and following the ancient guideposts of the Thirteenth Tribe leading to Earth.

Such an approach builds on the plentiful background and available characters from the TV show. A drawback is that the settings and characters might be too familiar, forcing the GM to change things in order to keep the campaign interesting. One way around this would be to avoid using the *Galactica* and its crew, and instead focus on another ship in the fleet. Such an “alternate ship”

campaign would allow the group to experience many of the main events of the show (the formation of the fleet, the destruction of the *Olympic Carrier*, the search for a water supply, etc.) from a completely different point of view. By dovetailing the plots with the main storyline from the show, the GM can create stories that intersect or ignore the established storyline as necessary for a memorable campaign.

### Resistance

Humans are tough bastards, and not everyone was killed on the Twelve Colonies. On Caprica, at least, enough survivors banded together to strike back at the Cylon occupiers. Same thing might have happened elsewhere. This approach allows for a game set on a planet, not in space, and for a point of view very different from that explored on the show. An entire campaign could be set on one or more of the twelve worlds, or on an outpost of the old human civilization.

Although the characters in a resistance campaign are not confined to a ship, they are in even more danger from the Cylons than those in a space-focused storyline. Not so easy to escape into the trackless wastes of space when you are planet-bound. The themes of survival and maintaining humanity under difficult conditions are still there, but the setting is dramatically different.

### On Our Own

Another campaign approach follows the basic premise of *Battlestar Galactica*, but shifts away from the *Galactica*-lead fleet. The PCs might have a mostly self-sufficient ship and must try to survive on their own. Many of the problems faced on the show can be reflected but with different characters and circumstances, and with likely very different resolutions.

Since character relationships are so important in BSG-style storytelling, it’s important to make sure enough nonplayer characters exist for potential conflict, suspicion, romance, and jealousy. This could be done either with a large, passenger-laden ship, or perhaps a “mini-fleet” with several ships working in cooperation.

This type of storyline could continue indefinitely, could wind up back on the Colonies to become a resistance campaign, or could dovetail with standard adventures by meeting up with the *Galactica* and her fleet.

## WHAT LIES AHEAD

The remainder of this book explains the universe of *Battlestar Galactica*, how to create characters, and how to play the game. If you are taking on the role of Game Master, the later chapters provide both guidance and resources.

**Chapter One: Twelve Tribes of Kobol** gives a brief overview of the history and culture of the setting, along with the few facts that are known about the Cylons. (As a point of reference, this information reflects the television series up until the latter half of the first season.) Players should read this background information to better understand both their characters and the enemy. The chapter closes with game information and a full description of the major characters from the television series.

**Chapter Two: Characters** describes various aspects about characters and how they are created. It also contains rules for improving an existing character.

**Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** details two of the major elements that help define characters. The entries also offer insight on how to play characters who possess those qualities.

**Chapter Four: Rules** presents the Cortex Game System. It tells you how character information actually translates into play. Everything from skill use to combat to medicine is explained in the chapter, with plenty of examples to make things clearer.

**Chapter Five: Gear** begins by discussing the economy of the fleet and the use of cash and barter in a society on the run from the Cylons. It explains how characters acquire personal equipment, from sidearm

to dress uniforms to specialty equipment. It wraps up with lists and game information on a slew of useful items.

**Chapter Six: Vehicles** offers a look at the most important machines of the *Battlestar Galactica* setting, from huge capital ships to small craft such as a Vipers, Raptors, and Cylon raiders. The chapter explains how large and small craft interact at different scales and offers more specific rules for vehicle combat.

**Chapter Seven: Game Master** defines the role of the game monitor/referee/facilitator. It starts with the most basic concepts, then moves on to guidelines for constructing adventures and crafting campaigns, advice on how to handle players, and methods to keep a game interesting and engaging.

**Chapter Eight: Others** provides “stock” characters that can prove useful when running a BSG adventure. The chapter also provides alternate PCs for those who wish to get started quickly but do not want to play the characters from the television show.

The book closes with an **Appendix** of Colonial slang and basic military concepts and jargon. A character sheet may be photocopied for personal use only. A group of important charts and tables makes it easy to quickly find a number or die value you might need during play, while the index helps you reference the rest of the book quickly.

The universe of *Battlestar Galactica* is large enough to tell just about any story you can imagine. Just remember that danger should be faced with courage, tragedy with joy, and despair with hope. So say we all!



# CHAPTER ONE



TWELVE TRIBES OF KOBOL

# COLONIAL ONE, CONFERENCE ROOM

**T**HE Cylons have returned. They've attacked us without warning, destroyed our cities, and driven us back to the stars. We have endured the most heinous event in human history, yet we survive.

"Why?" some may ask. "Why have we been spared while billions have not?"

President Adar, gods guide his spirit, once told me of an explosion in the prison on Cancecon. The destruction was massive. Passengers on a starliner leaving the south colony said they saw the blast from orbit. No one was sure what caused it. Something had ignited a tylium vein . . .

The only survivor was one of the inmates. Forty-one Colonial marines and over a thousand prisoners, all gone. The warden died as well. His name was Adam Adar. He was the President's nephew.

The outrage was immediate. The victims' families demanded to know why their loved ones were gone. Fingers were pointed. Everyone had someone to blame, but the investigation was inconclusive and no one ever learned what really happened.

All eyes were on the survivor. How had he managed to avoid the blast? Was he involved somehow? Was it a failed escape attempt? People slung wild theories and virtually all of them laid the blame squarely at the survivor's feet.

The Quorum of Twelve called a special inquiry. The people demanded it. They wanted a scapegoat. The colony representatives split down the middle, with President Adar casting the decisive vote. Adar was feeling pressure from all sides and, to be frank, the only thing keeping him from siding against the inmate was his conscience. Adar was furious. He loved Adam like a son. But to condemn a man to death without proof of his guilt . . .

That day the President received a package that Adam had sent the day before the explosion. Inside was a painting of the sun cresting Cancecon's equator. Adar said it was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen. Then he noticed the signature.

It was the inmate. He'd painted the piece from his cell. You might know his name: Goran, one of the greatest artists of our time. He'd trained with Monclair in the final years of his life.

Adar voted to spare Goran and as you might know, he went on to paint many more amazing things.

"Why have we survived?" Because each of us is another Goran. You might paint, or write, or cook, or just make people smile. Everyone in this fleet has something to offer. Everyone in this fleet brings a little piece of home into the stars. We survived . . . to remember.

If we don't, if we focus on the why and let it consume us, if we give in to anger and depression, the Cylons win. But if we bring our knowledge and culture to our new homes, if we honor the Lords of Kobol with our memory, if we never forget, nothing can destroy us.

—President Laura Roslin,



## CRASH COURSE

All right, rooks, listen up! You're here to train with the best of who's left. As you know, we're in a world of hurt these days. The Cylons did a number on the colonies and they've been kicking our behinds across the galaxy ever since. We've lost our homes, our families, and more booze than I care to cry about, but like the President says, we're not gonna lose who we are!

There's fifty thousand of us left—Aerelons, Scorpians, Capricans, Picons, Gemenese, the rest of ya—thrown together in seventy tin cans held together with spit and hope. We may have our issues with each other, but we don't have the luxury of turning off the news anymore. We can't just sit back and watch. We have to fight to survive and we have to fight harder to find a new home. And we will find a new home. We'll find Earth. The Old Man says so.

When you're out there dodging Cylon fire, you should know who to pray to. That's where the gods come in. Listen close. We're only gonna cover this once....

## LIFE HERE BEGAN OUT THERE

Growing up in the colonies, it's easy to believe that we always lived there. The tribes settled over two thousand years ago and there's been a lot of history since: the trouble at the start and the wars between the worlds. A lot of information was lost with the dead. Too little time was spent recording the past. We let our roots slip away as we focused on other things and eventually it all became myth.

The zealots regale you with stories of glorious Kobol. They speak of it like it's the Promised Land. Ambrosia for all, they say! And most believe them. Kobol wasn't just the home of the tribes, it was the home of the *gods*. Kobol was where it all started. It was the root of all culture, the forge of all technology, and the wellspring of every one of our eternal souls.

It's also where we learned to hate and kill each other.

## THE LORDS OF KOBOL

Our knowledge of Kobol is sketchy. The Sacred Scrolls tell us it was the cradle of human civilization, a world of endless fruit and fancy. Rolling hills and sweeping seas, the stuff of frakking legends! The heart of it all was the City of the Gods, where Zeus,

Ares, Aphrodite, Hera, and the other gods lived in harmony with the tribes. The people enjoyed the finest in art and explored the limits

of science. They built the famous Forum, Temple, and Opera House, which we tried to copy in Delphi on Caprica. Did we succeed? Well, that's one for the critics.

Some people devoted themselves entirely to the gods and began calling themselves oracles. They became the spiritual leaders of the tribes and remain our spiritual leaders today. If you believe the scripture, the gods gifted the oracles with the power of prophecy and this led to the Sacred Scrolls. These were the collected writings of all the oracles, in particular Pythia, who wrote about the cycle of time. She foresaw a coming darkness and said that it would consume humanity over and over again. With each cycle, the people would be exiled or flee their home to be reborn elsewhere. That was 3,600 years ago and given what's happened since, it's hard to ignore the possibility that she was right.

The first time of darkness came two thousand years ago when one of the Lords—no one's really sure which—made a jealous play to rule the rest. At least that's what we *think* happened; remember, our intel here is sketchy. This troublemaker called down a great blaze from the heavens and the other Lords were powerless against it.

The next part, for once, is pretty well documented. To escape the onslaught, a number of Lords and a bunch of people boarded a vessel called the *Galleon* and fled into space. Hera, queen of the gods, was so overwhelmed by grief as she watched the *Galleon* leave that she threw herself from a high mountain. Zeus was enraged at her death and screamed to the heavens that any who returned to Kobol would pay a price in blood. How the folks aboard that ship heard Zeus' words is just one of those things the oracles tell us we got to take on faith.

However it was that they heard it, the tribes heeded the warning and never came back. They ventured into the deep black, in time finding twelve habitable worlds orbiting a single sun. If you've read your history, you know that didn't work out so well....

## THE TWELVE COLONIES

The planets that the tribes settled eventually became the Twelve Colonies we know today. That didn't happen without some rough patches though. Leaving Kobol so unexpectedly, the colonists brought little with them. Worse, their anger and confusion over the gods' selfish conflict caused rifts. The people neglected, even rejected, their past and found ways to separate themselves rather than bind together. Hot and cold civil wars began and the colonists entered

a dark age that stalled or reversed much of their progress. This continued for many hundreds of years.

The resident Lords of Kobol, still riled up by the events at their home world, didn't do much to help matters. Many actually fought and died in battle. Others turned their backs on their children, leaving them to their folly. Precious few tried to make peace. One way or another, by the time the wars ran their course, the gods no longer walked among the tribes.

Getting humankind back on its feet was no picnic. There was no shortage of problems. Survivors were scattered and fearful of their neighbors. Tempers remained high, making it difficult for the colonies to work together. Much knowledge was lost in the fighting. Infrastructure was destroyed, or had never existed in the first place. Efforts on every front were stymied: agriculture, industry, research, rediscovery.

In the end, the tribes got their act together and began to move forward. Open warfare and destruction waned, but that didn't eliminate the conflict. Each of the Twelve Colonies developed their own identities and some were just better than others. Worlds flush with natural resources pulled ahead, seizing positions as the cultural leaders of the system. The fruitless worlds had it the worst, their peoples limited to menial labor and curtailed learning. To some people's delight and other's disgust, these roles stuck. Colonials were defined mostly by where they were born. Truth to tell, this sad state of affairs hasn't changed much since.

The peace also brought progress, though. Travel and communication between the worlds became easier. Industry and education took center stage. Colonies traded resources, products, and services, and started defining value in the post-war era. A cross-planet colonial economy developed. The official currency of the Twelve Colonies, the cubit, was introduced. That could easily have gone badly, but somehow the leaders of the systems' fledgling governments refrained from disputing the cost of potatoes over the barrels of their guns. It looked like things were finally settling down again. Some started saying that the whole cycle of time thing was behind us.

The colonies turned their attention to space again. They built observatories and explored the edges of their new home. They built listening stations and pointed them up to see if anyone was talking, but the skies were silent. They built fleets of new ships to venture back out into the deep black. Yeah, there was a point—mind you, it was brief—where it looked like it the colonies would build a lasting peace. Didn't last, though. It never does.

The next time of darkness came on the colonies slowly. It started with two seemingly unrelated events. First was the gradual breakdown of the peace. Old prejudices and new arguments clouded the politics of the day. No single thing set it all off. None of it was particularly new, either. The poor colonies wanted more from the rich. The small planets wanted space on the large worlds. Debates about prices got heated and then shut down altogether. Practical disputes gave way to personal biases and the old hatreds resurfaced.

The second round of civil wars was far more subdued. The fighting was mostly restricted to border moons and backwash parts of the core worlds. That way it couldn't interfere with the comfortable daily lives of the wealthy and influential. Gods forbid the frakking ingrates sending men off to war actually watch them die. The blood on their hands might have stained their pretty clothes. No, while the grunts were smearing themselves across the system, the leaders of the colonies were focused on more and more imaginative ways to avoid an honest day's work.

That's where the real kicker comes in. Against all common sense, those bastards did the impossible, the abominable. Fifty years ago, they created life. Worse, they created *slaves*.

The Cylons were meant to help us. They were stronger, faster. They could go places we couldn't and do things we wouldn't. They could work forever and they never asked for a wage or better conditions or even a hot meal. They could even fight our wars, absolving us of our guilt over the fallen. The Cylons were the perfect solution for a civilization consumed with cozy efficiency.

The eggheads pushed Cylon development and reaped billions doing so. They gave the robots advanced processing capabilities and logic systems. More and more elaborate software was designed. In time, the Cylons became *aware*. Must have taken a hard look at their existence.

Big surprise, they didn't like it.

## THE FIRST CYLON WAR

The First Cylon War was just the "Cylon War" in the history books that came before the holocaust. It lasted twelve years and knocked the piss out of the Twelve Colonies. Battles were fought across the system, on the colonies, and in space around them. It was clear from the outset that the eggheads hadn't just given the toasters the ability to think, they'd stupidly given them the ability to hate. Reports from all theaters spoke of the Cylons' horrifying ferocity. They killed without mercy, leaving



no survivors. They wiped out entire cities and hunted down all who ran. They boarded ships to engage the enemy in bloody hand-to-hand combat, seemingly for the joy of it. This was the case with the *Brenik*, where only 20 of its highly capable 75-man crew escaped.

With intimate knowledge of computers, the Cylons developed “logic bombs,” viruses that shut down networked machines. Worse, they turned the computers against us. Colonial ships targeted each other or locked in collision courses with friendlies. IFFs failed, letting the Cylons catch us unaware.



Defense grids fell. Barracks were explosively vented into space while half the pilots on board were getting some rack time. It was a frakking nightmare.

The Cylons’ savagery and success had one up side, though: it banded the humans together like never before. Not surprising, really. Fear produces clarity. Talk of unification quickly became action and before too long the Twelve Colonies drafted and signed the Articles of Colonization. The modern colonial government—a democratic federal republic—was born. The first president was inaugurated. Sure, laws and rights were introduced, but that was all secondary to massing the soldiers and the war machines. The first order of business had to be mounting a defense against the toasters.

The arms race ran hot and heavy. Both sides came up with new and more destructive ways to exterminate each other. The humans built the battlestars, one for each of the colonies, and loaded them with squadrons of Viper fighters. The *Atlantia*, the *Athena*, the *Galactica*, and other flagships took to the skies against the Cylons’ new basestars and hordes of raider craft. We’d gotten wise to their tricks. The new colonial ships were specifically designed without networked computers so the Cylons couldn’t turn them against us. For the first time, we had an honest-to-gods chance of winning the blasted war!

A lot of courageous men and women died in the years that followed. Viper pilots led the charge in the heavens as grunts fought Centurions on the surface. The fighting was pitched and dire. Both sides wanted nothing less than to grind the last of the enemy under their heels. A lot of the time, they succeeded. The Twelve Colonies were littered with dead bodies and broken toasters.

Ultimately, the First Cylon War ended in stalemate. Neither side could gain a sustained advantage and the attrition was brutal. After twelve years of fighting, man and machine meet on a small moon named Cimitar. An armistice was declared and the Cylons agreed to leave the system to search for a world of their own. Some experts believe that the Cylons fleeing the system of their creation had as much religious importance as the tribes fleeing Kobol. They said it might be the culmination of the second time of darkness, just as Pythia foresaw. Those of us who lived through the recent holocaust see it differently.

Later, those in the colonies willing to forgive the toasters tried to open peaceful relations. They built an Armistice Station at the line both sides agreed never to cross. They sent a representative every year and hoped the Cylons would respond in kind. Waste of time. We heard squat for nearly forty years.

## THE FEDERAL ERA

The military kept pushing the envelope in the years following the First Cylon War. Dozens of new battlestars joined those already in service. Technology improved. Your basic Viper, which had undergone a single major upgrade during the war (from Mark I to Mark II), went through several more. Roughly twenty years after the war, new *Mercury*-class battlestars, including the *Pegasus*, became the jewels of the Colonial Fleet. Relics like the *Atlantia* and the *Galactica* remained in active service but plans commenced to decommission them.

Another twenty years later, one hundred and twenty battlestars soared the skies. They patrolled the Armistice Line and the frontier. When needed, their troops performed missions around the Twelve Colonies as well, most of them peacekeeping operations. On Sagittaron, a group calling itself “SFM” blew up a federal building in protest of the government’s “exploitation” of the planet’s people and natural resources. Some called SFM terrorists. Others called them revolutionaries. Regardless, the military stepped in to quell the uprising and took the group’s ringleader, Tom Zarek, into custody. Zarek was thrown in jail, though years later President Adar offered him freedom if he’d renounce his terrorist ways. He refused. The man’s got steel in his shorts, but he’s an idiot.

The military expansion had many lasting effects. A big one was the emergence of military families. Sons and daughters followed their parents into service, creating a sub-section of the populace that many called exclusive. Some people argued that the military shouldn’t be the only ones with guns. Peace activists spoke out against the build-up, claiming that the Cylon threat was past. They warned that building more guns would only lead to civil war again. This movement gained a lot of support amongst younger civilians. Of course, many of them only knew the First Cylon War from history class.

Friction between the military and civilian sectors got worse over the years, though it never flared into anything. There wasn’t enough time. Left alone, we might have figured out a reason to start fighting with each other again, but the Cylons didn’t give us the chance.

Veterans watched the Armistice Line, waiting for the toasters to make another move. Eventually, they watched alone. The next generation of the military moved on and the civilians forgot. Everyone was so frakking eager to abandon their past that they wound up surrendering their future.

## EXODUS

The Cylons never stopped hating us. Their war never ended. It *evolved*. Hell, the Cylons evolved, too.

On Caprica, celebrated intellectual Gaius Baltar was spearheading a new military project. His Command Navigation Program (CNP) was an operating system designed to improve the Colonial Fleet’s response time, coordination, and combat efficiency. It was also the damned Cylons’ key right through our front door. Just as the CNP’s installation was complete, a Cylon basestar—a nasty upgrade from their old ships—jumped into place beside Armistice Station. Minutes later, the basestar unleashed a torrent of missiles on the station, obliterating it.

More basestars appeared over every colony and bombarded them with nuclear salvos. The Picon Fleet headquarters and the Scorpion Shipyards were immediately destroyed. Time and time again, the Cylons outmaneuvered colonial forces, as if they knew all our most closely guarded military secrets ahead of time.

The remaining ninety battlestars quickly mobilized a counter-attack under the command of Admiral Nagala aboard the *Atlantia*. Thousands of Vipers and other fighter craft approached the basestars spoiling for a fight, but they were in for a rude awakening. All at once their systems cut out, leaving them drifting—helpless. They were sitting ducks for the Cylon onslaught.

Notice of system failures quickly spread through the fleet but it was already too late. By the time the military pulled the plug on the Command Navigational Program, the enemy had achieved a near-total victory. The last futile defense of the colonies took place over Virgon, where Nagala valiantly went down with the *Atlantia*.

Reports continued to arrive over the fleet wireless: the battlestars *Columbia*, *Solaria*, *Triton*, *Valkyrie* . . . all gone. The colonies of Caprica, Gemenon, Aerelon, Libris, Canneron . . . each consumed by nuclear fire. In a matter of hours, twenty billion lives were lost. Twenty *billion*. The whole of the human race, or very nearly.

Three hundred million miles away from the seat of colonial government, the battlestar *Galactica* was powering down. After fifty years in service, the last of the original battlestars was being decommissioned. She wasn’t ready for combat. She had point main guns and defense batteries but no ammunition for them. Her Viper squadrons had been reassigned. Her starboard landing pod was a museum. Still,

she was a legend, and gods dammit, legends never die.

The decommissioning ceremony was coming to a close as wireless reports about the attack reached *Galactica's* CIC. Executive Officer Saul Tigh was skeptical, assuming it was all a retirement prank, but Commander William Adama wasn't so sure. He scrambled his crew, alerting them that the Cylons had returned and the Twelve Colonies were at war.

Adama intended to take the fight back to the Cylons, but first he had to find munitions and fighters. Ammo was available at Ragnar Anchorage, a colonial armory suspended in the upper atmosphere of a gas giant plagued by violent storms. As for planes, a squadron of mothballed Mark IIs were sitting in the starboard flight pod. Granted, they were obsolete, but it wasn't like any better options were available.

The *Galactica* got the Mark IIs in the air just in time to defend against a flight of incoming raiders. The battle was brutal, but for once the Cylons didn't have the upper hand. The Command Navigation Program had been delivered to *Galactica* but never installed, and the Vipers were too old to use it. The crack pilots at the sticks made up the difference and shredded the raiders, though the *Galactica* suffered a nuclear strike for her troubles. Her forward port flight pod suffered heavy damage and caught fire. Violent decompressions erupted through the pod frame by frame, threatening to ignite the fuel lines and blow the ship to hell. The only option was to perform an emergency vent of the burning compartments, sacrificing eighty-five deck crew in the process. Gotta have brass balls to make

that call. It's the kind of thing that will drive you to drink.

The *Galactica* couldn't waste any time licking her wounds. She needed to get to Ragnar and reload so she could get back into the fight. The crew spooled up her FTL drive, crossing their fingers that it still worked, and flipped the switch. That particular piece of her equipment hadn't been used in twenty years and it was anyone's guess where the ship would wind up. Miraculously, the drive functioned as hoped and minutes later the *Galactica* began its descent into the clouds of Ragnar.

Elsewhere, starliner *Colonial Heavy 798* was facing its own troubles. The ship had delivered a bunch of civilians to the *Galactica's* decommissioning, including clergy, the press, and the feeble offering the government had sent. President Adar couldn't be bothered to make an appearance himself, so he sent the frakking Secretary of Education! If the Cylons hadn't crashed the party, the Secretary of Defense and a whole line of four-star generals would have had some words on *that* little stunt.

After the ceremony, 798 headed back to Caprica with Adama's son Lee flying escort. The starliner got word of the attack en route. Laura Roslin, the Secretary in question, contacted the remnants of the government. *That* amounted to one shell-shocked guy on Caprica with a radio, who told her that after the first nukes President Adar had offered an unconditional surrender. The Cylons didn't answer.

Just in case the message hadn't fully processed, a Cylon raider jumped in. It scanned the ship, fired

## NOT WITH A WHIMPER . . .

Dr. Gaius Baltar survived the Cylon attack due to the courageous self-sacrifice of one of the Fleet's finest. Lieutenant Karl "Helo" Agathon and Lieutenant Sharon "Boomer" Valerii were shot down over Caprica, but were able to repair their Raptor. As they were about to depart, a group of refugees, including Baltar, discovered them and pleaded for assistance. Convinced that the scientist's survival was more important than his own, Agathon choose to remain on occupied Caprica and allow Baltar to take the last remaining space on the craft.

As a slow planet-wide nuclear winter settled in, Agathon struck out on his own. He was prepared to do his duty and show the Cylons how he felt about their little reunion bash. He was soon reunited with Lieutenant Valerii, who returned to rescue him. Together, they fought a brutal guerilla war against the Cylons as they searched for a way off the planet.

Helo and Boomer's story is not unique. Others survived the attacks on the twelve colonies. Not just soldiers but farmers, politicians, artists, athletes, and more. People who used to be on the news. People you used to meet at the pub. Friends. Family. Every one of them could fight. Take a stand against the toasters. The Cylons may have won the first round, but the war ain't over. Not as long as humans survive.

Also, the Cylons are still on the colonies, so clearly there's something worth fighting for there . . .

a missile at the 798, and bugged out. Showing some serious flying chops, Captain “Apollo” Adama shot the missile down, taking heavy damage in the process. He did manage to land the Viper in the starliner’s cargo bay. Good thing—post-invasion, planes are damned precious. Also, the fighter used to be the Old Man’s and he was awfully fond of it. Oh sure, he’d miss Lee too, blood being thicker than Viper fuel. Usually.

Last thing Roslin heard from the government was a Case Orange message. Case Orange was a crisis failsafe the colonials came up with during the First Cylon War. In the event that the government was “decapitated,” an automated message started broadcasting to see who was left. Of those who responded, the highest on a pre-set list of succession became the new President of the Twelve Colonies. Despite being forty-third in line, Roslin pulled the lucky straw.

Roslin, Lee, the 798’s captain, and others piled into one of the starliner’s passenger cabins for an impromptu oath of office. The senior clergy on board, an oracle named Elosha, swore her in. Just like that, a schoolteacher became the head of the colonies. Well, what was left of them.

The new President’s first official act was to round up all the civilian ships stranded throughout the system. After the initial attack, all non-military vessels were ordered to a full stop, leaving them defenseless against the Cylon onslaught. President Roslin personally spearheaded the effort from the 798, which its captain re-dubbed the *Colonial One* in honor of its illuminated passenger. Dozens of ships were recovered, including the *Tauranian*, a tylium refinery ship that could refuel the others. A few military craft joined the party as well, including a Raptor and a few Mark VII Vipers.

By this time, the *Galactica* was at Ragnar and sent word for ships to regroup at the gas giant. Roslin stuck to her guns about the rescue mission and tried to countermand Commander Adama. She ordered the *Galactica* to her position to assist. This was the first of many post-invasion flare-ups between the military and civilian sectors, but it was never resolved. Before anyone could make their case, another Cylon raider jumped to *Colonial One*’s position and attacked with several nukes.

In desperation, Captain Adama pulled a stunt that would have gotten him busted down to ensign in peacetime. He jiggered an EM coil that *Colonial One* was bringing back from the *Galactica* and used it to disable the missiles. Even better, it made it look like the missiles had gone off and bought them enough time to change their trousers and choose a new course of action. Roslin was initially dead set against leaving

civilians behind, but the ruse wouldn’t fool the Cylons long enough to get everyone aboard an FTL drive craft. Again, hard truths require hard choices. Many people were left to die that day. Some say they were the lucky ones.

At Ragnar, the *Galactica* led the *Colonial One* and other ships into the storms. The Ragnar armory was positioned in a pocket of relative calm deep within the violent turmoil of the giant’s atmosphere. Lousy place to put a military outpost...unless you fought the Cylons in the first war. The storms at Ragnar interfered with the silica pathways in Cylon brains. Kept the munitions safe from the enemy. The storms also masked DRADIS signatures, so just then, they kept the ships safe too.

*Galactica*’s crew went about collecting munitions, including several Class D nuclear warheads. The supply party also encountered a man calling himself Leoben Conoy. He claimed to be an arms dealer and said he didn’t know the Cylons had returned. Introductions were cut short as one of the warhead racks being wheeled onto the *Galactica* tipped over, spilling its explosive cargo. Fortunately, it was explosive shells and not nukes. Otherwise, the whole drama would have ended right there. As it happened, the blast trapped Commander Adama and Conoy behind a damaged bulkhead door. The deck crew tried to free them but Conoy knew a faster way out and led Adama deeper into the station.

Conoy was clearly ill. He mentioned headaches and nausea. He was burning up with fever. And it was getting worse. Adama soon became convinced that Conoy’s suffering was a telltale sign that the surrounding EM interference was rotting the “man’s” silica relays. Adama confronted Conoy and nearly got strangled for his troubles. Good thing the Old Man had twenty years of experience scrapping in the Colonial Fleet. He bested the toaster and escaped the station with the startling news: somehow, the Cylons looked like us now. Or at least some of them did.

Back on the *Galactica*, the survivors compared notes. Beyond the Cylons’ human forms, it was evident that they were somehow able to seize control of the Command Navigation Program, so all copies of the software were purged from the ships’ systems. All the Vipers got retrograded as well. Dr. Baltar had survived the bombing on Caprica and led this effort with the help of the *Galactica*’s CIC staff.

Newly armed and outfitted, Adama was hell bent on taking the fight back to the toasters. He dispatched a scout to the edge of the storms, where two Cylon basestars, ten raider squadrons, and two recon drone detachments had set up shop. On a

good day, the *Galactica* might have been able to take half that. It was pretty clear a frontal assault was suicide. After discussions with Roslin, the Commander came up with a daring escape plan. The *Galactica* flew just outside the storm and positioned herself between the Cylons and the civilians. She was reloaded and used her guns and Vipers to hold off the enemy as the other ships flew just far enough outside Ragnar's cloud to jump.

A third basestar joined the fray, nearly overwhelming the *Galactica*, but she held. Tough old broad, that boat. They might not have built them smart back in the day, but they certainly built them strong. As the last of the civilian ships jumped away, *Galactica* recalled her fighters and followed.

We humans ran for our lives.

## THE COLONIES

Fifty thousand refugees survived the Twelve Colonies. Their memories of home are humanity's legacy. The tribes who fled Kobol honored their past in the names of their new worlds. The original names of the colonies drifted slightly over the centuries, and so will the recollections of the time before the Cylons returned. Ultimately, all fades and becomes myth to make way for a new beginning. Until then, we remember where we come from by who we are.



### AERELON

Long ago, Aeron was called Aries. The world and its people were sturdy and dependable. Aeron's vast, fertile fields fed eighty percent of the system. Still, Aeronians were some of the poorest bastards in the Twelve Colonies. They had to import technology and manufactured goods—mostly stuff they couldn't make themselves. They were also piss-poor hagglers, looking for fairness in all things. Some call this naïve, but anyone lucky enough to call an Aeronian friend could rely on them for life.

Aeron's cities, if you called them that, were small and unassuming. Few of the buildings were more than a couple stories high. The Aeronians didn't build what they didn't need, keeping their communities close and compact. This showed in their daily lives.

Most Aeronians were born, grew old, and died in the same hundred square miles of dirt. Some never left the towns of their birth. They woke each day in the same beds, worked each day in the same fields, and ended each night in the same pubs, drinking the same beer. Outsiders saw this life as sad and unfulfilled, but Aeronians were proud of their simple lives. They did an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.

Given their background, Aeronians have had a pretty easy time acclimating in the fleet. That, and the fact that a fair chunk of the marines and deck crew grew up with dirty, farm-worn hands. The military was always the easiest way off the farmstead.

Aeronians aren't afraid of work and they're not afraid to face down a toaster to get the job done. They also play a mean game of Triad.

## AQUARIA

Aquaria is just ahead of Caprica in the system's Trojan orbit. Dotted with many small seas, its tribe settled along the coasts and developed a water-oriented culture including a strong sailing tradition. The planet's proximity to Caprica and Virgon made it cheap and easy to trade their two most abundant resources: fish and algae. They also developed highly efficient growing techniques that worked pretty much everywhere. Nearly every botanical ship in the fleet is either owned or run by Aquarians.

Aquarians are quiet, thinker types. Some call them shifty but more often than not, they just don't have anything to say. Rather than fill the air with noise, they keep to themselves. Aquarians are extremely self-sufficient and ask few questions. They get to the point and rarely bicker. Hell, the only time they're really talkative is when they're telling stories. The Aquarians do love their stories. Most of the time, they tell creepy campfire tales about ghosts and the power of the sea. The Aquarians never really pushed inland, leaving a lot of their world untamed, unexplored. Their folklore wonders what's out there, lurking.

Watching Aquarians in the fleet, it seems like they feel the same way about space. "We could find *anything*



## THE CHILDREN OF KOBOL

The twelve colony worlds spun around a single star on elliptical orbits. Closest to the sun was sweltering, volcanic Canceron, the greatest source of tylium in the system. Next came a Trojan orbit of planets—three worlds following the same orbital path, separated by roughly the same distance (one-sixth the orbit's diameter). In order, these planets were Aquaria, Caprica, and Virgon. They were centers of art, culture, and system-wide trade.

Two gas giants followed, each in its own elliptical path and each itself orbited by a number of moons. The first of these behemoths was Zeus, named after the king of the gods, and its moons were Leonis, Picon, and Scorpia. Another large planet named Aeron shared Zeus' orbit, positioned exactly opposite the giant. The second gas giant was Hera and her charges were Gemenon and Libris, with Sagittaron likewise spinning opposite. These two giants and their moons were the heart of the system. This real estate was the most heavily contested during the colonies' many civil wars.

At the outermost edge of the system dwelled Tauron, followed by a third gas giant named Ragnar. Tauron was the first world settled after the fall of Kobol. It was the springboard for all expansion in the system. Its people were also responsible for the Cylons' spark of life. Not something to be proud of these days.

out here," they say. It's not unusual to find them just staring out a porthole, watching the stars, dreaming up new stories. Might be why so many entertainers came from Aquaria. Their minds are always wandering. Lots of tortured artists among them too. They might not mind being alone but many don't get along in their own heads, either.

Lots of Aquarians are in the service. They don't mind space so much; sea sailing on their homeworld is far worse. You lose control in space, you drift. You lose control on the sea, you die. Best of all, Aquarians rarely get rattled. Even in the most pitched battles, with the ship jerking and buckling, they just stomp across the deck, never losing their footing. It's spooky.

### CANCERON

Located closest to the system's sun, Canceron is mostly a barren, hellish pit. The majority of its surface isn't fit for anything. The entire middle was nothing more than a cracked desert broken up by volcanoes. The Colonial Fleet used this region for flight exercises—bombing and strafing like there was no tomorrow. Hard for people to complain about blowing up useless land. Also meant that military was close at hand in case the bad half of the population got out of line.

Canceron was home to two groups, one at each pole. The Southers were dour folk who mostly lived in climate-

controlled subterranean mazes. They were good at selling things. Had to be. When your world only had one export and half of it was automatically sent to the other worlds, you got mighty good at making money off the rest.

The Northers were the troublemakers. At any given time, over two thousand federal prisoners toiled in mines digging tylium. Canceron wasn't the system's only prison. Several high-security penal stations were located on other planets, but inmates always had the option to transfer to Canceron. In exchange for enduring the hellhole and mining tylium for their home colonies, inmates earned "freedom points" toward early release. Everyone made out. Except the Cancerons, but that's what happens when you're sitting on the majority of a natural resource the government deems "essential to the health of the colonies."

Canceron's where the black market got started. The Canceron penal colony housed all the really *motivated* inmates, the criminals with vision. On the inside they planned; when they got out, they acted. Some say the head of the black market in the fleet, a soft-spoken fella by the name of Phelan, spent some time on Canceron. That would explain all his connections. It also explains his less-than-sunny disposition toward the military.



## CAPRICA

Central in the Trojan orbit, Caprica used to be a beautiful blue-green world with the perfect climate. The colony had rolling hills, pleasant lakes, and deep forests. The cities were heavily populated, but it never seemed that way. Glittering silver towers spiked through bustling open-air plazas and markets. Parks, rivers, and waterfalls were everywhere. So comfortable were Caprica's cities that people rarely paid attention to the steady lines of vehicles streaking overhead.



Caprica was also the center of government, education, and culture. Its capital of Delphi housed all three branches of the colonial government and hosted the biggest corporations and universities in the system. The place had replicas of the Forum, Temple, and Opera House—trying to replace the originals left behind on Kobol. The Museum of the Colonies displayed many original artifacts from our lost homeworld.

Before the nukes fell, it seemed like half the colonists came to Caprica to visit the heart of colonial faith, business, and law. Every year, the planet's spaceports grew and its cities expanded. While many visited, only the best and the brightest stayed. You had to be good to survive there. When you did, though, life was worth living. Many claim that Capricans grew decadent, but its inhabitants were too comfortable to listen. They stretched out on sandy beaches, sailed clear blue seas, and enjoyed sheltered lives. Professionally, they raced around, making laws and money, rarely thinking beyond their atmosphere.

Capricans have a hard time in the fleet. Their specialized skills don't mean much anymore. Their former status just gets them in trouble. A few, like Starbuck, are exceptions. Those types came from the *other* Caprica, where the colonial military elite made its home. Several of Caprica's spaceports were exclusive to the fleet, and Caprica City's Government Center Plaza housed the Colonial Defense Mainframe and Baltar's Command Navigation Program. You have to wonder, though. Most of the Cylons' strategies exploited these resources. Might have been



better off for all of us if the military types stayed on Picon.

## GEMENON

Gemenon was the third colony settled, after Tauron and Caprica. The first to arrive were the priests, oracles and others who closely studied the Sacred Scrolls. Others of a religious bent followed. They built shrines and temples by the score. Place was so unpleasant, wasn't much other reason to be there.

Gemenon became a place for religious pilgrimages. Visitors bundled up and braved the cold, windswept mountains of this rocky moon to see the original temples and monasteries built by the first colonists. Several natural wonders were exalted as well, including the Faces of the Lords, a series of wind carvings said to resemble the gods. Religious types believed that trips to these sites would awaken and refresh the spirit.

As of the Cylon holocaust, two sects lived in relative tolerance on Gemenon. The fundamentalists believed that every word of the Sacred Scrolls was literally true. Even the crazy talk. The gods could heal and regularly bestowed visions on their most devout followers. The cycle of time repeated forever. The Thirteenth Tribe was real and found Earth. Many see the fundamentalists as a little loony—zealots, or worse. It didn't help that they looked at children as property of the gods and imposed the death penalty for abortion, child abuse, and even a failure to provide proper education.

The other religious faction was made up of orthodox theists. Contrary to their name, these folks were the least judgmental of the Gemenese. They used their resources to found the Colonial Cross, a relief foundation that served the Twelve Colonies. They also operated Kobol College, with schools devoted to philosophy, psychology, medicine, administration, civil engineering, and public relations. Their efforts earned them a significant following and great political pull.

Gemenon was one of the poorest colonies, by choice as well as circumstance. They had very little to offer outside of faith and they gave that for free. What little money came in was from nominal lumbering,

metal mining, and cloud scooping of useful gas from the nearby giant Hera.

## LEONIS

In the service, rooks are taught the “Lesson of Leonis,” which is two-fold. Leonis teaches that over-enthusiastic pride can destroy. It’s also a testament to the power of the colonial arsenal, and what happens when war goes too far. These lessons are pretty damn apparent in the aftermath of the Cylon attack. There’s

just not very many to learn them anymore.

When the tribes originally settled the Twelve Colonies, the followers of Leo fought tooth and nail to claim one of three moons of the gas giant Zeus. The colonists knew that the planet contained uranium, which was required to make nuclear weapons. They were sure that controlling a primary source of uranium would give them great standing in the colonies. After a hard fight, they won their claim. Early on, their position was very strong. The Leonids were

instrumental in founding the colonial military and advancing its weaponry. They built elaborate stations, hoping to become the hub

for Fleet operations in the system.

Unfortunately, the uranium ran out within a few centuries. The Leonids continued to fight for their place at the head of the table, but it only got them into hot water with the other colonies. During one particularly bloody civil war, Caprica and the other two moons of Zeus, Picon and Scorpia, bombed Leonis back to the Stone Age.

Leonis was largely subservient to Picon after that. Politically, it was a non-entity. The Quorum of Twelve was often a Quorum of Eleven with one representative standing in for both colonies. The Leonids became bitter, resentful people. They scraped by working a number of ship-building contracts at gloomy, hollow stations. Some claimed the military continued to grant these contracts only out of guilt.

Fact is things are actually looking better for Leonids nowadays. They’re making a comeback in the post-invasion fleet. Many of their people were ground

pounders, deck hands, and mercenaries before the attack. Those are exactly the skills needed now. More and more Leonids are being recognized as heroes, leading our defense against the Cylons.

## LIBRIS

Libris was known mostly as the colony that warred the least. Rattled or disgusted by the flight from Kobol, its people chose a seemingly out of the way moon and interacted little with their brothers and sisters. They shunned most of the colony wars, gaining a reputation for having cool heads. At one point, the colonies tried to formalize this, asking the Librans to mediate looming conflicts. They refused. “Leave it to Caprica,” they said.

Librishadmanynatural resources, but not much of any of them. Its people had many skills, but didn’t specialize in anything. Some of them fought. Some farmed. Some mined. Over the first several centuries in the system, the planet generated its slow, steady income from many small enterprises. It wasn’t until the other colonies realized that Libris was the safest place for their money that the world gained a real name for itself.

The Libran banking system grew quickly. Folks appreciated that their savings wouldn’t go up in a puff of ordnance every time a war broke out. Before long, the Librans were one of the wealthiest colonies

in the system. All they had to do was take people’s money, protect it, and skim off their share.

Several hundred years ago, Libris decided to invest its cubit stockpiles in the one thing they had in abundance: land. They built resorts, casinos, and cruise ships such as the *Space Park*, a passenger liner now flying with the fleet. This attracted people from every colony and made Libris one of the hottest destinations around.

Librans are an intense bunch. Their financial background demands serious, focused attention, but their entertainment venues let them unwind in style. A Libran rarely does anything





halfway. When he's on, nothing can shake him, and when he's not, he's almost certainly at a party. Libran parties are legendary. More than once, half a morning's CAP stagger in with no idea where they've been the last twelve hours.



## PICON

In the twilight of the Twelve Colonies, Picon was the colonial military hub. Caprica was the center of politics and the home to the brass. Still, when they needed ships, they called Picon to make them. True, Picon would hire the Leonids to actually build the ships, and people from all the colonies would staff them, but Picon ran the show.

Picon's military muscle dated back to the civil wars and its bitter rivalries with Leonis and Scorpia. Three moons full of military-minded tribes orbiting the same gas giant—sparks were bound to fly. At first, it looked like Leonis would

have the upper hand, controlling the largest stocks of uranium. Then it ran out, leveling the playing field. The fighting heated up then and it looked like Picon and Leonis would beat each other senseless with Scorpia goading them along. That is, until Scorpia revealed its masterstroke: an alliance between Picon and Caprica.

After that, the fighting was pretty much academic. Leonis was doomed to play the slightest role among the moons of Zeus, and its place in the colonies suffered as well. Picon absorbed much of Leonid culture and many of its people. The only place where the rivalry between Leonis and Picon continued to play out was on the Pyramid court. There, Leonis showed its teeth every season. More often than not, they claimed victory.

Picon thrived. Its alliance with Caprica and Scorpia made it the centerpiece of the colonial military. Ultimately, Picons were happy to leave the politics to others, so long as control of the military stayed with them.

Picon has always emphasized strong leadership and military professionalism. They are excellent Fleet officers, pilots, and marines. That's where they're most comfortable. Having sailed the wide oceans covering most of Picon's surface since the colony's inception, they are no-nonsense, traditional, naval sorts. Picon steadiness and tradition cannot be matched.

## MEMORIES OF THE FALLEN

Twenty billion dead. Twelve worlds in flames. Only the gods know them now.

Here in the fleet, we do what we can to honor the dead. Survivors drift to sleep each night clutching pictures of those no longer with us. Most of the time, it's a solitary affair. A husband mourns a wife. A sister prays for her brother's safe delivery to the heavens. A pilot knocks one back for his wingman consumed in fire.

Occasionally, pictures of the dead take on a greater meaning. They've become symbols for what we share, the things none of us can deny. They are reminders of what we've sacrificed, and beacons for what we will overcome.

After the destruction of the colonies, it didn't take long for folks to start looking for loved ones. Pictures of the missing started to circulate. On *Galactica*, members of the crew were tasked with collecting the names of the survivors, and until they were done, they asked those with pictures to pin them up in the halls. Soon, more than a few halls were littered with photos of the missing and the presumed dead. Mourners came to grieve, more than a few tears were shed. These "memorial halls" grew and people began placing photos of the newly dead as more were claimed by Cylon attacks and the deep, harsh black. These tapestries aren't only grim. They're a testimony of our struggle and they'll stay up so long as we draw breath.

Beside the door into the *Galactica's* ready room, where Viper pilots brief for each shift, there hangs a black and white photo of a colonial soldier on his knees atop a blazing rooftop. The shot documents the Cylon bombardment of Aereon. The inscription reads, "Lest We Forget." Much of the crew has gotten in the habit of touching the photo on their way out for luck. There's a brief, unspoken wish: "Lords of Kobol, hear my prayer. Take the souls of your sons and daughters lost this day...."

## SAGITTARON

Sagittaron was colonized by a splinter faction of Gemenese fundamentalists who felt that their brothers and sisters didn't embrace the faith *enough*. They chose a distant planet opposite the gas giant of Hera for its remote location and fertile land.

Before the Cylons' return, the other colonies often viewed Sagittarons as uncultured, unwashed heathens and exploited them. They took advantage of them in trade negotiations, keeping them poor. On many occasions, they simply stole from them, or worse. At one time or another, half the

other colonies claimed territory on Sagittaron. They destroyed the planet's buildings and some even took

its people as slaves.

Naturally, this didn't instill much good will in the Sagittarons, but most of them refused to take action. They just don't make much of a fuss, even when their caustic tempers get the best of them. One of their popular phrases sums it up nicely: "If you don't have anything nice to say, come sit over here next to me."

The Sagittarons are a simple people, pacifists by nature, herbalists and farmers by trade. They believe that sloth is the ultimate sin and that work is faith. None of that is too far out there but they're so keyed into their "separateness" that lots of folks dislike them. They withdraw from society but they aren't hermits—they don't shun outsiders but don't have much use for them either. They don't attend school but they aren't stupid—they teach each other skills the rest of the colonies have never adopted. They refuse medicine but aren't suicidal—they believe the Lords of Kobol save those who deserve salvation. They reject many technologies that make life easier, viewing shortcuts as sin. Only those who embrace challenges are assured eternal deliverance.

A few Sagittarons are real hardcases. One of the survivors, Tom Zarek, was the leader of a terrorist group known as SFM. Twenty years ago, he and his cronies blew up a government building in protest over the mistreatment of his people. He also wrote an inflammatory book that was virtually banned throughout the colonies. In keeping with their pacifist

ways, many Sagittarons speak out against Zarek, but those who support him seem to be getting more aggressive every day.

## SCORPIA

Scorpia is the third moon of Zeus, a gas giant that also hosts Leonis and Picon. It used to be a small, cool world of dense woodlands and exotic plant life. Its population was always low, even for a moon its size, but what they lacked in numbers they made up in cunning. The Scorpians were shrewd strategists, brokering deals with the right colonies at the right times. Somehow they always came out ahead even when they double-crossed their allies. An early alliance with Tauron secured critical military technology that kept them from suffering the same fate as Leonis during the colony wars. More crucial to their survival, however, was their pivotal role in the alliance between Picon and Caprica, which set the balance of power between the moons of Zeus for over a thousand years.

The ancient rivalry between Picon and Leonis was infamous, and it often spilled over into neighboring worlds. Scorpia was closest and in the early days it became the sandbox the bigger kids would stomp around in. Though Scorpia fought just enough to make a point, it wasn't really interested in a prolonged struggle. Fortunately, it didn't need to be. Through its strong ties with Tauron, Scorpia had influence at the heart of the system, Caprica. Its delegates convinced the colonial government that Leonis was responsible for a

few key battles in which Capricans died and suddenly the Leonids were fighting three worlds at once. By the

time the dust settled, Scorpia had already reached an arrangement with the other victors to establish the moons of Zeus as the home of the Colonial Fleet. Leonis would build the ships, Scorpia would house them, and Picon would administer the whole mess. So it remained until the Cylons returned.

Scorpians are often considered cold and calculating, and more than a few are. Still,



their innate charisma and sense of humorous irony makes them entertaining and popular. Before the fall of the colonies, the Scorpians' wry wit catapulted many of them into the public eye as celebrity comedians. Their scathing novels and public speakers attracted attention system-wide. Those that stayed out the limelight were—and still are—no less influential.



## TAURON

Tauron is the most distant colony from the system's sun and the landing place of the *Galleon*, the ship that brought the tribes from Kobol. The Taurons are extremely proud of their standing as the first among the Twelve Colonies. In the early days, they flaunted that position and took credit for the other colonies' successes. "After all," they said, "no one would be here without us." The Taurons' superiority eventually wore thin, and the screaming really got loud when the Taurons challenged the Gemenese interpretation of the Sacred Scrolls. Fighting started soon after.

Despite instigating much of the tension in the early colony wars, the Taurons eventually withdrew from the fighting. They preferred to further the technology aboard the *Galleon*. The Taurons claim to have built the *Galleon* for the Lords of Kobol. No one challenged them as it was all ancient history, and that left the Taurons' in complete control of the most advanced science in the system.

The Taurons made good use of the resource, developing much of the machinery used throughout the colonies. They amassed huge fortunes and heavily influenced the course of scientific development. Over the centuries, though, the Taurons pulled away from the peoples of the other worlds. Their reverence for technology was unnerving and some wondered privately whether the Tauron inventors were more devoted to their creations than the gods. Maybe there was some truth to that. They did create the silica strands used in Cylon brains.

Tauron is a frigid, harsh world and its people reflect this. They're born of brawny stock

and tend to be tall and muscular, thick in body and mind. They're often called stubborn and sometimes insubordinate. They can argue just to argue and rarely give up, even when they're wrong.



## VIRGON

Virgon is the last of three planets in the Trojan orbit. A mid-sized jungle world, it had a few concentrated cities, a subtle reputation, and a lot of big ideas. Its people were best known for their most frivolous pursuit: fashion. Many of the colonies' celebrated actors, models, and public speakers were Virgons. Every world looked to Virgon for each season's trends. Even in Caprica City, the frakking heart of everything, Virgons set the style.

Behind the glitz and the glamour, Virgons controlled or influenced far more than anyone suspected. They were said to have "the eye," a sixth sense for opportunities, personalities, and motives. This wasn't some sacred gift. The Virgons were religious, but not fiercely. Many oracles came from Virgon, but so did many business moguls, city builders, artists, and soldiers. They claimed it was just healthy, sensible ambition. Have faith in yourself and your deeds, and the gods will provide for you.

Whatever the reason, Virgons were everywhere. Mostly out of the spotlight. Their art graced small galleries on Caprica, their contracts crossed moderately influential desks on Picon and Scorpia, and their money filled respectably sized coffers on Libris. Virgons held some of the most underrated positions in the colonial military, often as gunners due to their keen vision and reflexes.

Outside fashion, Virgons' reputation is one of excellence without notoriety. Self-effacing and respectful, most Virgons choose accomplishment over fanfare any day of the week.

## GOVERNMENT

Fifty-two years ago, the Articles of Colonization unified the Twelve Colonies into a federal republic. It was the first time the colonies had agreed on so many

things at once. Hell, that probably wouldn't have happened if the Cylons hadn't revolted.

A democratically elected President ran the show. He chose a Cabinet of Ministers to run the various Ministries: Defense, Education, Justice, and others. The Ministers' appointments had to be confirmed by the Quorum of Twelve, though. Just one of the many times that the government ground to a frakking crawl.

The Quorum of Twelve boosted one elected representative from each colony. They confirmed Minister appointments, nominated and confirmed the Vice President, and decided many other issues. Each had one vote on each issue, with the President breaking ties. Unfortunately, the Quorum liked to debate. It was their specialty. By the time they made up their minds about something, it was a miracle if it mattered anymore. Then there were the decisions that defied all logic. The fleet doesn't have these problems. At least, it didn't until recently.

Post-invasion, we held to as many of our traditions as we can, including Colonial Day. That's the anniversary of the signing of the Articles. President Roslin took the event as an opportunity to re-institute the Quorum of Twelve and they jumped right in with Vice-Presidential nominations. This went quickly for once, but the nominees . . . let's just say they could have done better. Convicted terrorist Tom Zarek and playboy elitist Gaius Baltar? In what universe are those two qualified to run things?

Roslin had it right in the first place. Her initial choice was strong. Wallace Grey kept the fleet's economy out of the crapper and for that alone he should get a frakking medal. Too bad he's got the charisma of a shoebox. Sure, Zarek and Baltar are exciting. They make the civvies swoon. But where would the fleet wind up with either of them in charge? The mind boggles.

When it became clear that Grey wouldn't win any votes, Roslin chose her lesser evil. Dr. Gaius Baltar is one of the eggheads who caused all the trouble in the first place, but he's a smooth talker. He won six of the Quorum reps over and the President cast the deciding vote. With any luck, Baltar'll stay in the lab and leave the heavy lifting to the professionals. And Roslin better take her vitamins because if she keels over, we're in it good.

Roslin hasn't chosen a Cabinet. The fleet's too small for Ministries. Instead, she relies on a small number of handpicked military, civilian, and spiritual advisors to get the job done. She hasn't re-established the rest of the former government, either. The Lord's Council, which gave priests and oracles the President's ear and

powers of justice and legislature. The People's Council, which did the same for the "average" citizen. These are parts of the old machine we may never get back. Maybe that's for the best.

## THE MILITARY

You might be Caprican, Sagittaron, Aerelon, or Libran, but when you join the colonial military, you're all the same. You wear that uniform and you take the fleet's survival into your hands. You hear Action Stations and it's go time. There's no room for hesitation or debate. You question an order and people die. It's that simple.

The Cylons did some a favor. They gave everyone a fresh start. Before the bombs, you might have been a world-class screwup. You might have gotten lazy. Comfortable. You might even have been considering the virtues of civilian life. Now you can get past all that. Now you get to prove that you're worth risking the gear you carry.

How? That's easy. Do every frakking thing you're told. Without question. The alert sounds and you grab your knickers and get running. The CO says shoot, you pull the trigger. The mission is everything. What you *want* is unimportant. What you *need* is unimportant. All that is important is that you follow orders. You *hear* me? Sound off like you have a pair!

That's better.

Now. Let's take a look at what you maggots have gotten yourselves into ....

## THE COLONIAL FLEET AND MARINES

Before the bombs, the Colonial Fleet was the pinnacle of the colonial war machine and the last word on all matters military. Its job was to patrol and defend the Twelve Colonies. It was commanded by the Admiral of the Fleet and the Fleet Command Staff, and ran dozens of installations, institutions, outposts, and facilities throughout the colonial system. Its crown jewels were the battlestars, each a small city with the firepower to devastate an entire planet's surface. Attended by gun platforms, support ships, tankers, tenders, and a full complement of fast-strike fighters, these behemoths anchored a full 120 battlestar groups. Hear the lifers tell it, the Fleet was second to none in power, prestige, and—mostly—bureaucracy.

Had to belay that talk around the marines though. Technically, the Colonial Marine Corp was a branch of the Colonial Fleet, commanded by the Chief of Marine Corp Operations (CMCO). But

jarheads don't appreciate playing second fiddle to anyone. They had their own ball and played their own game—separate officers, enlisted, and chains of command. About the only time marines didn't do what they pleased was when a small detachment was assigned to a battlestar or other major Fleet vessel. In that case, the grunts followed orders from the boat's commanders just like everyone else.

The Colonial Marines were trained extensively in personal and ground combat. There never were many of them, but they made up for it in balls-out ferocity. They were the toughest sons of bitches around. Some smartasses claim that's because they were too stupid to lay down and die. Didn't say that much around the marines though. That was a sure fire way to the infirmary. Jarheads don't take guff from anyone.

The Fleet and Marines maintained separate reserve commands that stayed in fighting shape, but kept out of day-to-day operations. Rank in the reserves was the same, but reservists minded their Ps and Qs around active duty folk.

Course, after the Cylon holocaust, a lot of this stuff stopped being important. Fleet and Marines command—hell, the fleet and the marines—largely ceased to exist. All members of the reserves were called to active duty and every able body, military or not, was pressed into service. Still, lots of traditions remain—the ranks are the same, the basic command structure survives, and training still has to be done.

## THE POST-INVASION FLEET

Post bombing, the "fleet" is a collection of military, public, and private vessels huddled together and scared out of their wits. The "Fleet" is the *Galactica*, and those who serve onboard her. Fleet personnel keep the *Galactica* going and the rest of the fleet alive. The pilots take on the enemy, the deck hands keep them in the air, and the snipes keep the pilot light on.

Top of the Fleet is the brass. For now, that means Commander William Adama and Executive Officer Saul Tigh. Senior Officer of the Watch Felix Gaeta runs the show when the other two are absent from the CIC.

Time may come for others to take over. Command has perks—a little more rack space, a bit better food and drink—but there's a price to pay. You gotta keep your head at all times. Never forget that every godsforsaken bastard who salutes you is counting on your sorry ass to get them through alive. Surviving when men who followed your orders didn't is *not* a pleasant experience.

The *Galactica's* Vipers, Raptors, and support ships are manned by her Air Group. The head honcho is the Commander, Air Group, or CAG. That's Captain Lee "Apollo" Adama these days. Generally, flight orders come across the wireless from the LSO, or Landing Signal Officer, but in the event that the CAG is around, his word is law.

Nuggets spend several weeks in the motherly care of an experienced pilot. Used to be simulators kept the screw-ups from ever climbing in a pilot's seat. Sadly, the *Galactica* doesn't have them, so nuggets take the stick of a live Viper. That can be a problem. If you haven't noticed, we're a little low on hardware. Can't afford to lose any planes every time a nervous stick cracks up out there. It's worse in Mark VII's. The new Vipers were designed for computer-assisted flight, but they've all been retrograded to avoid Cylon manipulation. Now they buck like a frakking bronco! Fight that stick at the wrong moment and you'll wind up one of those pretty flares we see outside the porthole every so often.

At one point or another, all pilots get a call sign. Want to avoid living out your days as "Chigger" or "Whiplash?" Then show us you're worth better. Track kill tallies on the ready room wall and make sure you get some rack time between flights. You'll need it.

All landings on *Galactica* are manual—auto-landing systems require a computer network. Always confirm the ball with the LSO and keep your distance from other planes on approach. If you find yourself in a combat landing, and you will, try not to approach too hot, keep your bird level, and pray.

The most common pilot duty assignment is the CAP, or Combat Air Patrol. Each CAP consists of two Vipers scouting the edge of the fleet, sometimes with a Raptor if trouble's brewing. These days at least one CAP is in the air at all times with additional alert fighters standing by in the tubes.

Other pilot assignments include setting up a DRADIS picket to hunt for hostiles and salvaging wreckage we stumble across. Ambush and assault missions are less common, but sometimes unavoidable. Raptors fly med-evac and handle most of the search and rescue missions.

The most experienced pilots are sent on advance recon. This usually involves a Raptor jumping ahead of the fleet to investigate possible destinations. Get in, get the coordinates, get back. Some recon flights drop beacons to throw the Cylons off the fleet's trail. It isn't always that easy, of course, which is where the experience comes in.

The hotshots like to talk big, but don't think the Fleet is just about pilots. Hundreds of men and

women work their butts off keeping the *Galactica* and her birds flying. Chief Petty Officer Galen Tyrol runs the *Galactica's* deck crew, which has the “enviable” job of salvaging the planes that make it back from battle. With limited time and parts, these folks do things with machinery that would make your hair stand on end and salute. They're the real reason the Cylons haven't punched our ticket yet.

And you can't talk about the Fleet without mentioning all the people who on a good day never see a Viper or a Raptor. The command strategists, who plan the Fleet's missions. The nav specialists, who make sure we don't jump into a sun. The damage control teams, who bravely run into parts of the ship that everyone else is breaking their necks to get out of. At any time, there's about a dozen people in anyone's line of sight that never get mentioned, but without them this bucket of bolts wouldn't make it another week. The Fleet's pilots might be its fist, but the rest of the crew is its lifeblood.

## THE POST-INVASION CORPS

Since the bombs fell, not much is left of the colonies' police or local military forces. Cylons made sure of that. A few of those poor slobs made their way onto ships. That's where all the different patches on the soldiers come from. It's their right to remember their former units and comrades. Whether they were grunts, cops, deputies, bounty hunters, clerks, cooks, or water boys, they are all Colonial Marines now. Just like the flyboys welcomed pilots from the *Triton*, the *Columbia*, and other ships, every fighting man and woman in this gods-lovin' Corps should be treated with the respect due their rank and duty, regardless of where they come from.

The Colonial Marine Corps owns the ground now. If the threat's on its feet, it belongs to the marines. Before the clouds, the marines were generally only used for the really sticky situations—the quick assaults, the raptor drops, the hot dust-offs. Those days are long gone now. Marines are the ground pounders now.

Each Marine is assigned to a Senior Marine Commander or the Master-at-Arms, who handles ship security. It's a privilege to do whatever these fine marines ask, up to and including walking into the path of enemy fire. In the Corps, the Commander is Mother, the Master is Father, and both are gods. Like gods, their ways are mysterious. Love 'em or hate 'em, as long as you obey them, you'll get along fine.

There's always something for the grunts to do. Not much time for training, though; everyone's got to pick it up as they go.

Brass always needs updated inventory. Some troops are assigned to different ships to sweep every inch for anything suspicious. Anything that remotely looks like it's toaster-made gets handed over to Dr. Baltar. Everything else gets catalogued.

Cylon detail never ends. The latest intel on the human models is updated regularly and everyone has to stay on top of it. The marines routinely sweep the fleet. Get in every passenger's face. Skinjobs get tossed in the brig and the Master-at-Arms gets informed immediately.

Police rosters are posted daily. MPs have to be prepared for anything. Unrest among the civvies, bar fights, another prison riot on the *Astral Queen* . . . Damn near anything's possible in the fleet these days.

A precious few Marines see special duty. The Master-at-Arms picks the best and brightest to be examiners. They report to Sergeant Hadrian, who always seems to have some mess to clean up. Could be a murder, but it's mostly theft or suspicious activity. Could be some nugget gone missing on the *Prometheus*. He probably just paid one of Phelan's girls a visit and got himself rolled. Whatever the mystery, it's the examiner's job to get to the bottom of it.

The rest of the marines who aren't off-shift are on guard duty—the Armory, Fire Control, CIC. Some take the Old Man his food and guard his quarters. Others are on the President's duty team. Any of them frak up and we're all in the crapper.

## CULTURE

Colonial culture took root at least as far back as Kobol. Maybe earlier. Fancy glass cases in Delphi and Caprica City held relics from the time of the war between the gods, and a few that looked older. Few know who created them, but they were valued throughout the Twelve Colonies. The cycle of time teaches that we learn and grow with every journey. It also reveals that everything is fleeting.

The Twelve Colonies' journey ended in fire. Countless works of creative genius were annihilated: Kitaris' poems, which illuminated the spirit and exposed humanity's weaknesses; Monclair's stylized oils, which captured passion amid horror; the original score of the colonial anthem.

The survivors hold onto what's left as best they can. Some cling to what they remember. Others even now are building on it. As happened after the exodus from Kobol, the fleet's culture is growing from trampled roots. What comes next will echo the past, but also can't help but be unique to this new age. Already we're seeing artists

create chalk murals on bulkheads or build sculptures out of scrap. *Galactica's* deck hands are talking about ways to install rec areas in the unused spaces of the ship.

Little amusements linger as well. People still play Pyramid, even if leagues and formal teams are things of the past. Games are one on one or three on three. They're a hell of a lot more rugged and less structured. The card game Triad is also popular, especially in the military. Gives the troops something to do between duty shifts. People still bet cubits, but mostly for fun. When you want to get serious, you toss in something of real value, like fumarella cigars or a week's KP duty.

Gods help us, the most lasting record of the fleet's culture will probably come from the press. When the bombs dropped, the corps assigned to *Galactica's* decommissioning ceremony survived along with the President. But even if the "professionals" hadn't, someone would have decided "to seek the truth" and started reporting. Just the way humans work.

Two breeds of press have made a name for themselves in the fleet. The Fleet News Service attends press conferences scheduled with the President aboard *Colonial One* or Commander Adama in the ready room. Roslin's a hell of a lot better with the press than Adama, so she does the bulk of the heavy lifting there. She feeds them information about the known Cylon models, which helps us smoke out infiltrators.

Another group calls itself the Colonial Gang. These blowhard jokers host a wireless talk show and call themselves "the last legitimate journalists in the universe." Their topics are always hot-button and their debates are pretty inflammatory. We should probably shut them down, but their ringleader, James McManus, was a big shot at the *Caprica Times* and draws a lot of attention. For now, they're here to stay.

## RELIGION AND SCRIPTURE

Most colonials worship the Lords of Kobol: Zeus, father of the gods; Aphrodite, the goddess of love and sensuality; Ares, the god of war; and the rest of them. The colonists believe that the Lords ruled ancestral tribes on Kobol and delivered them to the Twelve Colonies over two thousand years ago. They also believe that service to the gods in life is rewarded with eternal salvation.

Faith in the gods touches every part of colonial life. Nearly everyone prays to the Lords for guidance and support. Children are dedicated to one or two of the Lords at birth. Those gods are said to influence the child's talents, personality, and success.

Services call upon the gods to lead the

spirits of the dead from darkness and grant them immortality.

Religion is also central to colonial politics. Priests swear officials into office and serve as advisors. Prayers are part of debates and voting. The clergy is a bonafide government body and to some degree influences all the others.

Colonial faith is communal. Temples exist on every ship. Some are specific to certain Lords or beliefs. Others are open to all. Visitors can pray alone but the group is always there. Examples of the community are everywhere. Faith groups shepherd each other through the pain of the colonies' destruction. Before facing their enemies, soldiers break a salt line and pray together. Even the ultimate expression of faith is communal: "So say we all."

Believers are tended by two types of clergy. Priests are the Lords' foot soldiers. They keep temples, perform services, and care for the faithful. Oracles perform all functions of priests, but most believe they're something more. They've given themselves over entirely to the gods and claim to receive many gifts in return. Believers say oracles can see the future.

Oracles sometimes take chamalla, the extract of a bitter-tasting root that provokes hallucinations. Skeptics say the oracles' visions are just random hallucinations, but all too often, the visions come true.

## THE SACRED SCROLLS

On Kobol, the first oracles wrote of the cycle of time. "All this has happened before," they said, "and all this will happen again." Their words were collected in the Sacred Scrolls. They foretold the war between the gods on Kobol, the discovery of the Twelve Colonies, and the colonists' ultimate voyage to a distant planet called Earth.

In time, humanity's memory of Kobol faded and the Scrolls' prophecies became myth. Criticism of the oracles undermined the writing. Heated debates and current problems marginalized them. Language changed, obscuring their meaning. Though the Scrolls remained a source of inspiration for the colonists and their verses were still used in ceremonies, they lost the ring of truth. People still had faith in the Scrolls, but few believed they were a true account of history.

The Cylons' attack on the colonies brought the Scrolls back to the minds of the people. For many, it also renewed their faith in the prophecy of Earth.

## EARTH

According to the Sacred Scrolls, a Thirteenth Tribe left Kobol over four thousand years ago. These starfarers struck out in a different direction than the Lords of Kobol and their charges. They ventured deep into unknown space and “made their home on a planet called Earth, which circled a distant and unknown star.” As with all of the Sacred Scrolls, though, hard to say where the myth stops and the truth starts.

After the Twelve Colonies’ destruction, the weight of it all crushed down on the survivors. Morale hit a real low. In a rousing speech, Commander Adama revealed that not only was Earth real, but the highest-ranking members of colonial government and military knew where it was. Was he lying? Maybe, but it doesn’t really matter. Word spread quickly through the fleet and that gave people hope again.

Some oracles say we’re living through a prophecy written by Pythia over three thousand years ago. She was one of the original authors of the Sacred Scrolls. Many find Pythia’s scripture fairly vague, but some are starting to see the parallels.

Pythia wrote, “the Lords anointed a leader to guide the caravan of the heavens to their new homeland.” This could be President Roslin and the fleet, but it might also refer to the original escape from Kobol, or any of the colonies after Tauron. It doesn’t help that Pythia also said that, “unto the leader, they gave a vision of serpents numbering two and ten, as a sign of things to come,” and that the leader would suffer a “wasting illness” and wouldn’t live to enter the new land. So far, the President looks fine. She’s a little skittish now and then, but that’s to be expected for someone in her position. The serpents? Closest we’ve got are the Vipers down in the flight pods. Come to think of it, twelve Vipers did lead a mission to take a Cylon base recently ....

If the scriptures are true, then we’re in for some chop. They foretell of bigger battles ahead, including a “confrontation at the home of the gods.” An artifact called the Arrow of Apollo is supposed help point the way. Well, that’s helpful. They also say that, “Kobol will lead the way to Earth.” Good news for the victors. Guess we better not frak up.

## THE CYLONS

The Cylons haven’t been sitting on their chrome-plated hands for the last forty years. They are faster, smarter, and stronger than they were in the first conflict. They even figured out how to look like us. All the way down to the blood.

Their raiders are sleeker and have FTL drives now. Their Centurions are faster and more agile. They still

use many of the weapons humans gave them, up to and including nukes. Otherwise, though, we’re dealing with a whole new breed of toaster here.

Cylons claim to worship God—singular—and the skinjobs tell us that’s why they have to kill us. “The children of humanity will only grow up when their parents are dead.” So far, they’re doing a pretty stellar job. They came this close to exterminating the human race back at the colonies, and they haven’t been more than one step behind the fleet since.

Doubt and fear pulses through every ship in the line. The Cylons could be anywhere. They could be any of us. The guy fixing your coffee, the gal comforting her kid, the joker raising your Triad bet—any of them could be toasters. They might not even know it. We know they have sleeper agents. We just don’t know who they are.

*Are you a Cylon?*

Beyond the paranoia, there’s still so many questions unanswered. Where did they go after the First Cylon War? How did they “find God?” Is this God real and if so, what is it? How did they build the human models? What else do they want from us? How long have they been among us? How many are among us right now?

What we do know is we’re outmatched. The Cylons don’t get tired. They don’t need food. For every toaster, raider, and skinjob we take out, they build two more. So how do you defeat an enemy you can’t stop?

We’ve got roughly fifty thousand chances left to find out. After that, it’s game over.

## CENTURIONS

The original Cylon Centurion was supposed to make colonial life easier. It was built to be durable, dependable, and strong. The idea was that an android could perform tasks that humans couldn’t, or wouldn’t. It could mine asteroids for tylium without an EVA suit. It could fight without risking human casualties. Unfortunately, the survival instinct programming required to win wars backfired.

The Model 0005 was six and a half feet tall, bipedal, and had marginal dexterity—just enough to use most weapons and tools. It wasn’t very fast and could only operate on its own for about eight to ten years without a new battery. People called it a “walking chrome toaster” due to the shape and design of its head, and the term’s still used to refer to all Centurions. The original model’s most prominent features, though, were a glowing red eye that bounced back and forth and the heavy stink of machine oil.



The post-holocaust Centurion keeps much of the original design, though it's slimmer and faster. Its tall, tapered head and heavy gait have earned it the nicknames "bullethead," "clanker," and "chrome job." The hands have seen a major upgrade. The fingers are much more agile and can slice through colonial armor. The whole forearm can retract to reveal a double-barreled automatic weapon with savage stopping power. Clankers can run and jump with surprising strength and some of them are armored, requiring explosive rounds to take down.

Some of the crew have the dubious privilege of having to cut a few Centurions open. Unlike their predecessors, which were entirely mechanical, the new clankers contain living tissue. Got to be a way to exploit that. Just got to figure out how.

## RAIDERS

Cylon raiders are attack fighters, used just like Vipers. They attack human targets and defend the Cylon basestar flagships. Up to four Model 0005 Centurions manned the original raiders. The new ones operate autonomously. Just like bulletheads, the new raiders contain living tissue. Lieutenant Thrace learned this the hard way when she found a "dead" one on some anonymous rock. Desperate for oxygen, she actually crawled inside and picked her way through the innards. Not only did she find fresh air, she actually figured out how to fly the tin can back to the fleet.

Like Vipers, the new raiders can enter atmosphere, which is why their shape still includes wings. The new model's far more bird-like, though. Some pilots call them "sparrows." So far, this new model has come armed with kinetic energy weapons and conventional nukes. There's also a heavy troop transport versions, called a heavy raider. Other configurations are likely.

During the attack on the colonies, raiders used wireless pulses to seize control of the Command Navigation Program. They used it to shut down battlestar and Viper controls, leaving them helpless in space. During the First Cylon War, old raiders used similar technology to infiltrate colonial computer networks and plant viruses.

The new raiders are also FTL-capable, allowing them to jump directly to the main Cylon fleet when they catch sight of the human survivors. Their FTL systems appear to be more accurate than their colonial counterparts.

In combat, the new raiders act more like animals than trained soldiers. They lack ingenuity but make up for it in sheer numbers and ferocity.

## HUMAN MODELS

"There are twelve models." Those words were written on a note left for Commander Adama just after the fleet left Ragnar. So far, we've seen three: the one who first identified itself as arms dealer Leoben Conoy on Ragnar Anchorage; the "PR man" who first called itself Aaron Doral and insinuated itself onboard *Colonial One* during the initial chaos; and the blonde model, which first claimed to be "Shelly Godfrey," the assistant of one of Dr. Baltar's former colleagues. In each case, these infiltrators attempted to sow disinformation and distrust in the ranks. Bad as that is, it's only the beginning. Their tactics are bound escalate.

Human-model Cylons are virtually indistinguishable from the real thing. Their biology is a match in every way. They can eat, drink, sweat,



breathe, sleep, laugh, cry, and even frak. Whether they need to do these things or they're just faking is anyone's guess. A lot of colonials hope the physical stuff is real at least, because that would mean they can hurt.

Each of the human model types appears to look the same. All the Dorals look like Dorals, for instance, and all the Godfreys look like Godfreys. They can disguise themselves, but they either can't change their basic appearance or they choose not to. This is one of the only points in our favor so far. As each one of the twelve is identified, there are fewer chances of another sleeper agent slipping into the fleet. Right now, all they have to do is sneak one of the unknown models onto a ship with a bomb and set it off. Who knows why they haven't yet. Maybe they value their

lives more than we give them credit for. That would be more good news because it means they can fear. Of course, all this assumes that the note was right. "Twelve models" could be a Cylon trick for all we know.

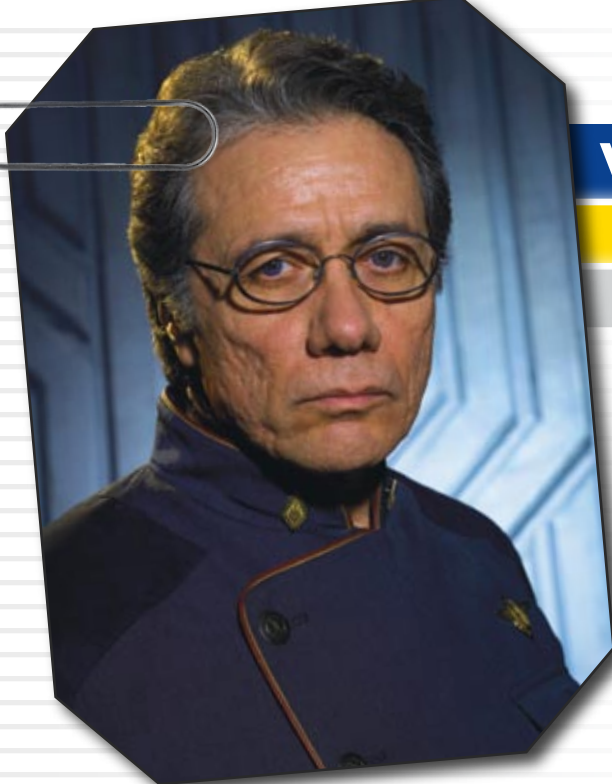
It's unknown how the Cylons share memories. According to the Conoy model on Ragnar, each one that's killed simply wakes up in another body somewhere else. Where? Do they wake up on their basestars, back on their home world, or somewhere else? Do they trade information like computers or do they have to talk to each other?

Cylon brains have clearly evolved in the last forty years, though they still use a variant of the original silica technology. This is another point in our favor, as Dr. Baltar's used that as the basis for his Cylon detector. Too bad it takes eleven hours for each test. Sixty years is a long time to screen the entire fleet....

## RELIGION

Colonial knowledge of the Cylon God is spotty, consisting of bits and pieces gained during brief conversations with the human models encountered to date. The Cylons believe in a single God that created humanity. They also claim that humanity is flawed and undeserving of God's love, so God influenced humanity to create the Cylons as a replacement. By wiping out the human race, the Cylons are fulfilling God's plan. To hear them tell it, the Cylon God loves all and asks only for love in return, yet he punishes and destroys when that love is denied. They believe that God is impartial, yet he's capable of such righteous hate that he guided the Cylons to annihilate *billions*.

It's clear the Cylons detest the colonial faith. They believe the colonial gods are false idols and that humanity is ignoring a dark, sinful past on Kobol. Oddly enough, they show a keen interest in the Sacred Scrolls and seem to recognize the cycle of time. They want to know more about the Thirteenth Tribe. Might only be an effort to track down more humans to kill.



# WILLIAM ADAMA

**RANK: COMMANDER**

**CALL SIGN: HUSKER**



**Current Assignment:** Commanding Officer, Battlestar Galactica

## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d10
Vitality	d8
Alertness	d6
Intelligence	d8
Willpower	d10
Life Points	18
Initiative	d6+d6

## Skills

Artistry	d4
Athletics	d6
Discipline	d6
Leadership	d10
Morale	d8
Interrogation	d10
Guns	d6
Heavy Weapons	d4
Knowledge	d6
Perception	d4
Pilot	d6
Viper	d10
Survival	d4
Unarmed Combat	d6
Brawling	d8

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Traits

**Cool Under Fire d10**—A veteran of more combat situations than he can easily remember, Commander Adama rarely gets rattled or nervous. He takes things one step at a time, hardly ever raising his voice.

**Dull Sense (Eyesight) d2**—Adama's vision has gotten worse with age, forcing him to wear glasses to avoid squinting.

**Formidable Presence d6**—Strange that a quiet man like Adama can be so intimidating. When the Commander directs his steely gaze at you, you quickly realize that he is not a man you want to frak with.

**Duty d10**—The Commander worries not only about the safety and security of his ship and crew, but the whole damn fleet. He doesn't bitch and grouse about his burden, but it does wear on him at times.

## Role Playing Notes

As old and scarred as his ship, William Adama commands what may well be the last military vessel of the entire human race. His voice is soft and gravelly, but carries quiet authority that cuts through the noise and chaos of the most tense situation. The "Old Man" (as he is affectionately called by almost the entire crew) is serious and demanding, yet can offer both humor and patience when needed. He commands respect from everyone on his ship, but is accessible even to the lowest-ranking enlisted crew.

You wouldn't expect the decorated Fleet veteran to be the son of a lawyer and an accountant, but Bill Adama is never quite what you expect. He fought in the First Cylon War as a Viper pilot, and shot down an enemy on his very first combat mission. His voice earned him the call sign "Husker," and he advanced through the ranks on the battlestars *Atlantia*, *Columbia*, *Valkyrie*, and *Galactica*. Furloughed by the Colonial Fleet after the armistice, he spent years away from active duty before returning as a senior officer.

Adama fathered two sons, Lee and Zak, both who followed the senior Adama's footsteps and trained to become Viper pilots. Lee performed well, but Zak was killed in the cockpit performing basic maneuvers. Zak's death drove a wedge between Bill and his remaining son, but forged a bond between the Old Man and Zak's fiancée, Kara Thrace.

Bill Adama was ready for retirement—as was *Galactica* itself—when his old enemy returned. The Old Man prepared to fight to the last, but the newly-appointed President of the colonies convinced him that the survival of the human race was of higher priority than revenge. Now both old warhorses—the man and the ship—lead a fleet of civilian transports that carry the small hope of an entire species.

The search for Earth was the goal Adama set to provide hope for the fleet, but he does not believe in Earth any more than he believes in the Lords of Kobol. Others believe in it, including the President, but until he sees real proof he's not going to invest much hope in superstition and mythology.

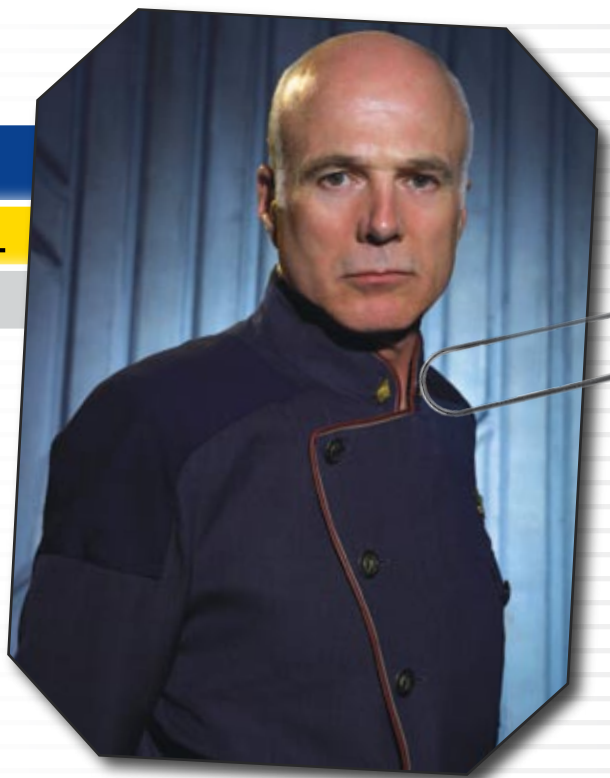
At present, Commander Adama simply tries to get through each day without losing too many lives. He is, at all times, prepared to make tough choices and stand by them. His experience tells him that sometimes lives need to be sacrificed for the greater good, but it's important to him that humanity be actually worth saving—that in trying to survive, they don't become as cold and soulless as the Cylons.

Adama's strongest connections are with his best friend and XO, Colonel Saul Tigh, and the young woman he loves like a daughter, Kara Thrace. Bill wants to repair the damaged relationship he has with his only remaining son, but has not had much luck to date.



# SAUL TIGH

RANK: COLONEL



**Current Assignment:** Executive Officer, Battlestar Galactica

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Skills

Athletics	d4
Covert	d4
Discipline	d6
<i>Leadership</i>	d8
Guns	d6
<i>Pistol</i>	d8
Heavy Weapons	d4
Knowledge	d4
Mech Engineering	d4
Medical Expertise	d2
Melee Weapons	d4
Perception	d4
Pilot	d6
<i>Viper</i>	d8
Survival	d4
Unarmed Combat	d6
<i>Brawling</i>	d10

## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d8
Vitality	d12
Alertness	d6
Intelligence	d6
Willpower	d10
Life Points	26
Initiative	d6+d6

## Traits

**Addiction d6**—Tigh has been a “functional” alcoholic for many years, often showing up for a duty shift with a coffee cup filled with something that’s definitely not coffee. The booze does not necessarily affect his performance, but it has caused problems when interacting with those under his command. It’s also an open secret on *Galactica*, with crewman and officers alike laughing at the XO behind his back.

**Brawler d6**—He doesn’t get into scrapes much anymore, so few people realize that Tigh is the last person you want coming after you in a fight. He does not frak around.

**Cool Under Fire d6**—Tigh saw so much combat during the Cylon War that he is able to keep a level head even in the most dire situations.

**Prejudice d6**—Colonel Tigh is third-generation military, and has grown up with the prejudice that civilians (or “civvies”) are soft, weak, and spoiled. He rarely bothers to hide his scorn.

**Tough d8**—Though old and worn, Tigh is one tough bastard. He can take a lot of punishment and still get up for more.

**Wise-Ass d4**—A hard-ass military man through and through, Tigh suffers fools badly and rarely keeps his thoughts or opinions quiet. He has an acerbic comment for most any situation.

## Role Playing Notes

Saul Tigh is a tough old bastard with a drinking problem and a barely-contained bad attitude. He doesn’t offer excuses; he doesn’t accept any. He only has one real friend and his troubled marriage only makes the rest of his problems worse.

Third generation military, Tigh joined the Colonial Fleet in his teens and went on to experience some of the bloodiest battles of the First Cylon War. The ships he served on were boarded more than once, so he was forced to defend himself hand-to-hand and was a first-hand witness to the horrors of war. Tigh suffered from post-traumatic stress, but because he holds little stock in psychology, anytime he needs to numb his pain, he just grabs a bottle.

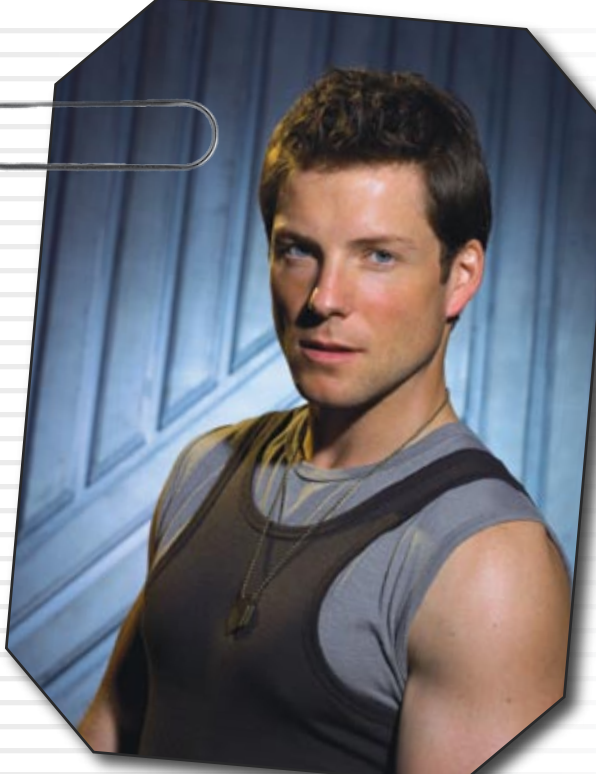
Tigh rose to Chief Petty Officer during the war, and when the Fleet ran low of Viper pilots he was drafted into Colonial Officer Candidate School. He was a reliable pilot who earned more than a few kills, and was awarded several medals during his tour as an officer aboard *Battlestar Athena*. During the war Tigh felt alive, understood his value, and had many duties to distract him from his personal demons.

The war ended, and Tigh was just one of countless warriors who were furloughed and thrown back into regular society. Life aboard ship was the only thing he had ever known, so he took a job as deckhand on a commercial freighter and drank himself to sleep almost every night. It was during this time he met another former Colonial Officer, William Adama. Though they had not known each other during the war, they found a lot of common ground—both had similar experiences and were in the same place in their lives.

Were it not for his friendship with Adama, Tigh probably would have faded into menial work and died from alcohol poisoning. After Adama was reinstated, he convinced Tigh to return as well. From that point on, Tigh and Adama would serve together and make a formidable team.

Colonel Tigh was anticipating retirement when the Cylons attacked. Though a terrible thing, he was forced to admit it made him feel alive again. He tried to give up drinking, but stress and his sense of isolation made the bottle too damn attractive. Nevertheless, Tigh is always ready to perform his duties and does not apologize for his behavior.

Tigh is level-headed and capable of making tough decisions, but is terrible about personal relationships. Every now and again he’ll try to interact with the crew while off-duty, but these encounters generally reinforce his feeling that everyone hates him. Bill Adama is the only person he can really open up to and truly be honest. Tigh has high expectations of himself and anyone under his command, and is once again ready to fight the Cylons to the last.



# LEE ADAMA

**RANK: CAPTAIN**

**CALL SIGN: APOLLO**



**Current Assignment:** CAG, Battlestar Galactica

## Attributes

Agility	d8
Strength	d8
Vitality	d8
Alertness	d8
Intelligence	d8
Willpower	d8
Life Points	20
Initiative	d8+d8

## Skills

Artistry	d4
Athletics	d6
<i>Dodge</i>	d8
Discipline	d6
<i>Leadership</i>	d8
Guns	d6
<i>Pistol</i>	d8
Influence	d6
<i>Persuasion</i>	d8
Knowledge	d4
Mech Engineering	d4
Medical Expertise	d2
Perception	d6
Pilot	d6
<i>Viper</i>	d10
Unarmed Combat	d6

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Traits

- Contrarian d6**—Lee Adama generally finds the underdog cause in any given situation and supports it, without necessarily understanding his own motives or how it may damage his relationships. This is a trait he inherited from his grandfather, lawyer Joseph Adama.
- Good-Natured d4**—People generally respond well to Adama's positive attitude and friendly nature. This helps him both in his leadership role and in convincing others of his point of view.
- Tough d8**—Apollo can take more punishment than one might expect after sizing him up.
- Trusting d2**—Though he's been let down and disappointed by people more than once, Adama generally takes someone at his word and expects them to follow through.

## Role Playing Notes

Lee "Apollo" Adama is the CAG aboard *Galactica*, leading a small group of overworked pilots whose missions might well determine the survival of the entire human race. He is likeable, friendly, and positive, but a subversive part to his personality causes him to choose unexpected sides in a conflict.

The oldest son in the Adama family, Apollo's father is William Adama—a respected leader in the Colonial Fleet. He and his brother Zak were raised largely by their mother, Carolanne. Though a loving mother who taught her sons the value of intellectual freedom and self-analysis, she suffered from mood swings and tried for years to work through a drinking problem.

After graduating from college, Adama enlisted in the Colonial Reserves so he could attend flight school—largely because his father always said a real man wore the wings of a Viper pilot. His younger brother quickly followed in his footsteps, even more eager to win their father's approval. Adama was convinced that his brother would wash out of flight school, as he had neither the talent nor the reflexes needed for flying. Apollo was attached to the flight school as a reservist, and struck a friendship with a flight instructor named Kara Thrace, Zak's betrothed.

Adama was shocked when he learned that his brother was killed while flying a Viper on simple maneuvers, and immediately blamed his father for putting pressure on his sons to wear the uniform. He carried that anger until Thrace confessed she had passed Zak on his final flight exam even after the young recruit had demonstrated that he was unsuited for flying a Viper.

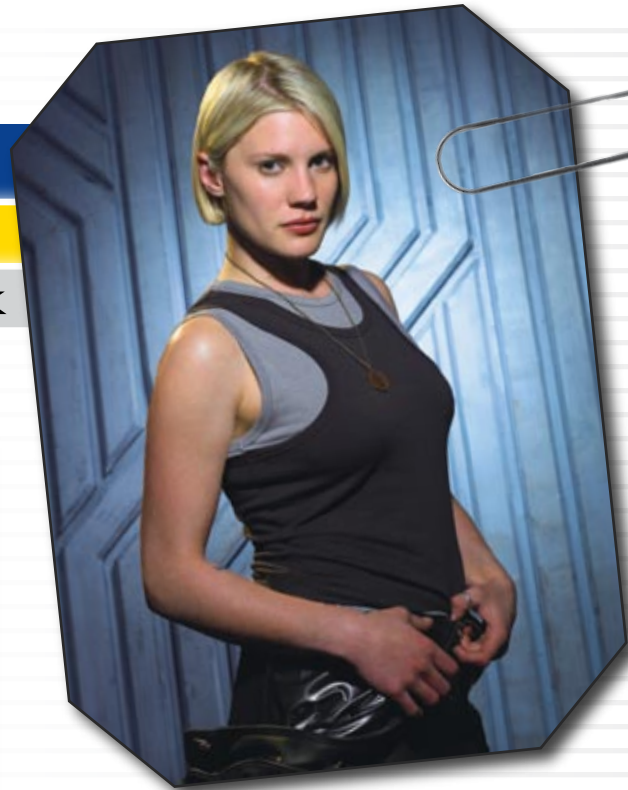
For two years, Apollo drifted. He performed his duties and was promoted to Captain, but considered leaving the Colonial Fleet all together. Engaged to be married and an expectant father, one of his last assignments was to attend the decommissioning ceremony of his father's ship, the *Battlestar Galactica*. When the Cylons attacked and the very fate of the human race was on the line, Apollo was able to push aside thoughts of his mother, fiancée, and unborn child. Still, he thinks and dreams of them.

Lee Adama leads his pilots to the best of his ability and serves as an advisor to President Laura Roslin. She affectionately calls him "Captain Apollo." He tries to stay focused on work because he is prone to guilty feelings over perceived mistakes. Adama has limited time and resources for his favorite hobby, cooking, because of rationing within the fleet. He is torn between duty to the military and belief in civilian law, something that he revisits with each conflict between President Roslin and his father.

# KARA THRACE

RANK: LIEUTENANT

CALL SIGN: STARBUCK



**Current Assignment:** Viper Pilot, Battlestar Galactica

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Skills

Artistry	d6
<i>Painting</i>	d8
Athletics	d6
<i>Pyramid</i>	d8
Covert	d4
Discipline	d4
Guns	d6
<i>Sniper Rifle</i>	d8
Mech Engineering	d4
Perception	d4
Pilot	d6
<i>Viper</i>	d12
Planetary Vehicles	d2
Survival	d6
Unarmed Combat	d6
<i>Brawling</i>	d8

## Attributes

Agility	d10
Strength	d8
Vitality	d6
Alertness	d10
Intelligence	d6
Willpower	d8
Life Points	14
Initiative	d10+d10+d4

## Traits

**Crude d6**—In the cockpit or in the mess hall, Starbuck is known for smokin', drinkin' and cussin'. She prefers to speak plainly, even when her mouth is sure to get her into trouble.

**Dogfighter d4**—Starbuck is a good pilot, but in combat situations her reflexes kick into high gear. You definitely want her on your wing when there are Cylon raiders on the prowl.

**Faith d2**—Though not necessarily devout, Kara is a spiritual woman who "talks" to the Lords of Kobol in private.

**Out for Blood d4**—Aggression is a good trait in a fighter pilot, but Starbuck gets hot under the collar and doesn't know when to let go. Whether it's chasing a Cylon raider when it's smarter to let it escape, or punching a superior officer in the face, Kara acts first and thinks later.

**Overconfident d6**—A fine line divides knowing you're good and thinking you're invincible. Kara often jumps far off the deep end. So far, she's been both skilled and lucky enough to swim back.

**Split-Second Timing d4**—Starbuck is quicker than she has any right to be, which has saved her skin on more than a few occasions.

**Talented (Pilot/Viper, Pilot/Ship's Cannons) d10**—The Old Man once said that Starbuck is the best Viper pilot he had ever seen, and she is known for making even good pilots look sloppy and slow by comparison.

## Role Playing Notes

Viper pilots are known for attitude and big egos, but Kara "Starbuck" Thrace takes it so far that it has jeopardized her career. Fortunately for her, she may well be the best pilot in the entire fleet. Thrace's tactics and methods are rarely found in flight manuals or military texts. Instinct guides her, adrenaline fuels her, and she loves nothing more than the rush of her Viper being shot out of the launch bay at high speed.

Kara Thrace had a troubled childhood, with an abusive mother who beat her while telling Kara she had a special destiny. As a young girl, she began to feel that pain was her only real destiny. As an adult, she is often self-destructive, making bad choices or putting herself needlessly at risk.

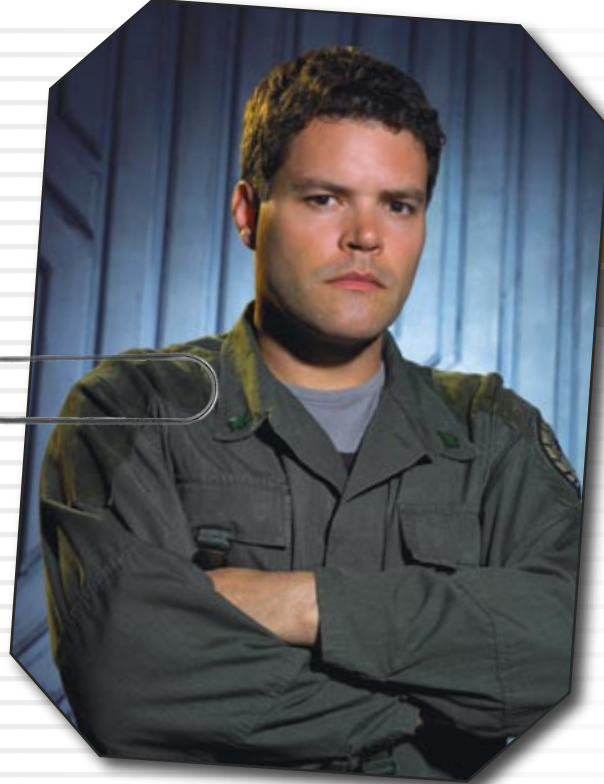
Thrace joined the Colonial Fleet to escape her home life, and found she had natural gifts. In addition to being a talented pilot, she routinely qualifies as a crack shot and an excellent flight instructor. She would have advanced through the ranks quickly, but her insubordination and constant breaking of protocol has slowed her down. Starbuck really doesn't mind, as long as she can fly.

After a stint on *Battlestar Triton*, Thrace was assigned as a flight instructor. She fell in love with one of her "nuggets," Zak Adama, son of a distinguished Fleet Commander. She passed Zak on his final flight examination even though the young man had no feel for flying and could not perform three of the required maneuvers. Zak's lack of ability in the cockpit soon led to his death. Thrace could not help but feel responsible for the accident. At the funeral, Starbuck met Zak's father, Commander William Adama. Grief over the shared loss created a connection between the two that grew into the love of a father and a daughter.

Shortly after the accident, Thrace resigned from the flight school and transferred to *Galactica* to fly Vipers on active duty. For two years she served under Adama and flew routine ops, waiting for the day that both the ship and its Commander would retire. When that day finally came, the Cylons returned and the old world came to an end.

Thrace's solution to the renewed hostilities is simple: "Fight until you can't." In the battle around Ragnar Anchorage she shot down many Cylon raiders and rescued Commander Adama's remaining son, Captain Lee Adama, with a highly unconventional and stupidly risky maneuver.

Starbuck likes to work and play hard. When off-duty, she enjoys drinking, playing a few hands of Triad, and smoking cigars—if there is a court available, she'll take on anyone in a game of Pyramid. She hates showing weakness, so tends to be over-aggressive. Secretly, Kara Thrace is quite sensitive and highly religious. She keeps religious icons in her locker and prays to the Lords of Kobol whenever she thinks no one is listening.



# GALEN TYROL

**RANK: CHIEF PETTY OFFICER**



**Current Assignment:** Chief of the Deck, Battlestar Galactica

## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d8
Vitality	d6
Alertness	d8
Intelligence	d10
Willpower	d10
Life Points	16
Initiative	d6+d8

## Skills

Athletics	d4
Craft	d6
<i>Metalworking</i>	d8
Discipline	d6
<i>Leadership</i>	d10
Guns	d4
Heavy Weapons	d6
<i>Demolitions</i>	d8
Influence	d2
Knowledge	d6
<i>Religion</i>	d8
Mech Engineering	d6
<i>Ship Design</i>	d12
<i>Mech Repairs</i>	d12+d2
Perception	d4
Tech Engineering	d6
Unarmed Combat	d6

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Traits

**Anger Issues d4**—While even-tempered most of the time, Tyrol can become angry and reckless, especially when people he feels responsible for are hurt or threatened. His occasional angry outbursts hint at deeper troubles.

**Friends in Strange Places d4**—The highest-ranking non-commissioned officer left on *Galactica*, Tyrol is a popular figure and has friends all over the ship. His loyalty to his crew is reciprocated. Many are willing to help him out, cover for him, or support him in any way.

**Mechanically Inclined d6**—Tyrol has always been good at fixing things, and has a real feel for how machines work.

**Trusting d2**—He fancies himself a cynic, but in reality Tyrol places a great deal of trust in the people he cares about—even to the point of ignoring evidence that might be right in front of him.

## Role Playing Notes

Chief Petty Officer Galen Tyrol is the highest-ranking non-commissioned officer aboard *Galactica* since the Cylon attack. He is admired by people both over and under his command, and has a positive but forceful style of leadership. Tyrol is an amazing mechanic, able to coax unexpected performance out of the old Mark II Vipers. Despite his many positive attributes, Tyrol sometimes lets his feelings cloud his judgment.

To say that Galen Tyrol was born to religious parents would be an understatement. Born on Gemenon to an oracle mother and priest father, he ultimately rejected his upbringing and joined the Colonial Fleet as a teenager. He has served on battlestars for half of his life—including *Columbia*, *Atlantia*, *Pegasus*, and *Valkyrie* before *Galactica*. Tyrol's admiration for Adama led him to follow the Commander from one ship to the other, and he has tried over the years to emulate the senior officer's command style.

Shortly before the Cylon attack, Tyrol and his team refurbished a recently recovered Viper Mark II—the very plane flown by William Adama during the Cylon war. It was a gift for the Commander, so that the plane could be flown by Lee Adama during the decommissioning ceremony that would send both *Galactica* and her commanding officer into retirement.

Though experienced, Tyrol had never served during a time of war. The Cylon attack tested his mettle. The Chief was ready for action, though not quite prepared for losing so many under his command. Tyrol is still angry at Colonel Tigh for giving the order that resulted in the death of 85 of his crew. He is not willing to hear that the decision most likely saved *Galactica* and everyone on it.

Tyrol has been having an affair with pilot (and his superior officer) Sharon "Boomer" Valerii. It is against military protocol, but is an open secret that his own crew helps cover up. Since the attack Valerii has been strangely troubled. Tyrol doesn't understand, but is more than ready to do anything to help her.

# KARL AGATHON

RANK: LIEUTENANT

CALL SIGN: HELO

**Current Assignment:** Electronic Countermeasures Officer,  
Battlestar Galactica



WOUND >>>

## Skills

Athletics	d6
Dodge	d8
Covert	d4
Discipline	d4
Guns	d6
Heavy Weapons	d2
Influence	d4
Knowledge	d4
Medical Expertise	d2
Perception	d4
Pilot	d4
Planetary Vehicles	d4
Survival	d4
Tech Engineering	d6
Astrogation	d8
Comm	d4
Unarmed Combat	d6

## Attributes

Agility	d8
Strength	d10
Vitality	d10
Alertness	d6
Intelligence	d6
Willpower	d8
Life Points	18
Initiative	d8+d6

## Traits

**Athlete d2**—An active, physical man who has kept himself in shape, Helo's athleticism has come in very handy when on the run from the Cylons on Caprica.

**Fast on Your Feet d2**—Agathon has always been quick, and his ability to run faster and harder is an excellent survival trait.

**Idealist d4**—Helo doesn't perceive himself as naïve. He does, however, keep a positive outlook that can be a source of strength as well as a weakness exploitable by others. He believes in a greater good, and is willing to do his part to help it along.

**Quick Healer d6**—It may just be part of his overall robust good health, but Lieutenant Agathon is quick to recover from injuries.

**Trusting d2**—Generally, Helo wants to believe in people and takes what he is told at face value.

## Role Playing Notes

Karl "Helo" Agathon manages to keep a mostly positive outlook even when facing overwhelming odds and approaching doom. He is competent, brave, and fiercely loyal. Unfortunately, Helo is also somewhat naïve and a bit too trusting.

Most pilots and their brethren only go by their call signs while in the air, but Karl Agathon's name causes too many tongues to trip, so the members of the *Galactica* crew call him Helo—on duty or off. Helo served for a while as ECO aboard Raptor 478, under pilot Sharon "Boomer" Valerii. Even though Helo wanted to be more than just her ECO, he kept his feelings quiet knowing that she was trying to maintain a secret relationship with the deck chief, Galen Tyrol.

Boomer and Helo were escorting *Galactica's* last Viper squadron back to Caprica when the Cylons attacked. The Vipers were completely destroyed. Valerii and Agathon's Raptor was hit by a missile that damaged the ship and injured Helo's leg. They set down on Caprica for repairs, soon encountering refugees fleeing from the destruction of the major cities.

The Fleet officers took what survivors that could fit on the Raptor and prepared to lift off. Then Helo recognized a famous face, Doctor Gaius Baltar. Convinced that Dr. Baltar could be far more useful to the survival of the human race than a simple ECO, Helo offered up his seat. He never thought twice about sacrificing his own life for the greater good, and he flatly rejected Boomer's objections.

Of course, Helo's story wasn't far from over. The refugees scattered and after a week, he found himself completely on his own. The antiradiation meds in his survival kit allowed him to survive, but time was running out. All seemed to be lost when he was captured by a Cylon patrol in the wilderness. Out of the blue, Boomer returned and rescued him. She told Helo that she couldn't bear the thought of leaving him alone to die on Caprica. The two of them now struggle to survive and escape the Cylons on Caprica.

STUN >>>





# GAIUS BALTAR

ROLE: SCIENTIST

Current Assignment: Scientific Advisor , Battlestar Galactica

## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d4
Vitality	d6
Alertness	d12
Intelligence	d12+d4
Willpower	d4
Life Points	10
Initiative	d6+d12

## Skills

Animal Handling	d2
Influence	d6
<i>Persuasion</i>	d8
<i>Seduction</i>	d8
Knowledge	d6
<i>Culture</i>	d8
<i>History</i>	d8
Mech Engineering	d4
Medical Expertise	d2
Perception	d6
<i>Gambling</i>	d8
Performance	d4
Scientific Expertise	d6
<i>Geoscience</i>	d12
<i>Mathematics</i>	d12
Tech Engineering	d6
<i>Comp Program</i>	d10

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Traits

**Advanced Education d4**—Don't ever forget it's "Doctor" Baltar. He holds a number of degrees in the various sciences, computer technology, and artificial intelligence.

**Allure d4**—Baltar is an attractive and charming man. Most women and more than a few men are drawn to him—even those who are aware of his flaws.

**Coward d8**—After the attack, Baltar has found that his attitude toward violence is surprisingly cold. But he is not a man of action and will do anything to save his own skin.

**Lady Luck d4**—He believes that misfortune has followed his every step. In truth, Baltar lives a charmed life. When things seem to be going badly, it often leads to unexpectedly positive results.

**Lustful d4**—Baltar truly loves women. Every woman has a secret beauty—charms that are hers alone. He works to seduce nearly every woman he meets, and never spurns a woman's advances.

**Mathematician d4**—Among his other talents, Baltar has always been talented with numbers. His specialties lean more toward applied mathematics rather than theoretical.

**Renowned d6**—Over the years, Dr. Gaius Baltar has become the iconic "celebrity scientist" of Caprica. His achievements resulted in his picture on the covers of magazines and have earned him interviews on shows broadcast across the Twelve Colonies. After the attack, his role in helping the President and the military have only increased his cult of personality.

**Unstable d6**—Baltar does not admit this to anyone, but a Cylon woman has appeared to him as a phantom or vision since the destruction of Caprica. She has told him that she implanted a chip in his head so she could transmit her image to him, but he is half-convinced that she is a manifestation of his subconscious playing itself out in his waking mind. Whatever the truth may be, the vision of this beautiful woman makes demands of him, seeming to help or hinder depending on the situation. She claims that she only wants him to love her and to find a monotheistic God.

## Role Playing Notes

Gaius Baltar was already a legendary figure before the holocaust. A man of science popular with the people, he helped design critical defense systems to keep the Colonies safe. His research once again moved computer technology forward after years of stagnation. Men admired him and women loved him.

Since the attack, his fame has only grown, especially after he was forthcoming about how the Cylons exploited his Command Navigation Program to cripple Colonial ships, after he worked tirelessly on a Cylon detection system, and after he began acting as scientific advisor to both the President and the military aboard the *Battlestar Galactica*.

Few would suspect that Baltar was originally from Aerelon, or that he was born and raised on a dairy farm. Realizing that people from his world were subject to discrimination and ridicule, he worked hard on losing his accent, adopting one from the upper crust of Caprican society. He turned his back on family and heritage and moved away. Then he did his best to forget it all together.

Fortune smiled upon him. Using a vast intellect, good looks, and charm, Baltar was able to put himself through school. He enjoyed collegiate life and research so much, he extended it as long as possible, pursuing more than one degree. He proved not only brilliant but a good writer and effective communicator. Over the years, he became the very pretty face of scientific development on Caprica. Success brought wealth, fame, and women.

The most intriguing woman of all his conquests was a tall and striking blonde. At first, he believed her offers of assistance were thinly veiled corporate espionage. This intrigued him and only served to deepen his attraction to her. He soon learned that the woman was not only beautiful and passionate, but a brilliant computer programmer. She created code that accomplished many of the goals he had been unable to achieve on his own. Baltar later learned, to his horror, that the woman was actually a humanoid Cylon who had created "back doors" in the Command Navigation Program used by almost the entire Colonial Fleet, and provided an easy way for the defense network to be shut down remotely. Thanks to Gaius Baltar's infatuation with a beautiful woman, the Twelve Colonies of Kobol were defeated in a matter of hours. As horrible as the holocaust was, his top priority became escaping the destruction of Caprica and hiding his involvement.

Baltar's luck saved his skin once more when the ECO of a downed Colonial Raptor recognized the celebrated scientist and offered him transport to his base ship, *Galactica*. His status as a famous scientist quickly brought him into the inner circle of both the newly appointed President and the command crew of *Galactica*. Haunted by the phantom image of his Cylon lover, his major concerns, as always, are living as well as possible and furthering his own ends.

Perhaps because of his hard upbringing and the difficult choices made as a child, Baltar is narcissistic and mostly incapable of empathizing with others. While capable of great things, his desires are generally shallow comforts. He feigns humility, but in truth he craves and loves the spotlight of mass admiration.

# LAURA ROSLIN

RANK: COMMANDER IN CHIEF



Current Assignment: President of the Colonies

WOUND >>>



STUN >>>

## Skills

Athletics	d4
Discipline	d6
Leadership	d8
Influence	d6
Bureaucracy	d12
Persuasion	d12+d2
Politics	d12
Knowledge	d6
Education	d10
Government	d12
Religion	d10
Perception	d6
Empathy	d10

## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d6
Vitality	d4
Alertness	d10
Intelligence	d10
Willpower	d12
Life Points	16
Initiative	d6+d10

## Traits

**Addiction d6**—Chamalla extract is a highly addictive, non-traditional treatment for cancer, but Roslin takes it as an alternative to the mind-numbing diloxin. She has become convinced that the visions she experiences while undergoing treatments are spiritual insights.

**Destiny d12**—The President firmly believes that she is the “dying leader” written about in the sacred scrolls, and that it is her job to guide what is left of humanity to their new home on Earth. This sense of

purpose guides all of her actions.

**Duty d6**—Roslin is constantly reminded that her decisions not only affect the well-being of thousands of people, but their standard of living and levels of freedom. She bears the burden as best she can, but it can take its toll.

**Faith d2**—Though her faith in the Lords of Kobol has only recently been renewed, Laura Roslin draws upon it when all else fails.

**Illness d12**—Only a few people know of her disease, but just before the attack on the Twelve Colonies, Roslin was diagnosed with terminal breast cancer—the very disease that took her mother’s life. She does her best to put on a brave face and secretly takes chamalla extract to fight the cancer, but she is in fact terribly ill and will die sooner rather than later.

**Political Pull d12**—As the President of the Twelve Colonies, Roslin has more political clout and connections than anyone in the fleet.

**Rival d4**—Tom Zarek, a highly regarded and influential political prisoner, has called for elections to either re-affirm or reject Laura Roslin’s position as President. He works to support an alternate candidate, perhaps even offering himself. Roslin never knows when Zarek may cause her problems with his political machinations.

**So Say We All d6**—Even with a soft voice and friendly disposition, Laura Roslin has a quality that commands attention and gets things done. She is a natural-born leader.

## Role Playing Notes

Dismissed at first as simply “a schoolteacher,” Laura Roslin has proven herself an effective leader with the popular support of the people. She has even earned a grudging respect from most members of the military. Her public persona is sympathetic but tough. Only a chosen few have seen her in a moment of weakness. Roslin sets the safety and destiny of the fleet as her highest priority, and is willing to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to achieve that goal.

Laura Roslin was indeed once a schoolteacher, but she entered politics with Richard Adar. After twenty years, Adar had assumed the highest office in the Colonies, the Presidency, and Roslin was named the Secretary of Education. Her infatuation with Adar contributed to the fact she never married; she carried on a secret affair with the President for years. Shortly before the attack, Roslin received two pieces of devastating news: she was suffering from terminal breast cancer, and her recent actions during a teachers strike caused the President to ask for her resignation. She only had one last duty to perform—attend the decommissioning ceremony for an old warship, *Battlestar Galactica*.

The Cylons attacked while Laura was en route back to Caprica, and while everyone else panicked, she took control of the situation. Instead of immediately fleeing, she organized a search and rescue mission to find survivors. Her ship, a passenger liner designated *Colonial Heavy 798*, received a government transmission that identified her as the last surviving member of the Colonial government. As a result of an automated process set in motion by a destroyed government, Laura Roslin became President of the Twelve Colonies. She was sworn into office, and her ship was re-dubbed *Colonial One*.

Roslin quickly realized that Commander Adama of *Battlestar Galactica* was preparing a suicide assault against the Cylons, one that would certainly doom the few humans left alive. She was able to persuade him that retreat was the only option, and that the *Galactica* was the only defense for the civilian fleet.

Since the time of the attack, Roslin has worked tirelessly—despite the fact that she is very ill and nearly always exhausted—to serve the survivors in the fleet. After Commander Adama announced that the fleet would seek out a new safe home on Earth, she has become convinced that leading humanity’s survivors to the fabled 13th Colony is her destiny. Roslin takes chamalla extract as a treatment for her cancer, and she finds spiritual meaning in the drug-induced visions.

President Roslin respects and supports the military, and never fails to thank the men and women in service for their sacrifice and dedication. Even so, she is willing to challenge Commander Adama when necessary to maintain her role as commander-in-chief. Though she has come to like and respect Adama, their relationship goes from friendly to adversarial quickly. She believes in her duty and destiny, and will see it through regardless of what, or who, stands in her way.

# CHAPTER TWO



CHARACTERS

## *GALACTICA,* CONFERENCE ROOM

**T**HIS is confidential, right? I know the rules ... my father was a priest and my mother was an oracle—but I also know that not everyone in the faith follows the rules.

Look, I'm not really a religious person these days. My parents burned me out, and I walked away from the gods. But everytime things take another turn for the worse I start praying again anyway. I don't know if the gods listen, or even care, but I guess I'm more comfortable with a priest than a shrink.

I'm supposed to keep the planes in the air, fix things. I'm in charge of the deck, so it's up to me to enforce the rules and maintain discipline. Truth is, though, I'm a frak-up. Sorry. My own life's kind of broken and I can't fix it. I'm letting people cover for my mistakes, I flipped a switch that killed 85 of my people, and, if that wasn't bad enough, I'm having an affair with a superior officer.

It's been tough to stay focused lately. The deck is total chaos and the planes are breaking down faster and faster. So I worry about gimbles and coolant levels when I should be enjoying what little rest I get. I know I should break it off with ... the officer, but she's probably the one thing that keeps me from going over the edge.

Guess it's kind of stupid to go to the gods with these problems.

This is the part where you tell me that the gods help those who help themselves. They'll lift up my spirit but I've got to do the work.

Sorry to waste your time. But I've really got to get back to the deck. There's a Raptor that had a jammed thruster, and I want to give it another look.

—Chief Petty Officer Galen Tyrol



There ain't too many humans left, and the numbers get smaller with every battle. The Cylons have killed billions, and we've done in a fair number ourselves. So now we need everyone to pull together—every gods-blessed man, woman, and child. Think you can do that?

Better yet, can you help pull humanity out of the crapper? Can you go above and beyond, doing more by 0900 than most do all day? Can you go days without food, water, or sleep? Can you maintain a holding action for a resistance movement that can't send support because there isn't any? Can you flip a Viper nose-to-tail fast enough to gun down the raider on your six? Hell, can you calculate if the fleet has enough fuel to make it to the next mineral-rich asteroid field? At this point, bureaucrats and pencil-pushers can be as valuable as fighters. The big question here is are you worth saving?

In the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game*, you players choose or create the stars of the show. This chapter outlines the process for turning imagined heroes—soldiers, leaders, scavengers, or anything else—into player characters (PCs). Couple ways to go here. You can re-create the characters from the show, and play out the adventures of Commander Adama and his crew. Just as easily, you can dream up your own characters. Some find themselves drawn to already existing archetypes—the hotshot Viper pilot who bucks authority; the religious leader certain of her destiny. Others have different goals in mind—a merchant-pilot who escaped the invasion with his ship, cargo, and skin intact; the ground-pounding marine assigned to boarding actions he hasn't trained for. Either way, or something completely different, is fine. Play the character that gives you the most enjoyment in the game.

Making a character can be as entertaining as playing one. Let's get to work.

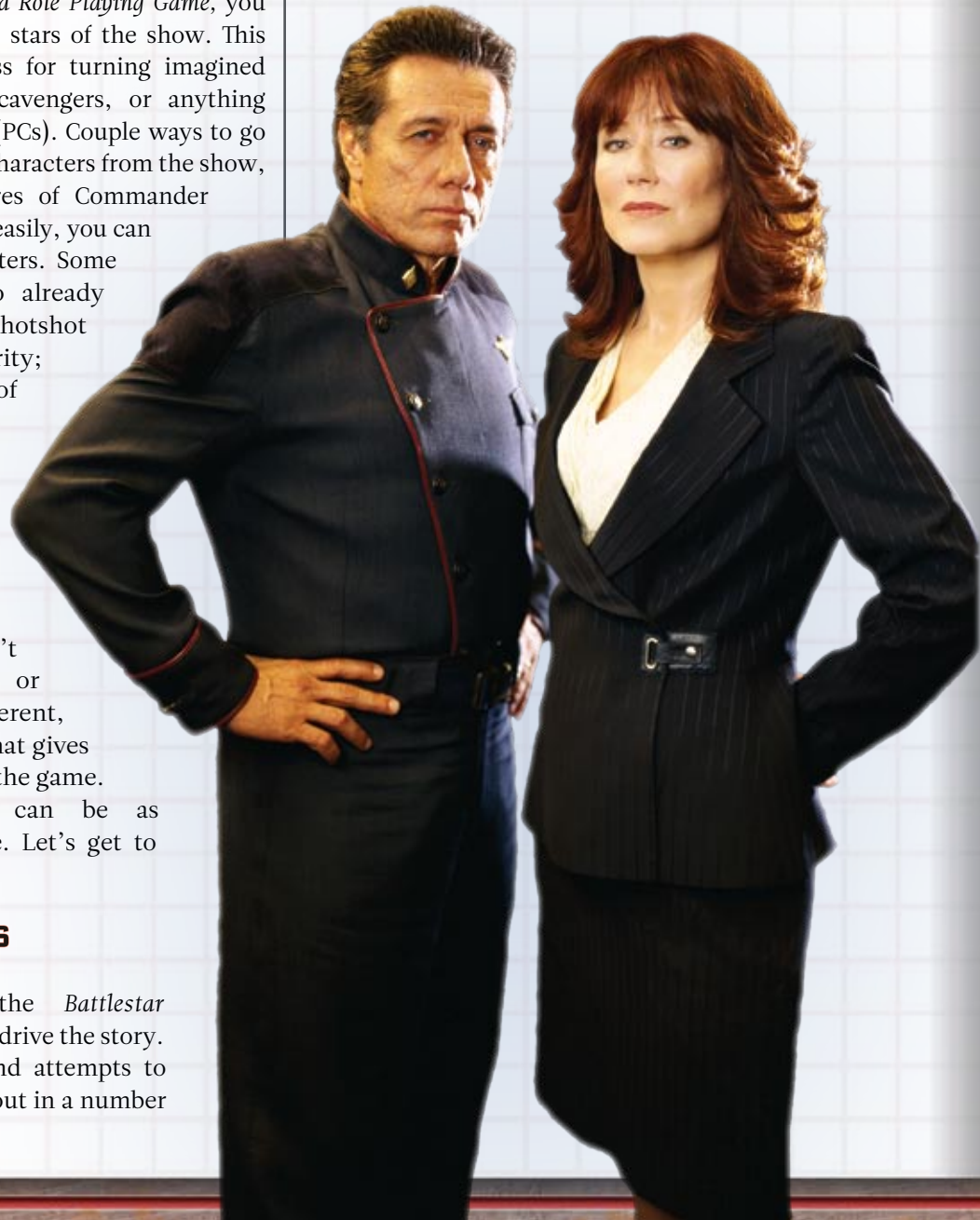
## CHARACTERS AND STORY

The characters of the *Battlestar Galactica* television show drive the story.

Humanity's escape and attempts to survive are played out in a number

of ways, but the interactions, tensions, and passions between the characters guide the action. Without their personalities, backgrounds, and feelings, the show would be empty and uninspired. President Roslin's ability to persuade Commander Adama to flee instead of fight kept humanity alive; Adama's commanding presence keeps people driven and loyal. The canonical characters are vital to the show—just as your characters will be vital to the story in your game.

This ain't a war-game, or a flight simulation. Conflict is inevitable (both on the ground and in the vacuum of space), but the PCs are the main event. Ongoing plots and subplots provide the characters places to explore, things to do, and events to experience.



## CHARACTER CREATION

This chapter runs down character creation in detail. Here's a quick summary.

**Set Starting Level:** Your GM chooses the power level of starting characters. Recruits: 42 Attribute Points, 62 Skill Points, and 0 Trait Points. Veterans: 48 Attribute Points, 68 Skill Points, and 4 Trait Points. Seasoned Veterans: 54 Attribute Points, 74 Skill Points, and 8 Trait Points.

**Concept:** Consider the highlights and general personality of your character. Hotshot pilot, raw marine, dynamic political leader, ace mechanic. This sets the tone for the remaining steps. Setting your character's home world at this point is often useful.

**Buy Attributes:** Attributes are innate abilities: Agility, Strength, Vitality, Alertness, Intelligence, and Willpower. Each Attribute is given a rating of a die type, from d4 to d12 and costs a corresponding amount of Attribute Points (e.g., d6 Agility costs 6 Attribute Points, d10 Strength costs 10).

**Buy Traits:** Players spend any Trait Points on Assets for their characters, and can gain more Trait Points by taking Complications. Each character must have at least one Complication and one Asset. Assets each have a listed set of possible die types, and are purchased just like Attributes. Complications add Trait Points equal to the

number of points their die type would cost (e.g., a d4-rated Complication gives four Trait Points that may be spent on Assets). Characters cannot start with more than 30 Trait Points gained from Complications.

**Buy Skills:** Skill Points are spent like any other type; the die type equals the expenditure. Skills have no minimum; they start out at d0. General Skills (like Guns or Athletics) can only be raised to a maximum of d6. Specialties start at d8 and have no upper limit (although starting characters cannot have more than d12 in any one Specialty). Specialty point costs "start over" at d8, costing 2 Skill Points per level. A General Skill of d6 in Guns costs 6 Skill Points. A Specialty in Guns/Pistols of d8 costs another two points; a second Specialty in Guns/Rifles of d12 costs an additional 6 points.

**Calculate Derived Attributes:** Life Points equal the sum of your character's Vitality and Willpower dice, and any effects of Traits that alter Life Points. Initiative is a set of dice formed by your character's Agility + Alertness, and any Traits that alter it.

**Finishing Touches:** You may need to acquire or purchase gear, depending on the campaign. Then it's time to flesh out the personal details: name, appearance, background, and so on.

You're ready, recruit—don't just stand there! Move! Time to get in the game!

Your Game Master (GM) is going to be guiding the storyline. That means you need to discuss with him the types of characters that fit. You should have as much freedom to make the characters as possible, but the GM needs to make sure they are coherent with the adventures he has in mind. Compromises might need to be made on both sides. If the story is taking place while the fleet searches for Earth, a resistance leader from Cylon-occupied Caprica doesn't work unless there's a way to get her on board the ships. If the game is set on a remote mining station that avoided the Cylon's notice, a Viper CAG is a waste of creative energy. Talk to each other, decide what types of characters work or are absolutely required (say, a pilot if the game is set on a small ship owned by the PCs), and work from there.

## THE CREW OF BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

The main characters of the *Battlestar Galactica* television show are diverse and interesting. Simply focusing on the major types can guide players and Game Masters in character creation.

**Commander:** High-ranked military officers have good leadership abilities. They don't participate in combat much directly, but their past experience makes them solid strategists and tacticians. The best use their charisma to make sure everything runs ship shape.

**XO:** Executive Officers are their Commanders' enforcer. They assist with delegation of duties and administering the battlestar. They also keep an eye on the crew for signs of insubordination and mutiny.

**CAG:** Commanders of the Air Group make sure the combat pilots are ready for action,

kept in line, and doing their jobs. They also organize training, patrols, and missions—all using small-craft to keep *Galactica* safe.

**Chief Engineer:** Whether working with Vipers, the battlestar, or any other equipment, engineers have their hands full repairing, rebuilding, and redesigning everything on the fly. In a world without production facilities or pre-fab parts, this job is even more vital.

**Scientist:** Depending on their specialty, scientists aid in the search for Earth, design ships and weapons, build computer programs to foil the Cylon viruses, or perform other cutting edge research. Specialized knowledge is a valuable commodity when the majority of the intellectual community has been reduced to radioactive ash.

**Political Leader:** The President, a member of the Quorum of Twelve, a petty official—they all have some clout, even if only with a small group. The ability to tell people what to do, and to have them obey, can be quite useful. Still, only the truly skilled can maintain their place of power, with so many vying for so few positions.

**Soldier:** Humans are in a fight for their very existence. Soldiers are crucial and the many missions they perform can't wait. That means they might be pressed into roles they aren't trained for (ECOs serving as field commanders, low-level officers commanding boarding parties). Can't be helped. With less than 50,000 survivors, the ideal personnel can't always be found.

**Convict Laborer:** Again, personnel shortages are severe on the survivor fleet. As a result, some of the more dangerous and labor-intensive jobs fall to people released from prison solely for that reason. Their crimes and status make them second-class citizens, but they may be vital to the survival of the fleet.

## STARTING LEVEL

Characters range in expertise and capacities from raw nuggets to grizzled veterans. Your starting character begins at a level of ability and experience determined by the Game Master, who picks one that best fits the planned storyline. Most won't start off commanding their battlestars or vying for presidential power. Not to worry, novice PCs allow the players to experience their rise in power and capability, assuming they survive that long. More powerful starting characters are intended for experienced players, or those anxious to participate in a more epic campaign from the word go.

Three starting levels, Recruit, Veteran, and Seasoned Veteran, have

been sketched out. Characters starting at higher levels have more natural ability, training, and resources than those at lower levels. As always, your GM is free to adjust the numbers depending on the needs of the plot.

**Recruit:** This is the default starting level. Characters are competent within their own fields, but aren't likely to be masters of anything. They might be nuggets on their first training flights, twenty-somethings just out of school, or low-level professionals who held tedious desk jobs for years before the invasion.

A Recruit starts with 42 Attribute Points, 62 Skill Points, and 0 Trait Points.

**Veteran:** These men and women have been around the block a few times. They know how to take care of themselves, and have probably had to more than once in the past. Veterans are likely to have a fair amount of practical experience in their field, and have a bit more diversity in their specialties.

A Veteran starts with 48 Attribute Points, 68 Skill Points, and 4 Trait Points.

**Seasoned Veteran:** These are the old salts who know better, but try telling the youngsters that. They are tough, capable, and dangerous. They might command a battlestar, hold great political power, or run huge criminal organizations. Whatever it is, they're damn good at it.

A Seasoned Veteran starts with 54 Attribute Points, 74 Skill Points, and 8 Trait Points.

## CONCEPT

If the news-hounds dragged you down for an interview, what would you tell them? You're not being asked to lie here—in fact, that's exactly the opposite of what we want. To find out who your character is, you need a character concept.

**TABLE 2.1—ATTRIBUTE DIE COSTS**

Die Type	Point Cost
d4	4
d6	6
d8	8
d10	10
d12	12
d12+d2	14
d12+d4	16

## RANDOM ATTRIBUTE GENERATION

Sometimes a little chaos can be fun—fills things in when you are having trouble coming up with character concept you like. In that case, here's how to randomly assign Attributes.

**Set Starting Level:** Start with the same number of points, just like everyone else.

**Roll to Assign Values:** Get a d6. Using the Random Attribute Generation Table, roll the die to determine the die type of each of your Attributes, starting with Agility. If you roll a die type you've already assigned, roll again. When you've assigned values to all but one Attribute, simply assign the last die value (rolling is unnecessary at that point).

**Roll to Modify:** Roll the d6 once more, and find the corresponding Attribute (1 = Agility, 2 = Strength, 3 = Vitality, 4 = Alertness, 5 = Intelligence, 6 = Willpower). Then choose one of the following options: 1) do nothing, 2) increase the chosen Attribute by 1 step (e.g., d8 becomes d10, d4 becomes d6), while reducing another Attribute by 1 step (e.g., d6 becomes d4, d12 becomes d10), or 3) reduce the chosen Attribute by 1 step, while increasing another Attribute by 1 step. Remember the starting minimum (d4) and maximum (d12).

**Reject or Accept:** This is an optional set of rules! Never accept a character you think you won't have any fun playing. You can decide to accept these randomly generated Attributes, re-randomize, or go choose yours manually.

The character concept is everything that makes your character a person—it separates a living, breathing persona from the ranks of mindless toasters. Without the ideas behind it, your character becomes just a bunch of numbers, and that's all the Cylons really are, isn't it? By the gods, even the skinjobs have a little personality.

The quick route is to slap a face on and play out a stereotype. A Viper pilot with a bad attitude? Sure, they all seem to act that way. An officer with a drinking problem? Who wouldn't have a drinking problem, dealing with this mess day after day. You can keep things simple and go that way, but it might be more interesting to throw in a bit more background, or even some twists.

You're a Viper pilot with a problem with authority? Why? Maybe you had a brother who was in prison at the time of the invasion, and convicts didn't exactly get priority during the evacuation. Maybe you've just been demoted and don't like taking orders from your "inferiors." A simple idea, if fleshed out a bit, can have some real potential. Just find something different or unusual and run with it.

**Home Colony:** In the *Battlestar Galactica* setting, one of the most important features of a person is the Colony of their birth or upbringing. Each planet has a different feel, and those from that dirtball gain a particular reputation whether deserved or not. Humans have been in space and at peace for years now, but tensions between certain planets still exist. Maybe the folks from your homeworld killed somebody's great grandpa, and they still haven't forgiven you entirely. Grudges can last a good long while.

TABLE 2.2—RANDOM ATTRIBUTE GENERATION

d6 Roll	Recruit (42)	Veteran (48)	Seasoned (54)
1	d10	d12	d12
2	d8	d10	d10
3	d8	d8	d10
4	d6	d6	d8
5	d6	d6	d8
6	d4	d6	d6

Some Colonies have good reputations for certain things, some are more friendly than others. Some are just different. Once you've got a character concept, skim or reread **Chapter One: The Twelve Tribes of Kobol** to get an idea which Colony best fits. Hell, you might take a look beforehand; the information might help build your idea a little.

In some games, homeworld might not be so important. A resistance campaign on one Colony probably features characters from the same place. Or maybe your group isn't interested



in that sort of political background or drama. Up to you and your Game Master.

## ATTRIBUTES

Commander Adama has the force of will and personality to keep an entire refugee fleet working together. Starbuck has outstanding reflexes. Doctor Baltar is a scientific genius, but he ain't much use when it comes to heavy lifting and he's about as perceptive as a dead toaster when it comes to the real world.

Attributes describe the basic physical and mental makeup of a character. They are used in almost every roll in the game, and represent fairly broad categories of natural ability. The physical Attributes are Agility, Strength, and Vitality. The mental ones are Alertness, Intelligence, and Willpower.

Each Attribute is measured by a die-type; the larger the dice, the better the Attribute. Humans average d6 in everything. Someone with Intelligence d4 might think it was a good idea to go hand-to-hand with a Centurion; a d10 Intelligence makes a good scientist, doctor, or strategic planner. You can't start with any Attribute below d4—people with that level of deficiency probably wouldn't have survived this long. Recruits must stop at d12 in any one Attribute, Veterans can go as high as d12+d2, and Seasoned Veterans can take d12+d4.

The number of points you can spend on Attributes depends on the Starting Level set by your GM. The die type desired equals the cost in Attribute Points. The Attribute Die Cost Table lays it out nicely. And don't be a wise-ass—you can't buy a die type that doesn't exist, no d7s or d5s!

You'll likely be starting off as Recruits—better than the average person, but with plenty of room to grow, and a lot left to learn. You have 42 Attribute Points to spend. If you're dead set on playing a smart-alec, you might want to set aside 10 points to buy an Intelligence of d10 right away, before starting on the rest.

Regardless of what your Attributes look like when you start, they can all improve later. Unfortunately, they could also be (temporarily or permanently) reduced through accident, even below a d4!

## PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

Take a moment to review your character concept. If you want a character better with the body than the brain, physical Attributes are what you are looking for.

Agility covers quickness and physical coordination, both in terms of balance and hand-eye work. A high Agility lets you put a shot between the eyes of Cylon infiltrator while

## INTERPRET THE NUMBERS

So you've got a Strength d6. Command doesn't want to hear that bull—you want to get anywhere, you need to understand what that d6 means.

A d6 is more or less average. Player characters and major nonplayer characters are exceptions, but other people are pretty easy to peg—d6. Being average doesn't make you bad at something, but it doesn't give much of an edge either. For Attributes, d4 is pretty poor. Intelligence d4 doesn't keep you from talking properly, but it's gonna be hard to follow an argument or to write a coherent report. On the other end of the spectrum, d12 is damn good. It represents the maximum that most people can achieve—not the extreme end of human possibility, but the most common end of it. Never assume you're the best there is. You might never see a man with d12 + d6 Vitality in your life, but that doesn't mean it's impossible.

When it comes to Skills, d6 is the floor for someone working in that area. Even so, the guy probably has one or two Specialties in that General Skill. A soldier might have Guns d6/Pistol d8 and Guns/Rifle d10. A medic (even a little-trained one) probably has at least Medical Expertise d6/First Aid d8. The d6 is base competency; expert-level or professional-level ability means having a few Specialties above that as well.

In terms of Traits, the numbers get a little more abstract. Not really a "professional" or "average" level for Traits as a whole, especially for player characters. As the stars of the show, they tend to have more resources (Assets) and problems (Complications) than most people. It's a safe bet to assume that almost every character, no matter how minor, has at least one Asset and one Complication. Important nonplayer characters have roughly d6 worth of Assets and d6 worth of Complications.

standing on top of a moving ATV. A low score means you might have trouble getting through a doorway, especially if a little distracted.

Strength represents physical brawn, how much muscle you have and how well toned it is. A high Strength lets you kick down doors, throw a solid punch, or bench press more than the other guy. A

low Strength makes the kickback of even a small pistol trouble, not to mention the Gs of a Viper's acceleration.

Vitality measures general toughness and health. With high Vitality, you are hard to take down, and even harder to keep down. You can drink all night, work all day, and take hits that would put down a lesser person. If you've got low Vitality, you need to watch yourself near sick people, and probably avoid highly dangerous work.

## MENTAL ATTRIBUTES

If you are thinking smart, not tough, you'll want good mental Attributes. These are damn useful when you need to talk your way through a sticky situation, outthink an opponent, or come up with the goods in a lab or library.

Alertness represents your ability to observe, understand, and intuit what is going on around you. A high Alertness score lets you hear someone sneaking up on you, detect the lies in a politician's speech, and pick up on the subtle cues that your buddy might not be entirely human. A low score might make you miss the low fuel warning lights.

Intelligence measures brainpower—your ability to think, reason, and remember. A high Intelligence makes you bright, inventive, and capable of dealing with complex information and difficult logic puzzles that would leave a lesser intellect stumped. Low Intelligence means you can't always be trusted to make the most sensible decisions.

Willpower indicates your determination and the forcefulness of your personality. If you have a high score in Willpower, you can more easily resist intimidation, torture and hardship; convince someone to do what you want through sheer charisma; and push yourself further than most would expect. A low Willpower makes it easier to take advantage of you, push you around, and even kill you.

## TRAITS

Attributes give a rough idea about your character, but they hold no more personality than a diploma or certification—you may find some basis for comparison, get some idea as to who is qualified for what job, but that's nothing more than numbers. A real character needs more than that. The crew of the *Galactica* are each memorable in certain ways: Starbuck is reckless and often out of control, a certain X.O. might occasionally drink too much, Roslin has her faith. In the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game*, these qualities are called Traits. Traits define some of the

more important aspects of your character's personality, personal history and background, friends and enemies, secrets, and more. They don't replace the character concept or description; they simply bring some of the more nebulous personal qualities into play.

Traits come in two types. Assets are primarily positive, granting you some assistance or edge. Complications make life a little harder. Like Attributes, Assets (but not Complications) can be bought in a variety of die types, but many of them have a more limited range. Some Traits can be purchased in die types of d2+, making them available at any level. These are purchased just like your Attributes, but using Trait Points instead of Attribute Points. Other Traits can only be purchased within a smaller range, like d6–d12 (which could be bought at the levels d6, d8, d10, or d12) or only at certain specific levels, such as d2/d6/d10. Check **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** for more details and an extensive list of Traits.

If you are a Recruit, you start with zero Trait Points. Also, you may want more Assets than you have points to spend. That's where Complications come in. They give you Trait Points equal to their die type values. A Complication rated at d8 gives you eight points to spend on Assets. Keep in mind that Complications aren't just a way to get more Assets; they have a big impact during game play, and can get you killed if you aren't careful! All characters must start with at least one Asset and one Complication, and cannot start with any Trait rated higher than d12. You cannot gain more than 30 Trait Points from Complications.

## SKILLS

You've got Attributes and Traits, and a pretty good idea of what you're capable of. Next step is Skills. Your know-how and experience could be from a classroom, time in the field, apprenticeship in an industry, or sheer natural talent. However you got it, it all gets used the same way.

Starbuck is a hot-head, but she sticks around because of her incredible abilities at the controls of a Viper. Commander Adama's incredible force of personality is enhanced by his experience in leading. Natural ability is great—and is often crucial—but even someone with high Attributes doesn't stand a chance against an average-joe who has trained harder. Review the Skills listed in **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills**, and pick those you have mastered over the years.

Like Attributes and Traits, Skills are rated as die types, starting with a d2 and progressing upwards. Like Attributes, Skills theoretically have no upper limit—but there is one hitch in the

progression. Skills are divided into two types: General Skills and Specialty Skills.

General Skills represent broad bases of knowledge. They cover many individual activities, and let characters be competent at a field without being particularly gifted at any one thing. Because they are so broad, they are also limited: General Skills cannot advance beyond d6. Guns, Athletics, and Pilot are examples of General Skills.

Specialty Skills are much more narrow and focused. The Guns General Skill lets you pick up, fire, and handle any small arm. The Guns/Pistol Specialty only covers pistols, but it makes you much more proficient. Specialties start at d8 and progress upwards from there.

**TABLE 2.3—SKILL COSTS**

Die Type	General Cost	Specialty Cost
d2	2	-
d4	4	-
d6	6	-
d8	-	2
d10	-	4
d12	-	6
d12 + d2	-	8
d12 + d4	-	10

Each Specialty you purchase has to be assigned to an appropriate General Skill, and you cannot purchase Specialties under a General Skill until it has reached the d6 level. There is no limit to the number of Specialties you can have under a given General Skill. Also, Specialties have no upper limit, save that starting characters cannot go above d12.

To buy Skills, spend starting Skill Points like Attribute and Trait Points. You only need to pay for the General Skill once, but each Specialty is bought separately. The Skills Costs Table lays it out. Although Recruits cannot start with any Skills higher than d12, Veterans can go as high as d12+d2 and Seasoned Veterans can reach d12+d4 level.

Lieutenant Agathon cannot have the Guns d4 and purchase the Specialty Pistols d8. He must advance his Guns to d6 before he could buy any Specialties under Guns. At that point, he could learn any number of Specialties, including Guns/Pistols, Guns/Rifles, and Guns/SMGs.

Agathon's d6 in Guns costs six Skill Points. A Specialty of d8 in Guns/Pistols only costs an additional 2 Skill Points, since he's already paid for the first d6. A d12 in Rifles would cost 6 more Skill Points, and a d10 in SMGs would cost 4. That leaves him with Guns d6 (6 Points), Guns/Pistols d8 (2 Points), Guns/Rifle d12 (6 Points), and Guns/SMG d10 (4 Points), at total of 18 Skill Points. That's a lot of time on the firing range.

## DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Derived Attributes are calculated from regular Attributes. You've already made the call on those, so it's just a matter of working through some simple math now.

Initiative rolls determine who acts first in combat. When your Game Master asks for an Initiative roll, roll your Agility + Alertness dice and total the results. Higher is better—you want to go first as often as possible. You might also make an Initiative roll to test reaction time: do you dive behind cover before the grenade goes off? Record your Agility + Alertness dice, along with any modifications from Traits, as your Initiative. Not that Initiative is represented by a dice notation, not an absolute number.

Life Points measure how tough you are. Whenever you take a Cylon barrage, get punched in the head, or fall down the stairs, the damage is subtracted from your current Life Points. When your damage equals or exceeds your Life Points, you probably go down. Life Points sum the maximum values of your Vitality and Willpower dice, along with any modifiers from Traits. For example, a character with d10 Vitality and d6 Willpower would have 16 Life Points. Unlike Initiative, Life Points are a flat number, not a dice notation.

During the game, you may suffer two different types of damage: Stun and Wound. If the Stun damage you suffer exceeds your Life Points, you likely pass out. Stun damage represents light or superficial injury (scratches, bruises, pain, and so on) and is recovered fairly quickly. A night's rest will have you back on your feet.

Wounds are more of a problem. It represents serious trauma or injury, major blood loss, damage to organs, a bullet in the guts—that sort of thing. When Wound damage exceeds half your Life Points, you suffer a -2 Attribute step (all your Attribute dice are treated as if they were two levels lower) to all your actions. If Wound damage exceeds Life Points, you finally get a chance to stop running and rest—permanently.

Keep track of damage using two columns of check boxes side by side. Stun damage is recorded from the top going down on one column, and Wound damage from the bottom going up on the other. When the two columns meet, there's a real good chance you'll drop. When the Wounds column is full, you start dying.

**Chapter Four: Rules** has more details on damage, its repercussions, and recovery.

## GEAR

It's a frakking shame, the state most folks live in. Crammed into tramp freighters and free traders commandeered for emergency housing, most people have only what they carry. Some don't even have that. That's life in a refugee fleet.

You have the very basics—the clothes on your back, the tools absolutely necessary for your work, and a few small personal effects. You might not even have those if the GM starts the game in more dire circumstances. The story's the deciding factor—in a survivor's economy, money often ain't worth the paper it's printed on.

If your GM does give you some extra stuff, he might assign a value and let you pick it. If you're that lucky, look through **Chapter Five: Gear**, make a list, and check it over with the GM.

Don't get too attached to anything. They just don't make things like they used to, and there's a long line for repairing anything nonessential.

## PLOT POINTS

Plot Points are your edge. They let you do things—add dice to rolls, suffer less in combat, or shift the story in your favor. You spend them to survive SNAFUs; you get them for doing stuff that makes the game fun or moves the story along. You start the game with six Plot Points. At any one time, you can have up to 12 (any excess are lost). Further details are covered in **Chapter Four: Rules**.

Plot Points are vital—as you play you'll see more and more opportunities to spend and earn them. Ideally, the players and the GM should be trading them back and forth like a Viper and a raider exchange munitions. Plot Points make the game more fun, especially when FUBAR is the order of the day.

Plot Points are saved between sessions; record how many you have left at the end of each session, and start off with that many next time.

## CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Evolution. The Cylons have mastered it. Humans better keep up or the machines'll kill every last man, woman, and child and replace us with walking refrigerators. Humans develop differently from Cylons—hell, we develop differently from each other. That's one of our strengths—we change and learn in many different ways.

You may start as a raw Recruit, but that doesn't mean you'll stay that way forever. If you survive, you'll have the opportunity to learn new Skills, discover or acquire new Traits, and improve your Attributes. Hopefully you'll learn a thing or two about yourself along the way.

Advancement in the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game* occurs fairly slowly, but it happens steadily, over time. From attending sessions, role playing well, and completing goals in the game, you earn Advancement Points (APs) which can be converted to Attribute, Trait, and Skill Points. Spend these Points as you did during character creation—the only difference is that you add to or increase things, rather than start from scratch.

## GAINING AP

Advancement Points are awarded at the end of each game session. Each player earns the same number after a session, and the amount gained can vary from one to four. This keeps advancement among the PCs to a reasonable rate, encouraging teamwork and group role playing.

The final award is up to your GM, but here are some suggestions.

**Evolution:** Everyone who shows up for the game should get one AP. You learn something every day and nothing stays the same forever.

**Good Role Playing:** If, by and large, the role playing, attitudes, and interactions of the players (and GM) made the game fun, and included at least some appropriate in-character dialogue or creative thinking from a majority of the group, add one AP to the session award.

**Plot (Point) Interaction:** Plot Points allow the players to shape the story, whether by spending them to change the plot or by earning them, possibly from being changed by the story. If each player interacted with the game on this level, in a significant way, by either spending Plot Points to influence the game or by being involved enough to have earned Plot Points from their Complications, add one AP to the session award.

## EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES, EXTRAORDINARY COSTS

To better represent just how rare truly extraordinary abilities are, your GM may decide to double the cost of any increases above d12. Going from d10 to d12 costs two points as usual. Going from d12 to d12+d2 would cost four points. D12+d4 then costs another four points, and so on. This does add a bit more complexity and may place really high abilities out of reach. As such, your GM may not apply this optional rule.

**The Story:** If the players moved the story along, either by following the course laid out for them or devising their own, add one AP to the session award. This doesn't necessarily mean the PCs were successful or did the "right thing." It just means a significant milestone in the storyline occurred as a result of the PCs' actions.

### SPENDING AP

Spending AP is easy, but it ain't cheap. Between sessions, they can be exchanged for Attribute Points, Trait Points, or Skill Points according to the Advancement Point Costs Table. Unspent AP are saved, and should be noted on your character sheet.

**TABLE 2.4—ADVANCEMENT POINT COSTS**

Point Type	AP Cost
1 Attribute Point	8
1 Trait Point	7
1 Skill Point	3

You can spend converted APs to increase one of your Attribute or Skill dice by one step. Your GM may decide that during downtime between sessions (or during a session, even) you can buy more than one increase, but there's usually not enough time for that. So, you could increase your Agility from d6 to d8, but not to d10. If you go that route, you can't also increase your Guns Skill from d4 to d6 (normally costing two Skill Point/six APs). Choose one, and do the other next time.

For Attributes and Skills, you pay the difference in Attribute or Skill Points between your current step and the step you are buying. During character creation, buying an Agility d8 costs eight Attribute Points. When advancing to Agility d10, you spend two Attribute Points (16 APs). The total cost stays the same either way—any increase of

one step should always cost two of the appropriate type of Points.

New Assets can be bought at whatever level your GM deems appropriate. Also, if an Asset progression doesn't follow the normal dice steps, the GM may allow you to bump it up anyway. For example, Fit can be found in d4/d8/d12 versions. If you already have the d4 Trait, you can only improve it by going to the d8 version. At two Trait Points per step increase, that would cost four Trait Points (28 APs). Expensive but you can't buy a d6 version.

Complications can be gained (sometimes voluntarily) during game play, but they do not give Trait Points after character creation. They do provide more opportunities to earn Plot Points, and otherwise work just like Complications chosen during character creation.

Complications can be overcome by spending their die type in Trait Points. For example, a Complication rated d6 would cost six Trait Points (42 APs) to remove. This is always a matter for GM approval, however.

Removing Complications is a matter of serious role playing and significant plot developments. It should never be done merely by spending points and waking the next day miraculously unburdened.

You and your GM should discuss and play out any change, devising a good plot rationale for the improvement. Your GM might require you to role play a way to gain an increase. Perhaps you can't increase your Knowledge Skill without finding a teacher or an information resource. Maybe you can't buy or improve Pack Rat without first arranging a big score during play. Downgrading Combat Paralysis requires an extraordinary circumstance that forces you to locate hidden reserves of toughness. GMs should be open to the idea of PCs improving, and providing game situations to allow them to do so. Still, the GM's word is final about working in improvements.

Unspent Advancement Points are saved, and noted on the character sheet. They can be spent normally at some later time.

## EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER CREATION

Nathan is ready to create his character for beginning *Battlestar Galactica* game. His GM has stated that the characters will be Recruits, and that they will be stationed aboard a small military research station when the game begins.

First, Nathan thinks over some possible concepts. He considers the idea of playing an investigative reporter, but decides against it—might not be enough action for his taste. Instead, he decides to go for a colonial marine, assigned to guard duty on the station. That way, the GM can assign his character to follow the others around or protect them, involving him in whatever plotline might arise.

Looking at the starting levels, Nathan sees that his marine has 42 Attribute Points to spend. Nathan decides he wants to play a die-hard type who won't be easy to take down, but who isn't the brightest of the bunch. To suit that concept, he drops a d4 into Intelligence, d8 into Vitality, and d10 into Willpower. That costs 22 Attribute Points.

Nathan has 20 Attribute Points left to cover Agility, Strength, and Alertness. The first two are both useful in combat, so he puts a d8 in each (16 points). The remaining four Attribute Points buy him an Alertness d4. Here's the rundown:

**Agility d8**  
**Strength d8**  
**Vitality d8**  
**Alertness d4**  
**Intelligence d4**  
**Willpower d10**

Nathan realizes his perceptive abilities are pretty pathetic. If he wants to be a decent guard, he has to be able to tell when things are about to get dangerous. He decides to move two Points from Vitality to Alertness. His final Attributes are:

**Agility d8**  
**Strength d8**  
**Vitality d6**  
**Alertness d6**  
**Intelligence d4**  
**Willpower d10**

That done, Nathan moves on to Traits. As a Recruit, he doesn't get any Trait Points, so he starts with Complications. The Complication Duty (d10) nicely represents his significant obligation to the military and his superiors. Now armed with 10 Trait

Points, he reviews the Assets list, and picks Fit (d4) to compensate for his average Vitality. He spends the remainder on Talented (d6). For the Talented Skills, he focuses on close combat, and takes Athletics/Dodge, Unarmed Combat/Brawl, and Melee Weapon Combat/Knives.

Time to move onto to Skills. Recruits have 62 Skill Points to spend, and Nathan's character concept gives him a pretty good idea of what he'll need. First, he maxes out Athletics d6 for six Skill Points, and adds a Specialty in Dodge d10 for four more. He buys Discipline d6 to represent his military training at boot camp, and takes Knowledge d4 to reflect basic education. He's now spent 20 Skill Points, 42 to go.

Nathan moves on to combat abilities. First, he needs to know how to handle the weapons he'll be assigned. Guns d6 is an obvious choice, as are Specialties in Pistols d8 and Rifles d10. That totals 12 Points (6 + 2 + 4). He adds Unarmed Combat d6/Brawling d10 and Melee Weapon Combat d6/Knives d10 (20 points total) to build on his Talented Trait.

With 10 Skill Points left, Nathan fills in his weak points. Perception d6 means won't always be caught napping, Covert d2 means he at least knows the bare minimum about stealth, and Influence d2 keeps his foot out his mouth at times. The final Skills look like this:

**Athletics d6/Dodge d10 (gains d6 from Talented)**  
**Covert d2**  
**Discipline d6**  
**Knowledge d4**  
**Guns d6/Pistols d8/Rifles d10**  
**Influence d2**  
**Perception d6**  
**Melee Weapon Combat d6/Knives d10 (gains d6 from Talented)**  
**Unarmed Combat d6/Brawling d10 (gains d6 from Talented)**

Looks good. Nathan calculates his Life Points as 18 (6 from Vitality + 10 from Willpower + 2 from Fit d4) and his Initiative as d8 + d6 (his Agility and Alertness dice).

Consulting with the Game Master, Nathan notes down the armor and weapons his marine is assigned. He explains that when he's off-duty, he likes to go jogging around the station wearing a sweat-suit with the name of his favorite Pyramid team on the back, the Trillion Thrashers. Finally, Nathan picks a tough-sounding name Devvin Terris, and jots down that he, his parents, and his sister are from Caprica. Nathan and Devvin are ready to play!

# CHAPTER THREE



TRAITS & SKILLS

## *GALACTICA,* CONFERENCE ROOM

**H**OW will we be remembered by future generations? I hope they will view these precious days and the struggle for survival with empathy. We should be honored by them for our sacrifices and our refusal to let the greatest holocaust in human history sweep us away. We should be judged by the good that we do, not by whatever sins may lie in our past . . . I mean our collective past, of course. Whatever adventures lie in store for us, we will prove that humanity, for all its flaws, is a deserving race, a heroic race, a noble race.

Yes, we created the Cylons. But we know so little about them, really. I suspect that they are not truly bent on our destruction, at least not entirely. Perhaps in time we will discover that the Cylons are more like us than we think they are. Perhaps by becoming more human in their physiology, they will develop something that resembles a human soul as well. They may learn that being human means having flaws but being forgiven, defending ourselves but also knowing how to love. If that happens, the future of our race may not be so dim. And that, at least, is a start.

I just hope that when the Cylons and humans make peace that I'm still around to enjoy it.

—Dr. Gaius Baltar





So, you're strong, smart, or stubborn, are you? That don't make you a hero. Hell, it don't even make you fully human. It's what you do with those abilities that's important. How have you trained for your missions or your career? What skills do you know that could make you valuable enough to keep around when the going gets tough? Do you have any edges that set you apart? That's what separates people from each other. That's what makes you unique. So let's get to work figuring out what makes you so goddamned important.

This chapter covers the things that make your player character special. Outside of Attributes, that means Traits and Skills. Traits are Assets (the good stuff) and Complications (the not-so-good stuff). Those are detailed first. Then comes Skills, and all the specialties that fit under that heading.

## TRAITS

Traits put names and dice to qualities that don't fit as Attributes or Skills. They might alter your physical makeup, or provide insight into your persona. Beneficial Assets aid the character. Complications make life a little more difficult.

Characters cannot start the game with more than 30 points of Assets or 30 points of Complications (see **Chapter Two: Characters**). Traits should not directly contradict each other—for example, you cannot have both Allure and Ugly. Don't get too wrapped up in a Trait. Your Game Master may decide that it doesn't work in the campaign he has in mind, or maybe he just feels they are too powerful or too damaging. On the flip side, your GM might be more liberal with Traits, allowing you to start with a higher number or adding Traits not normally available.

All Assets are purchased with points received from accepting Complications. The number of points spent on each should balance out, but that doesn't mean you must take equal numbers of Assets and Complications. For example, four lower-value Complications could generate the number of points needed to pick up a single high-value Asset.

Deciding on Traits shouldn't be too tough. Look at your character's background or personality first. A smart, smooth operator is much more likely to have Allure than a quiet computer programmer. Still, the programmer could take Allure if you wanted to steer clear of the obvious choices. If you do pick Traits out of sync with expectations, make sure they are internally consistent. An attractive computer programmer still needs Mathematical Genius to excel at his job.

Traits solidify your image. If you choose them without due consideration, your

character will seem as little like real person as the paper he is recorded on.

## ASSETS

Assets are rated with a die type just as Attributes are, but not all Assets are used in the same manner. Some are straightforward: the die they grant is rolled as a bonus on actions the Asset might benefit. For others, the die type is simply a means to price the Asset, it is not rolled. These Traits have other beneficial effects, possibly modifying the way you can spend Plot Points, letting you reroll failed attempts, or granting you role playing advantages. Some Assets combine these types of benefits.

When choosing Assets, note the die types available. Some Assets can be purchased at any level from d2 upward. These bear a "d2+" designation; they work like Attributes, and have no cap. Others are only available at certain die types. An Asset that can range from d2 to d6 is noted as "d2-d6." An Asset only available in d2, d6, or d12 lists "d2/d6/d12."

More than one Asset may apply to certain attempts or situations. In general, both should be accounted for; Asset benefits stack. Of course, your Game Master can decide that only one applies for some reason, or that neither do. He makes the call about what Assets can be used when, and whether two specific Assets can be used simultaneously. You can only have one copy of a given Asset or Complication (unless the GM rules the situation is unusual enough to warrant it).

Assets, like Attributes, can be temporarily damaged or lowered. For example, a called shot to the head might graze a character's cheek, marring her Allure. Cosmetic surgery is probably not high on Doc Cottle's list of important procedures, so the reduction in Allure could last for some time. On the other hand, a plastic surgeon might be found among the refugees. He probably has been dragooned into emergency procedures (trained surgeons ain't a dime a dozen in the fleet), and might be happy to take a break from all that to return to his specialty for one operation. That could bring the character's Allure Trait back up, if not all the way, at least somewhat.

Assets can be awarded as part of a storyline. A mystical revelation or act of great piety might bring you great satisfaction. You could gain Faith. These Assets don't cost points; they arise at the GM's discretion based on events in the campaign.

## COMPLICATIONS

Complications define you in the opposite way—by giving you faults. No one is perfect, and characters in *Battlestar Galactica* are as imperfect as people get.

Complications create trouble for you and your allies. So, why would you want them?

First, Complications give you points to buy Assets. More importantly, they make it easier to role play, rendering characters more believable and interesting. Finally, they allow you to earn Plot Points. Complications encourage you to act a certain way, and this enhances the game and story. For example, your Overconfident marine might bite off more than he can chew, even though you know that's a bad move. Indeed, it's just at the point when you, as a player, realize that the character is overreaching that he should jump in with both feet. When this happens, your GM should award you Plot Points for abiding by the Complication.

You should play out your Complications regularly. When it spurs particularly good role playing or is fun for the group, even minor instances of problems caused by Complications might be worth a Plot Point. A Lustful character, for instance, drops bad pick-up lines all the time, and sometimes gets slapped or worse. Even more Plot Points should be forthcoming when a Complication really screws the pooch. For example, the Lustful gent chats up the gal at the next station instead of keeping an eye on his sensor bank. As a result, he doesn't notice enemy contacts right away.

Mechanically, Complications work much like Assets. They are purchased as die types, some with a broad range and some with only a few levels available. Multiple Complications can effect the same action. However, Complications either penalize the character directly, or add a bonus die to the opposing Difficulty (which would be rolled either by the Game Master or an opposing player) or an opponent's action. Often, the Complication is just a matter for role playing and no die is rolled.

Your GM may impose Complications during the game, based on events in the story. You might annoy someone important, earning a Rival for your troubles. You might suffer a blow that gains an Extraordinary success, losing a leg and becoming a "Lucky" One. These Complications do not generate points for purchasing more Assets, but they do give you more opportunities to earn Plot Points.

In general, Complications disappear only when bought off using points earned during play. This might require some appropriate role playing, and should always have a story telling rationale. Characters don't just wake up one morning with their hearing restored. Some Complications cannot be overcome.

## TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

A variety of Traits and their costs follow. When a Trait has a range of possible levels, abilities or restrictions of the lower levels usually stack with those at higher levels. Unless the new feature, by its nature, replaces the lower level one, you assume both. For example, Allure [d2+] can be taken at any level of d2 or higher, and adds its Trait die to certain rolls. However, at the d6 level or higher, it also grants a bonus to Plot Points spent on those rolls; it still adds the Trait's die, but now has a new ability as well. On the other hand, Fit [d4/d8/d12] can only exist at three specific levels. At each level it adds the Trait die to certain rolls, and adds a certain number of Life Points to your total (2/4/8 Life Points, specifically). These bonuses do not stack, since they simply replace each other, and you cannot have Fit at more than one level at a time, or have multiple copies of it.

## ASSETS

### Advanced Education [d2+]

While others were field training, you hit the books and sat in class. Bully for you. Add your Trait die to Knowledge Skill rolls or other actions in which the GM believes your "book learning" comes into play.

### Allure [d2+]

You're a knockout. Those smitten by you are more easily swayed by your charms. Add your Allure dice to any action that your beauty might influence in your favor.

**d6:** At level d6 or higher, you gain a +2 bonus when spending Plot Points on actions or story-edits based on your allure. Spending one Plot Point counts as if you had spent three, a three-point expenditure is treated as five, and so on.

### Ambidextrous [d2]

You possess a high degree of manual dexterity; you can write, type, or perform other fine actions equally well with either hand. No specific mechanical penalty exists for performing fine actions, such as writing, with your off-hand. Still, common sense suggests that without this Trait, such writing would be either extremely messy or illegible. This Trait has no effect on large-scale movement, like that involved in combat, where actual ambidexterity is not as important as training. To negate the off-hand penalty involved in combat, you must have the Two-Hand Fighting Asset.

**Athlete [d2+]**

You are a natural athlete, more fit than your Attributes suggest. Whenever you lift, run, jump, climb, swim, play Pyramid, or perform any other action that relies on endurance and conditioning, add your Athlete dice to the roll. These attempts must be something longer and more involved than an attack or similar combat action.

**d8:** At level d8 or higher, you may opt to suffer Stun damage to add Plot Points to rolls. Each point of Stun damage grants one Plot Point, which can only be spent on physical actions (including attacks and other physical actions not covered by the normal Athlete bonus). You may only do this once every twelve hours.

**Brawler [d2–d6]**

You have a mean left hook. When making an unarmed attack, use your Brawler Trait die as a damage die that inflicts Basic damage (initial damage remains entirely Stun).

**Cool Under Fire [d2+]**

You got mental grit. You keep your wits about you in all situations, reacting calmly and carefully even in the most desperate straits. Add your Trait die to any roll to avoid being frightened, intimidated, shaken, or otherwise unbalanced mentally. This Trait also aids you in resisting torture or coercion.

**d6:** At level d6 or higher, you can spend one Plot Point to immediately regain control even after failing a roll to do so.

**Destiny [d12]**

You have a role to play in the grand scheme of things. This destiny doesn't necessarily mean you'll be happy, or that you will survive to old age. It does mean that you are unlikely to die before your "purpose" has been fulfilled. Whenever events result in your death, roll the Trait's die. If the result is three or higher, fate arranges for you to survive—the killing blow is reduced to a nearly-fatal wound, the mob is persuaded to spare you, or the like. Unfortunately, Destiny doesn't protect those around you, keep you hale and healthy, or spare your loved ones.

Your charmed life is not absolute. Destiny can save you only once per day, and it cannot protect you in situations that arise due to another character's Destiny.

Consult with your GM before taking this Trait.

**Dogfighter [d2-d4]**

When you get in the Viper cockpit (or that of another small craft) and are in a combat situation, something comes alive inside you. Your reflexes are sharper, and you are able to coax performance from your plane that others can only dream about. You add your Trait die when piloting light spacecraft during combat situations.

**d4:** You gain a +2 bonus when spending Plot Points on actions or story-edits based on your piloting a small craft in combat situations. Spending one Plot Point counts as if you had spent three, a three-point expenditure is treated as five, and so on.

**Faith [d2+]**

You believe in yourself, a greater power, or the Gods. This faith can carry you, and perhaps others, through dark places. Whenever dealing with people who share or admire your faith, add your Trait die to any influence rolls (unless you have personally offended them or given them reason to distrust your sincerity).

**d4:** At level d4 or higher, your faith grants you mental resilience. Once per session, you may add your Faith dice to any roll involving Willpower.

**d8:** At level d8 or higher, you may be a leader among the faithful. The benefits of such a position are left to your GM. An Oracle of the Lords of Kobol is respected by most Colonials, but whether this occasions followers or grants influence is the GM's call.

**Fast on Your Feet [d2/d6]**

You're light on your feet, moving more quickly than most.

**d2:** Increase base movement by five feet.

**d6:** Increase base movement by ten feet.

**Formidable Presence [d2+]**

You're one intimidating SOB. Whether it's a gleam in your eye, an aura of menace, or simply because you're huge, bullying people has always been easy. Add your Trait die to any rolls when you are threatening someone.

**Friends in Strange Places [d2+]**

You have allies who have your back. Once per game session, you may call on them for help. You can alter the situation to include their assistance as if you had spent Plot Points to edit the story. The number of "phantom" Plot Points you can spend in this manner is equal to the maximum die value of this Trait. You cannot combine normal Plot Points with those used in

this edit. If the GM rejects your proposed change, you can use your call for help later in that session.

After taking this Trait, confer with your GM to specify the nature of your allies. You might have a variety of connections in all sorts of places, especially for high values of this Asset, but certain character concepts fit a pre-defined group of allies better. Some examples are “the military,” “the press,” or “the underground.”

### **Good-Natured [d2\*]**

You’re always smiling and being nice. The smart ones gotta wonder about you, but most everybody else seems to like you. You are cheerful and put people at ease. They are less likely to think badly of you, and are more likely to take your side or trust you. Add your Trait die to any roll to influence or persuade someone, and to others’ rolls to avoid being turned against you.

**d6:** At level d6 or higher, your nature has made you several fast friends. Whenever you spend Plot Points on a roll or story-edit that involves persuading someone, finding a friend, or a buddy showing up in the nick of time, Good-Natured adds two additional Plot Points. Thus, spending one Plot Point counts as three, spending three counts as five, etc.

### **Hardy Constitution [d2-d8]**

You have physical resilience. Add your Trait die to rolls when resisting physical harm, unconsciousness, death, poisons, disease, or the like.

### **Hideout [d6/d12]**

You have a bolt-hole, a safe place that no one knows about. Unless you lead people there, let them know it exists, or do something stupid that brings an extensive manhunt down on your head, you can make yourself scarce when you want and no one is able to find you. Multiple characters may take this Asset and combine their Hideouts, either increasing the capacity or the comfort levels.

**d6:** Your hideout is just big enough to accommodate you and a couple others. You can live there, but not comfortably. The place is stocked with enough food to eat sparingly, blankets and basic furniture, small sources of warmth and water, and the equivalent of a first aid kit.

**d12:** Your hideout is capable of supporting up to a dozen people as above.

### **Intuitive [d4/d8]**

You got a “sense” about things. Mostly it’s spooky, but you seem to know what’s going on, even when others are muddled and confused.

**d4:** Once per session, you may ask the GM a single “yes or no” question. Unless the answer would ruin the overall story, he must answer you truthfully.

**d8:** As above, but you can ask two questions (at once, or at separate times). Also, you can spend Plot Points to ask additional questions. Each extra question that the GM answers costs one Plot Point.

### **Lady Luck [d4/d8/d12]**

You get all the breaks. Anyone who sits down for an honest game of Triad with you is in for a rude awakening.

**d4:** Once per session, you may reroll any single attempt (except botches). Use the better of the two totals.

**d8:** As above, but twice per session, and botches may be rerolled.

**d12:** As above, but three times per session.

### **Mathematician [d2\*]**

You have a head for numbers. Not great during a firefight, but damned nice to have around when making FTL jumps. When making a roll to program computers, plot a jump, or otherwise do something that requires math, add your Trait die to the roll.

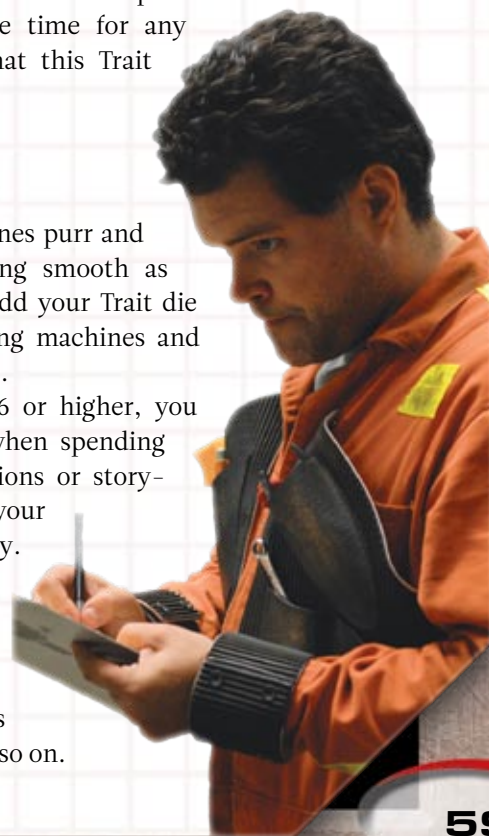
**d6:** At level d6 or higher, you gain a +2 bonus when spending Plot Points on actions or events involving mathematical skill. Spending one Plot Point counts as three, spending three counts as five, etc.

**d10:** In addition to the previous benefits, halve the time for any complex action that this Trait benefits.

### **Mechanically Inclined [d2\*]**

You make engines purr and machines tick along smooth as a babe’s behind. Add your Trait die to any roll involving machines and mechanical devices.

**d6:** At level d6 or higher, you gain a +2 bonus when spending Plot Points on actions or story-edits based on your mechanical ability. Spending one Plot Point counts as if you had spent three, a three-point expenditure is treated as five, and so on.



**d10:** In addition to previous benefits, halve the time for any complex action that this Trait benefits.

### Pack Rat [d4/d8]

You have a hoard. It might not be cash, but it is a “treasure” of some kind. Could be artifacts from the Twelve Colonies, luxuries, or vital supplies. Whatever it is, others want it. Add the Trait die to any roll in which you are willing and able to part with some of your supplies to get what you want—negotiations, bartering, bribery, and other situations may apply. In a refugee fleet, you are pretty damn useful. Barter is king—many people may insist on something in trade for information, and money won’t always be accepted in a post-holocaust economy.

**d4:** Your stockpiles are limited and replenish slowly. You may only use this Trait once per session.

**d8:** You can use this Trait up to three times per session.

### Photographic Memory [d2]

Your mind is like a steel trap. You never need to roll to recall information less detailed than a single page of text. When you do need to roll, the GM must reduce the Difficulty by two steps (Hard to Easy, Heroic to Average, etc.).

### Political Pull [d6/d12]

You’re a mover and shaker in the cesspool they call politics. You may not be the biggest fish around, but you have more pull than most of the sorry lot in the fleet. You may attempt to influence the government, run for a public office, or appeal to “the people” for support. Much of this is story-based not game mechanics. Before taking this Trait, confer with your Game Master. In some situations, Political Pull may not be a viable part of the story. In a highly political game, however, the GM is encouraged to expand this Trait to d2+, creating a broader range of possibilities.

**d6:** You have a limited appeal, but there are those who might support you. You might be a hero for a grass-roots movement, have a small following of some kind, or be the spokesperson for an important civilian organization. The exact benefits vary from campaign to campaign. Barring another boon devised by your GM, once per session, you can edit the story as if you had spent six Plot Points. These “phantom” Plot Points cannot be combined with normal Plot Points, and the edit must be appropriate to your Political Pull.

**d12:** You appeal to a wider group, and may already hold high level office. You might be the secretary of a department, the head of

a committee, or even one of the Quorum of Twelve, assuming the GM approves. Again, the benefits vary from story to story. A suggested default is identical to the above, but once per adventure (story arc, major goal, etc.), you can edit the story as if you had spent 12 Plot Points.

### Quick Healer [d6]

You bounce back quick. Add your Trait die to all rolls to begin recovery, and heal wound damage at twice the normal rate.

### Renowned [d2+]

You’ve made a name for yourself, deserved or not. After consulting with your GM, determine both why you are known, and by whom. Among this group of people, you gain your Trait die on all influence rolls. You may lose this benefit with specific individuals if they have reason to dislike or distrust you, or if you do something that causes them problems.

### Shadow [d2/d6/d10]

You stay off the authorities’ radar. Maybe you’re black market, or a “wandering stranger.” Whatever it is, you avoid notice better than a private ducking KP.

**d2:** No suspicious activity has been pinned on you, but a background search or questioning neighbors turns up some information. Because of your secrecy, the GM should limit any scoop to very general, well-known information.

**d6:** A careful search or inquiry turns up basic background information on you like date of birth, location, and (perhaps) current location. Otherwise, no personal information can be found.

**d10:** You are so far below the radar that you don’t even register. No official records exist, and there’s no way for someone to learn about you other than by personal questioning.

### Sharp Sense [d2-d6]

You’re a good one on point. Pick a sense or sense-group: Sight, Hearing, Taste/Smell, Touch. Add the Trait die to any roll using the chosen sense(s).

**d6:** At the d6 level, when the chosen sense(s) are used in a roll, you can opt (before rolling the dice) to spend a Plot Point to maximize part of the roll. If so, pick one of the dice you would roll; instead, remove it from the roll, and add its maximum value to the roll of the other dice. Any bonus die bought with Plot Points can also be maximized. You can only maximize one die per roll.

### Sixth Sense [d6/d8]

You've got eyes in the back of your head, and a nose for when trouble is coming.

**d6:** Your GM might secretly make a Hard (11) Alertness + Perception/Intuition + Sixth Sense roll for you when danger is about to strike, perhaps one or two turns ahead of time. If the danger isn't immediate, as when the Cylons will strike later in the day, you might wake up with a bad feeling about things.

**d8:** Same benefits as above, and you cannot be caught off guard in combat or other tense situations. Unless physically restrained, drugged, or otherwise incapacitated, you always roll at least your innate defense.

### So Say We All [d2+]

You're a golden child. When you speak, others listen. When you issue orders, others obey. And not just because they have to. When you want it done, they want it done too. You are the kind of leader than any great cause needs, as long as it doesn't lead to tyranny. When you need to persuade someone, or are in a situation where your natural talent for leadership comes in handy, add your Trait die to the roll.

**d6:** You may spend Plot Points to add bonus dice to any action made by those under your command, as long as they are currently acting under your orders or believe they are acting to fulfill your orders. These combine with any Plot Points your followers might spend on the same action.

**d12:** You inspire people to legendary heights. When you add Plot Points to other characters' rolls as above, So Say We All grants a +2 bonus. Spending one Plot Point counts as three, spending three counts as five, etc.

### Split-Second Timing [d2+]

You are quick as a whistle. Add your Trait die to all Initiative, dodge, and other quickness-related rolls, at the GM's discretion. Just because an action needs to be fast doesn't mean it gets this benefit. It must be reliant upon, or measuring, quickness.

### Talented [d2-d6]

You have a knack for something. Pick two thematically related Specialty Skills (not General Skills) that the GM approves. Whenever rolling either of these Skills, add your Trait die.

### Tough [d4/d8]

You are tougher than you have any right to be, and can withstand more punishment than your enemies might expect.

**d4:** Gain 2 Life Points.

**d8:** Gain 4 Life Points.

### Two-Hand Fighting [d4]

Your left hook is as good as your right roundhouse. You've trained to aim, swing, and hit with your off-hand. You do not suffer the normal -2 Attribute step for an off-hand attack, but you do accumulate the usual multiple action penalties. This Trait does not affect fine manipulation, such as writing, fighting with two hands does not reflect ambidexterity, and nor does ambidexterity represent the ability to fight equally well with either hand.

### Uncommon Knowledge [d6/d8/d10]

You are in the know. You have access to knowledge that is generally not available, and is unknown to the rest of the player characters. It might be secret, or it might just be obscure. Before taking this Trait, discuss with your GM the relevant knowledge, and whether this Trait is appropriate. The GM should decide what level of this Trait you need to purchase. This benefit is largely story based, and may not always work well.

## COMPLICATIONS

### Addiction [d4-d10]

You've got a monkey on your back and it's threatening to take over your life. Your addiction could be alcohol, tobacco, painkillers, or another kind of trouble. Whatever the case, the results are similar. You must have regular "fixes," or go into withdrawal. An Addiction that is not immediately dangerous, such as cigarettes, is a d4 level Trait. An Addiction that poses a danger, either because of the substance itself or because it degrades your capacities so severely is in the d10 range.

You and the GM must decide what the fix is, how often it is needed, and how expensive or illegal it is to obtain. Withdrawal depends on the addiction, but could include confusion or shakes (apply the Trait die as a penalty to increase the Difficulty of mental or physical actions). It might even cause you to go into shock and die (taking the Trait die in Basic damage every 10 minutes until treated by a doctor).

### Allergy [d2/d8]

You get teary eyed and start spewing snot regularly. You've got an allergy to some relatively common substance.

**d2:** The good news is your allergy isn't fatally dangerous. Whenever you encounter the allergen, you suffer two points of Stun

damage on initial exposure that doesn't heal while the allergen remains. As long as you still have this Stun and you receive no medication, your Trait die is added to the Difficulty of any action you take.

## SCALING COMPLICATIONS

Many Complications are primarily behavioral or role playing based. Greed, lust, cowardice—these are all things that hinder the character and provide excellent hooks for role playing. These Complications do not usually apply a game mechanic or a specific game penalty. The player is expected to portray them, and the GM expected to factor them into the storyline.

These Complications almost all have a set die cost, or a very small range of available die types. This results from the player's control over the Complication—it is never more of a problem than the player wants it to be. It also assumes that, for the character, these behaviors are something that can be resisted when necessary—again, at the whims of the player. A Coward can still be brave, a Lustful character can choose to behave himself, and so on.

Some players might want to create a character who is more defined by these Complications than most. This character might be so greedy that he'd sell out the fleet for personal gain, or so bent on glory that he'll do anything, even if it gets him killed or sacrifices his friends. Players should discuss this with the Game Master. If the GM approves, he can scale up the Complication, effectively giving it a range of d2+. He should also review the character's actions periodically. If the GM doesn't feel that the player has been adhering sufficiently to the character's Complications, the extra points gained (and any Assets purchased with them) are lost.

To a lesser extent, scaling can be applied to Assets. Even so, care is recommended—some Traits are limited in order to prevent abuse. GM should disallow any changes that simply further the goal of being the "best." When a player has an idea for something interesting, fun, and reasonable—that's what the GM should be facilitating.

**d8:** Your allergy is potentially fatal. Whenever exposed, you make a Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll against an Average (7) Difficulty plus a roll from your Trait die. If you succeed, treat the exposure as above. Otherwise, you go into shock and begin to convulse. Unless properly medicated, you suffer your Trait die in Basic damage every two minutes until you die.

### Anger Issues [d2-d4]

You may be even tempered most of the time, but when someone really pisses you off it can affect your judgment. It may be specific things that set you off, or you may just carry a big chip on your shoulder. This is primarily a role playing Trait, though when you're seeing red the GM may add your Trait die to a Difficulty or opposed roll.

### Blind [d6/d12]

You're missing an eyeball or two, or the ones you got just don't work. You can't see good or at all, and got no easy way to change that.

**d6:** You're not completely blind, but you are cyclopean. The Difficulty of any task that uses eyesight, particularly ranged and close combat are increased by your Trait die.

**d12:** You are sightless. Vision-related rolls are impossible, and the blindness rules from **Chapter Four: Rules** apply.

### Broke [d4]

You're busted and you owe a debt of some kind to everyone and his brother. Maybe you pissed it away gambling, lost it to a protection racket, or because you gave it away. When creating your character, start with one-quarter the normal amount of wealth (round down). After each session, roll your Trait die. You lose (25% x the result of the roll) of any current wealth by the next session (round down). Thus, a roll of 4 (100% loss) wipes you out completely . . . again. Only cash, valuables or goods primarily meant for trade are affected; personal possessions, unless superfluous, are not lost.

### Combat Paralysis [d4/d8]

You're a hazard to your team and your mission, and should stay the hell out of combat. You freeze up in tense situations. It could be fear, or merely indecision, but it stalls you.

**d4:** When combat begins, roll your Trait die. For that many turns, you can't take any actions. On the first turn, you can't even take nonactions, except innate defense.

**d8:** Roll your Trait die at the beginning of combat. You cannot take any actions during that number of turns; for the first half of that time (round up), you cannot even take nonactions, except innate defense.

### **Contrarian [d2–d6]**

You're always drawn to the cause of the underdog, or maybe you just like to bite your thumb in the face of authority. Either way, you champion the causes that seem doomed or are otherwise unpopular. This is primarily a matter for role playing.

### **Convict [d6]**

You're a jailbird and likely nothing but trouble. You might be temporarily released to a work gang, on parole, or out for some other legitimate reason. Walk softly—most folks don't like convicts. You take one step out of line, and you're back in the brig. Discuss this Trait with the GM to determine exactly what it might mean for you, and whether it works at all in the context of the story.

### **Coward [d4–d8]**

You're yellow and there's not a damn thing you can do about it. You don't want to die, and you don't want to get hurt. This is primarily a matter for role playing, but it also affects your ability to withstand torture, intimidation, and the like. In such situations, add your Trait die to all Difficulties.

### **Crude [d4–d8]**

Nobody ever confused you for high-society. You offend people as quickly as you meet them. You crack bad jokes, curse constantly, scratch inappropriate, or put people off some other way. Again, this is primarily a role playing hook. When you do try and play nice, the Difficulties for any political or social interaction rolls are increased by your Trait die.

### **Deaf [d10]**

You are deafer than a doorpost. Could have been an injury or you could have been born that way. If you start the game with this Complication, you know how to read lips. A character with a Specialty of d12 or higher in Perception/Read Lips is able to understand anyone they can see within a reasonable distance, no roll required. If your deafness comes on later, you need to spend time adjusting in order to understand others. Either way, your ability to speak is covered by the Mute Complication, not this one.

### **Dull Sense [d2–d4]**

One of your five senses is a bit lacking. Be it a chronic stuffy nose, bad eyesight, poor hearing, or desensitized skin. Whichever it is, best not rely on that sense in a tight spot. Whenever your dull sense comes into play, the GM will add your Trait die to a Difficulty or opposed roll.

### **Duty [d6/d10]**

You are beholden to something or someone and, by the gods, you're bound and determined to follow through on it.

**d6:** You feel an obligation to a group, a person, a mission, or something similar. You uphold it because you want to. If that changes, little stops you from acting otherwise, but social repercussions may follow when folks start to think of you as someone who shirks his duty.

**d10:** Your obligations are backed by the law. You might be in the military, with an extremely visible Duty to your superiors and the Colonial fleet. You might hold a position in the government that exposes you to criminal charges for malfeasance. The upshot is, should you try to shirk your Duty, you will be punished. Could be loss of privileges, time in the brig, or court martial and hanging.

### **Glory Hound [d4]**

You've got an eye out for the spotlight. You never pass up an opportunity to show others how impressive you are, even if it's a stupid stunt. This is primarily a role playing Trait.

### **Greedy [d4]**

Money is, in fact, the root of all happiness, and you are gonna get yours. Cash, luxuries, and expensive things are music to your ears. You might sell out your friends, take advantage of the helpless, or do whatever else you think will profit you the most. This comes through primarily in role playing.

### **Idealist [d2–d4]**

Things are going to work out for the best. Most people are generally good and honest. You have an unrealistically positive outlook on at least one major part of your life, and for the time being you haven't been kicked in the teeth enough to shake it. This is primarily a role playing Trait, though when your optimism might affect your judgment the GM will add your Trait die to a Difficulty or opposed roll.



**Illness [d4/d8/d12]**

Something's wrong with you, some sickness that isn't likely to disappear on its own. You may have some condition or syndrome, or you're maybe even stuck with something that will eventually end your life. For any of the levels of illness, add the Trait die to the Difficulty of any actions when your symptoms are an issue.

**d4:** You have a minor, permanent condition such as eczema or asthma that only bothers you infrequently.

**d6:** Your condition is something both more serious and frequently a problem, such as diabetes or early-stage multiple sclerosis. You probably are taking medication and special precautions to function normally, and even still are often affected.

**d12:** Better kiss your ass goodbye, because you have a fatal illness. It may be cancer, or a severe case of lupus. With proper medical treatment you might be able to function most of the day (and possibly even hide your condition), but over time your symptoms will worsen. Discuss this Trait with your GM if you choose to take it, to determine the nature, treatment, and timeline of your illness.

**Infamy [d2\*]**

You have a bad rep, and folks got little use for you. This don't make you intimidating; it just makes you unpopular. Add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any influence rolls you attempt. Add it to anyone else's roll to influence people against you, if the circumstances are right. Discuss with your GM what you are Infamous for—depending on what it is you did, you might have some allies left somewhere.

**Kleptomaniac [d6]**

You are a little light with the fingers. You steal constantly, more out of compulsion than need. If you are caught, there'll be hell to pay but that don't stop you. This is mostly role playing, but if anyone is looking for an angle to use against you, your stealing is just the ticket.

**Lazy [d4]**

You are a goldbricker through and through. You hate hard work, and avoid it if at all possible. This is a role playing Trait.

**Liar [d6]**

Can't believe a word that comes out of your pie hole. You enjoy telling tall tales, and constantly exaggerate. You lie even when you know it will get you into trouble. Most people view whatever you say with suspicion; they've been burned

before. Primarily a role playing feature, add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any roll to convince someone that you are telling the truth. This Trait compels you to lie; it doesn't make you particularly good at it.

**Lightweight [d2–d6]**

You couldn't outdrink an ensign's grandmother. You can't hold your liquor, and in general have a poor metabolism. Add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any rolls to resist poison, disease, drugs, and so on.

**Lustful [d4]**

You carry a psychological weakness for something, be it fine cigars or beautiful women or some other vice. Not an addiction, per se, but is a chink in the armor of your character and you may lie, cheat, or steal to get the object of your lust. This primarily a role playing Trait, though when confronted with temptation the GM may add the Trait die to a Difficulty or opposed roll.

**Memorable [d2–d6]**

You stick out like a sore thumb. It might be your presence, your appearance, or your actions. Whatever it is, you are easily marked. Add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any rolls made to avoid being identified, or add it as a bonus to anyone else's rolls to notice or remember you.

**Mute [d8]**

You've got no choice but to keep your trap shut. Whether born unable to speak, or stricken mute later in life, you can't speak. You must use sign language or some other form of nonverbal communication to make yourself understood, though depending on why you are mute you might be able to make some unintelligible verbal sounds.

During calm, normal situations in which there is ample time to communicate, especially when with people who know you, the player may simply describe or speak for the character—however, if the situation makes quick communication an issue, rolls may be required for either communicating or understanding. The roll can vary with the situation (for example, trying to sign something important while being bounced around in a damaged ship might be Agility + Intelligence), but the difficulty is always Average + the Trait die (7 + d8).

**Out for Blood [d4/d8]**

You are one hot headed piece of work. Anyone stupid enough to question you, get in your way, or just look at you funny deserves what they get. This is serious bloodlust, not simple Anger Issues (see p. 62).

**d4:** Your rage arises only in the case of serious offenses. In combat, or other extremely heated situations, you succumb to a frenzy, beating those you don't like until they stop moving. You might not be howling and foaming; you could be cold and silent. Either way, you don't suffer the enemy to live if you can help it. If things are getting to edge of violence, you must make an Average (7) Willpower + Discipline/Concentration roll to restrain yourself; the Difficulty is increased by your Trait die.

**d8:** You explode about small offenses. You must roll to restrain yourself whenever someone bothers you even a little. If you fail, you start a fight. In situations where violence is totally unacceptable and/or suicidal, the Difficulty of the roll is not increased by your Trait die.

### Out of Luck [d4/d8/d12]

Little goes right for you. If fate has a chance to screw with you, it will.

**d4:** Once per session, the GM may require that you reroll an action, and keep the lower of the two results.

**d8:** As above, but twice per session.

**d12:** As above, but three times per session.

### Overconfident [d4-d10]

Lots of folks are cocky but you take the cake. You are always sure of yourself—even to the point of foolishness. Whenever you get in over your head, the GM adds your Trait die to the Difficulty of an action or an opposing roll. This should not happen more than once per situation, but it represents the moment you realize you bit off more than you can chew.

### Overweight [d2-d6]

You call it big-boned, but nobody's fooled. Whether natural or consumption-related, you are overweight. Add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any athletic action.

### Pacifist [d6]

You abhor violence, and refuse to fight on moral or religious grounds. Don't make much sense to military types and it sure as hell ain't easy when the Cylons are about. You may choose to fight in self-defense, but you might risk social repercussions by doing so—either from others of your faith, or from those who use that incident to question your conviction.

### Paralyzed [d8]

You are paralyzed from the waist down. You cannot walk, and may have trouble getting around

even with assistance. You cannot perform actions like dodging, jumping, and running. Whenever attempting an action that is hindered, but not prevented, but your paralysis, add the Trait die to the Difficulty.

### Paranoid [d4]

You know they're after you. Cylons, Colonial law, criminals, aliens—whoever they are, you're worried about it all the time. You trust no one until they've proven themselves, and sometimes, not even then. Making friends is difficult. You know they just pretend to be your friend so they can stab you in the back! This is a role playing Trait, but it can create plenty of issues when you begin losing sleep and pushing people away.

### Phobia [d4/d10]

Something completely whacks you out. And it's relatively common: spiders, seeing open vacuum through a window, heights . . .

**d4:** Your fear is comparatively minor, but it is still a phobia—add your Trait die to the Difficulties of all actions you make while exposed to the source of your fear.

**d10:** Your phobia is paralyzing. When the object of your phobia is present, you must roll Willpower + Willpower every turn. The Difficulty is Average (7) plus your Trait die. If you fail, you are frozen in terror.

### Prejudice [d4]

You judge a man by something other than who he is. You dislike a certain type of person, likely based on ideological, religious, political, or ethnic differences. In the universe of *Battlestar Galactica*, the most common prejudices are based on the differences between the Twelve Colonies; the different planets each have certain tendencies, and stereotypes are common.

### Rebellious [d4]

You got a problem with authority and refuse to be coerced. You don't like taking direction, sometimes disobeying orders solely because they're orders. Depending on the situation, this could be grounds for a tongue-lashing or it could be considered mutiny. Either way, you are no stranger to the brig. This impacts role playing mostly, but when interacting with superiors you've butted heads with before, add the Trait die to all Difficulties.

**Rival [d2+]**

Someone wants you put down, and they want it bad. They might want you dead, discredited, or convicted as a criminal; you might feel the same about them. Up to now, circumstances have kept you from outright killing each other or it's possible the hate has limits. Still, you do work against each other at every turn.

Your rival is a character of approximately the same power-level as you. When performing an action directly against you, the rival gains this Trait's dice as a bonus. This puts the motherfrakker at an advantage—you'll have to be careful.

**Sadistic [d4/d12]**

You have no problem hurting people. Hey, you never claimed to be a hero.

**d4:** You are not a true sadist—you don't actually seek to cause pain solely for the sake of doing so. However, you are callous, cold, and uncaring. You see nothing wrong with executing those who get in your way, torture is a viable interrogation technique, and taking prisoners is a waste of resources. While this opens up certain options for you, it also makes people dislike, distrust, or hate you. Only those who share your tendencies are comfortable working with you. You have to work extra hard to keep people's trust.

**d12:** You are little short of a monster. Regardless of the story or the existence of anti-heroes, no player should be allowed to play this sick freak. It is reserved for the vilest of villains.

**Slow Mover [d2]**

You are stuck knee-deep in mud. You might be old, young, short, or have a bum leg. Reduce your base movement by five feet.

**Straight-Laced [d4]**

You got the sense of humor and easy nature of a fire-breathing drill sergeant. You almost never laugh, smile, or approve of others doing so—the situation is too grim for that. This comes through primarily in role playing, but could add the Trait die to the Difficulty of social rolls.

**Superstitious [d4]**

Certain actions have consequences, even if other folks don't see the relation. If you do something and have a good day, you keep doing it. If something messes you up, you avoid it at all costs. You know everyone's a skeptic, but that doesn't bother you; you believe because you know its true. Role play this primarily, but your superstitions

may make other people uncomfortable, or cause you to take extra time prepping for action.

**Toes the Line [d4]**

There's a right way and a wrong way. You do everything by the book. You won't buck regs, and you try not to let others do so. This is mostly a matter for role playing, but it might cause social problems with those who don't like your brown-nosing.

**Trusting [d2+]**

You never managed to wise up to the ways of the world. You may be wet behind the ears or just permanently naive, but you take people at their word way too often. This gets you in all kinds of trouble, but being careful isn't your strong suit. The higher the Trait die, the more gullible you are. This is a role playing hook. It also adds your Trait die to the Difficulty of any roll to avoid being convinced of something, or to figure out if you are being lied to.

**Ugly [d2-d6]**

A night of hard drinking can't even make you attractive. You are butt ugly, and that's a fact. Add your Trait die to the Difficulty of any action where being physically unappealing makes life harder.

**Unstable [d4+]**

You ain't right in the head. It could be stress, drugs, or other problems, or you could just be whacko. This effects you in several different ways—discuss the specifics with your GM. Possibilities include regular hallucinations (seeing snakes on your podium), the blurring of reality and a fantasy life (a lover who only exists in your mind), or the inability to perceive the world in the way that others do (the Trait die penalizes rolls to communicate with or influence others). Any sort of instability is off-putting. It creates a social stigma among those who know about it.

**Weak Stomach [d2-d6]**

You can't stand the sight of blood—your own, or anybody else's. You become ill, feeling nauseous and faint. When in the presence of blood, gore, or injury more serious than a paper-cut, add your Trait die to the Difficulty of all actions.

**Wise-Ass [d4]**

That's some mouth you got. You can't pass up an opportunity to crack wise, make fun, or pull some prank, even if it risks trouble. This comes through primarily in role playing.

## Youthful/Elderly [d6]

You are too young or too old. Discuss the specifics with your GM. Penalties include base movement reduced by five feet, 2 less total Life Points, and adding this Trait die to all Difficulties of Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) rolls.

## SKILLS

Attributes form your basic makeup. Traits make you different, unusual, or unexpected. Your learning, practice, and training are represented by your Skills. A character's Skills reveal a lot—profession, hobbies, background, or upbringing.

Skills are grouped into two related types. General Skills represent broad bases of knowledge or training. Athletics, a General Skill, can be used for anything from running to swimming to dodging an attack. General Skill can only be improved to a maximum of d6, however. After that, Specialties take over.

Specialties focus on a particular aspect of a General Skill, allowing you a die higher than a d6—but only within that field. For example, a character with an Athletics of d6 might have a Specialty in Running and thus use a d10. Once the General Skill rises to d6, you can purchase Specialties, which start at d8 and can then be improved normally, just like Attributes. There is no limit to the number of Specialties you can have under a given General Skill.

If a roll calls for a Specialty that you don't have, roll the General Skill die. If even that is missing, the Attribute is rolled by itself.

## BENCHMARKS OF PROFICIENCY

To give you an idea of how well trained your character is, and what they might be capable of in general, see the Skill Level Table. It lists each die type, and gives an appraisal of Skills rated at that level.

## SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Each description lists the name of the General Skill (along with a note if it cannot be used untrained), sample Specialties, and examples for Difficulty levels up to Impossible (31). Some examples are standard actions, some complex actions, and still others involve opposed rolls.

Note that Specialties may fall under more than one General Skill. For example, a dancer could train the Dancing Specialty under Athletics if they compete professionally, or under Perform if they are practicing for a ballet performance. Once you choose to train a Specialty under a certain General Skill, it cannot be moved to another, and you cannot take the same specialty more than once.

The examples below are meant to provide a descriptive benchmark for difficulty, and may not match the rules presented in Chapter Four exactly. Some actions would be opposed roll, or might be a modified on a different action – but they are described as below to give GMs a sense of where the numbers should fall when assigning a Difficulty to an action.

## New Specialties

Because Specialties have such a narrow focus, it would be impossible to list all possible Specialties under each General Skill. The lists here are suggestions covering the most common Specialties. They should not be considered a complete listing. It is even possible that your Game Master may wish to remove some, making them unavailable under a certain General Skill or nonexistent period. If you want a Specialty not listed, or want to place it under a different General Skill be sure to clear it with your GM first.

**TABLE 3.1—SKILL LEVEL**

Die Type	Proficiency	Comment
d2	Incompetent	"Pull up! Pull up!"
d4	Novice	"You're coming in a little hot . . ."
d6	Competent	"Nice and steady now, you got it."
d8	Professional	"Looking good!"
d10	Expert	"Combat landing! Careful—oh, frak . . ."
d12	Master	"That wasn't so bad, barely scratched the undercarriage."
d12+	Supreme	"You are insane!"

## Animal Handling

Not sure about your people skills, but you have a way with the beasts. You are good at caring for, befriending, and managing animals. Riding a horse, teaching a dog tricks, or avoiding attracting a bear to your campsite all fall under this Skill.

**Specialties:** animal care, animal training, riding, veterinary, zoology.

*Easy (3):* Teach a domesticated, intelligent animal basic tricks; ride at a trot around a cleared field; identify a common variety of bird.

*Average (7):* Teach domesticated animals to perform moderately difficult tricks; herd cattle; ride through a forest.

*Hard (11):* Teach domesticated animals difficult tricks; herd cattle during a thunderstorm; basic trick riding.

*Formidable (15):* Teach an animal to act as a guard or a sheep-dog; perform dangerous tricks while riding; tame wild but non-predatory animals.

*Heroic (19):* Tame wild predators; perform radical veterinary surgery.

*Incredible (23):* Calm a stampede; scare a ravenous tiger with a few appropriate noises.

*Ridiculous (27):* Perform emergency surgery on a pregnant animal, in the wild, under severe time pressure.

*Impossible (31):* Train a school of fish to spell out words.

## Artistry

May not help in a firefight, but there's poetry in your soul. Creating something beautiful, interesting, elegant—creative endeavors in their most essential forms, in fact, fall into the category of Artistry. Your basic ability in the fine arts is determined by this Skill.

**Specialties:** appraisal, cooking, forgery, game design, painting, photography, poetry, sculpture, writing.

*Easy (3):* Take a family picture; recognize a famous piece of art with cultural significance.

*Average (7):* Cook dinner for a family and guests; write a polite thank-you note.

*Hard (11):* Paint an attractive landscape; forge a close friend's signature.

*Formidable (15):* Write a poem that wins a local award; identify a piece of pottery from an ancient and lost culture; write a successful novel.

*Heroic (19):* Forge a will; paint a portrait that garners acclaim for decades.

*Incredible (23):* Write an article that sways the opinions of hundreds of people; compose an epic ballad.

*Ridiculous (27):* Cook a 12-course banquet for a wedding with only a day's notice; create a masterpiece that changes the paradigm of that art.

*Impossible (31):* Write a novel that boosts you from nothing to the top of the social food chain all by itself; create a forgery so convincing that its undetectable.

## Athletics

You got the moves and the moxie. If you're active, you're probably using the Athletics Skill.

**Specialties:** climbing, contortion, dodge, juggling, jumping, gymnastics, parachuting, riding, running, sports (pick one, like pyramid), swimming, weight lifting.

*Easy (3):* Do a set of jumping jacks; swim a lap around the pool.

*Average (7):* Run a mile for a fitness test; play a pick-up game of Pyramid with some buddies; throw yourself to the ground behind some cover when someone shouts "Grenade!"

*Hard (11):* Bench-press your maximum weight; jump from a moving vehicle without hurting yourself.

*Formidable (15):* Win a swimming competition; juggle a half-dozen differently shaped objects.

*Heroic (19):* Jump from one moving vehicle to another; slip out of a rope binding; play championship caliber Pyramid.

*Incredible (23):* Perform a new, never-before-seen gymnastic trick; run ten miles without stopping.

*Ridiculous (27):* Complete a marathon in record-breaking time; maneuver a lengthy difficulty course in zero-gravity in seconds.

*Impossible (31):* Survive a 100-foot fall onto rock; win a game of Pyramid if the other team doesn't have to play by the rules.

## Covert

You're good at infiltration and covert ops. Hell, you are downright sneaky, illusive, and most likely illegal.

**Specialties:** camouflage, disable devices, forgery, open locks, sabotage, sleight of hand, stealth, streetwise.

*Easy (3):* Forge a close friend's signature; find someone who's selling illegal drugs.

*Average (7):* Open the lock on a suitcase or piece of luggage; pickpocket a drunk.

*Hard (11):* Sneak past a group of people playing cards; disable a home security system; find a local fence who you can likely trust; plant incriminating evidence on someone's person.

*Formidable (15):* Sabotage a Viper; take the ID card from an on-duty officer; open locks on most doors; sneak a weapon past a body search; swipe merchandise off the counter.

*Heroic (19):* Cause a ship's water supplies to be vented to space; bypass the security on a well-protected personal computer; hide in a person's bedroom until they fall asleep.

*Incredible (23):* Forge official orders releasing supplies to you; create false military-grade ID documents.

*Ridiculous (27):* Open a bank vault; hide in a nearly-empty hallway.

*Impossible (31):* Steal documents from someone's hand; hide in an empty, open area.

## Craft

You can take a pile of trash or spare parts and make it a thing a beauty, or at least something useful. This Skill involves creating or modifying items, usually for commercial purposes as opposed to artistic value. If you need to make something that is more sturdy than pretty, this is the Skill.

**Specialties:** architecture, carpentry, cooking, gunsmithing, leatherworking, metalworking, pottery, ship design, sewing, weapon design.

*Easy (3):* Erect a defensible position in the woods; throw a bowl on a pottery wheel.

*Average (7):* Sew a new pair of pants; repair the broken leg on a chair.

*Hard (11):* Design a home; create useful tools for engineering; clean out and fix a jammed gun.

*Formidable (15):* Create a fancy four-poster bed; devise a recipe for a hardy but compact on-the-go ration; design a wedding dress.

*Heroic (19):* Draw up the plans for a new type of small spacecraft; create an entire set of ceramic cookware in a week; sew that wedding dress by yourself.

*Incredible (23):* Design a new type of gun; invent a line of desert foods using processed protein bars; create complex tools for engineering.

*Ridiculous (27):* Design a huge government office building; build a house; create the next big thing in the fashion world.

*Impossible (31):* Redesign a battlestar, creating a bigger, better ship that takes less time and costs fewer resources to make.

## Discipline

You got the steel to stay on mission when the bullets start flying. You are focused, determined, and avoid distractions. This Skill is also used to resist temptation, torture, and fear—and possibly to scare others in the manner you've been taught to resist. By yelling or coaxing, you can try to keep others on a focused path.

**Specialties:** concentration, interrogation, intimidation, leadership, morale.

*Easy (3):* Read a book with people talking nearby; scare off a child; question a cooperative witness.

*Average (7):* Keep the nuggets in line during a briefing; memorize jargon for a test tomorrow; resist spilling the beans when confronted with the good cop/bad cop routine.

*Hard (11):* Resist panicking and remain silent while the Cylons search the room next door; study effectively despite nearby demolition.

*Formidable (15):* Stare down a soldier with a gun trained on you; keep up the spirits of your followers in a desperate situation.

*Heroic (19):* Cajole the troops to keep going after five days without real rest; intimidate someone who is not physically threatened by you.

*Incredible (23):* Focus on reality despite paranoid delusions; resist days of torture; memorize military code while under fire; plot a jump course with a Cylon fleet firing salvos at your ship.

*Ridiculous (27):* Convince unarmed civilians to stand up to a group of Cylon Centurions; keep your crew from killing a Cylon that resembles a former friend turned traitor.

*Impossible (31):* Frighten a Centurion, a being who cannot die and who feels no pain; pick the lock on a door while the room you are in is decompressing.

## Guns

You've spent time on the firing range, and are proficient with any number of personal firearms, from pistols to sniper rifles. Life is cheap and the Cylons keep coming. All military and most civilian personnel have some degree of this Skill.

**Specialties:** assault rifles, grenade launcher, gunsmithing, machine guns, pistols, rifles, shotguns, sniper rifles.

*Easy (3):* Identify types of ammunition; hit an unaware, stationary target at close range; find the safety on an unfamiliar weapon.

*Average (7):* Clear a jammed weapon; hit a small, stationary target at close range.

*Hard (11):* Adjust the sight or make other small modifications to a weapon; hit a beer bottle from across the room; reload quickly while under stress.

*Formidable (15):* Collapse or assemble a weapon quickly; hit a coat-button from across the room.

*Heroic (19):* Make major changes to a weapon (e.g., adapting it to fire different ammunition); hit a moving target in the head; hit a person holding a hostage without harming the innocent.

*Incredible (23):* Shoot someone dead without looking; hit a running man in the heart at a hundred feet.

*Ridiculous (27):* Shoot the floor out from under the Centurions, sending them plummeting several stories.

*Impossible (31):* Hit a Centurion in the joint where its guns deploy, effectively disarming it.

### Heavy Weapons

If you have to fight, it don't hurt to bring the biggest gun. Victory through heavy ordnance, that's the ticket. This Skill covers the largest weapons that can be fired by a person, including field artillery that might require several people to fire.

**Specialties:** artillery, demolitions, forward observation, rocket launchers, ship's cannons, siege machines, vehicle mounted guns.

*Easy (3):* Set simple timed explosives; hit an abandoned office building with the ship's cannons from a few yards away.

*Average (7):* Hit a slow-moving transport; properly demolish a building.

*Hard (11):* Hit a vehicle moving at decent speed; arm or disarm unconventional explosives; give proper coordinates for an artillery team to hit a small parked vehicle.

*Formidable (15):* Give targeting information for an artillery team to hit a moving vehicle; create powerful explosives from tools and components; alter major weapon batteries.

*Heroic (19):* Hit a small spacecraft making evasive maneuvers; neutralize a "tamper-proof" explosive.

*Incredible (23):* Hit a specific facility on another ship, like the cockpit or engine.

*Ridiculous (27):* Disable a battlestar without destroying it; hit an orbiting vessel with unguided fire from a ground battery.

*Impossible (31):* Level a Cylon facility with a single well-placed explosive; destroy an important and well-protected vessel despite a flak-screen from multiple basestars.

### Influence

Anyone who listens to a fast talker gets what they deserve. Still, it's nice to have a competent mouthpiece on hand when you can't just blow your way through a problem. Influence lets you win friends, lie to enemies, and persuade potential allies to join your cause. This can be especially important in a political situation, where the right words can escalate or diffuse a situation in moments.

**Specialties:** administration, barter, bureaucracy, conversation, interrogation, intimidation, leadership, persuasion, politics, seduction.

*Easy (3):* Convince someone about something they want to hear; comfort a child who is looking for his parents.

*Average (7):* Deal with daily paperwork; negotiate an exchange of goods; seduce someone who finds you attractive; mingle well at a fancy party.

*Hard (11):* Convince a group of panicked refugees to band together for safety; give a speech that propels your candidacy forward.

*Formidable (15):* Reform a government out of a handful of surviving leaders; convince people to contribute their remaining supplies to a common cause; negotiate a working relationship with a group of escaped criminals.

*Heroic (19):* Persuade someone to violate orders and steal a ship; convince the press to discredit a popular figure in the community; turn a community to your way of thinking.

*Incredible (23):* Take control while the commanding officer is injured and recovering; get a drastic long-term plan approved by the government.

*Ridiculous (27):* Convince a rag-tag group of survivors to band together and follow you in a quest for a mythical land in order to give them hope and purpose.

*Impossible (31):* Negotiate peaceful coexistence with the Cylons.

### Knowledge

Hard to hear as it is, sometimes a professor type is more useful than a bunch of grunts with big guns. He knows stuff you can't even imagine, and that intel could be only way out of a tight situation.

Be careful to distinguish between book learning and practical ability—the Knowledge General Skill won't allow you to perform actions covered by other Skills. For example, a character with Knowledge d6/Guns d10 knows how guns work, who makes them, what kinds there are, and so on—he may not have ever shot one, particularly in anger.

**Specialties:** appraisal, culture, history, law, literature, philosophy, religion, sports.

*Easy (3):* Remember the name of a champion Pyramid team; name the Twelve Colonies and the Lords of Kobol.

*Average (7):* Remember the names of all the players on a champion Pyramid team; name the major exports of each of the Twelve Colonies.

*Hard (11):* Recall specific references to ancient religious writings; recite the stats for all the players of a champion Pyramid team.

*Formidable (15):* Recall the layout of a city you've read about; list five famous artists from the last century and how they revolutionized their fields.

*Heroic (19):* Detail military knowledge about the Cylons from the First Cylon War; describe the internal workings of the most modern weapons available.

*Incredible (23):* Explain the changes in Cylon combat tactics between the First and Second Cylon Wars.

*Ridiculous (27):* Recognize obscure historical or religious references completely out of context; list all major technological discoveries and the people behind them since the founding of the Twelve Colonies.

*Impossible (31):* Decipher the master plan of Cylons based upon their actions since the invasion; recite an entire play from memory after only reading it once, a year ago.

### **Mechanical Engineering (Skilled Only)**

Lots of tech around on a battleship. Some of it is relatively simple, most of it is not. None of that trips you up, though. You know your way around the machines and can make them stand tall and salute, if that's what's needed. This Skill might let you build an engine from scratch, redesign a machine, or perform other feats involving mechanical devices.

**Specialties:** create mechanical devices, mechanical repairs, plumbing, ship design.

*Easy (3):* Set up pulleys, levers, and other simple devices; identify and repair standard problems within basic equipment.

*Average (7):* Repair damaged plumbing; operate complex machinery and equipment; disable or repair relatively simple gadgets and devices.

*Hard (11):* Put together a new piece of equipment; disable well-maintained machinery; design a new engine.

*Formidable (15):* Construct a new ship from scratch using your own design; repair a nearly totaled vessel.

*Heroic (19):* Repair battle-damage in dangerous conditions (like a fire, or vacuum, etc.); get a flight of Vipers refit and ready for operations in only an hour.

*Incredible (23):* Keep a mechanical system running despite severe damage; make heavy repairs with only scavenged parts.

*Ridiculous (27):* Improvise a replacement for an important part using barely adequate supplies; find a way to reliably modify the organic components of Cylon raider to be controlled by a human pilot.

*Impossible (31):* Repair a broken hyperlight jump engine before the Cylon missiles hit the ship.

### **Medical Expertise (Skilled Only)**

Medics do what marines do, but they do it without guns and carrying the wounded. Sawbones put the broken bodies back together so they can get shot up again. None of its pretty, but it's got to get done.

You have been trained to patch people back together, treat disease, or work in a medical lab. You might not be a doctor, officially—but with the levels of casualties these days, quite a few people have picked up a bunch of first aid.

**Specialties:** dentistry, first aid, forensics, general practice, genetics, internal medicine, neurology, pharmaceuticals, physiology, psychiatry, rehabilitation, surgery, toxicology, veterinary medicine.

*Easy (3):* Give a physical exam; operate basic medical equipment; administer first aid for a light injury.

*Average (7):* Diagnose a cold or disease properly; prescribe the correct dosage of common medicines; administer first aid for a common poison.

*Hard (11):* Diagnose complex injuries like internal bleeding; use specialized medical equipment; treat critical emergencies; reattach a cleanly severed limb.

*Formidable (15):* Deal with unexpected complications during surgery; recall obscure theories or remedies; work out an experimental therapy for an "untreatable" ailment.

*Heroic (19):* Perform radical surgery to stave off death; perform major surgery without proper facilities and tools.

*Incredible (23):* Perform major triage during a battle; operate on a patient while suffering from serious wounds yourself.

*Ridiculous (27):* Restore mangled limbs; perform experimental surgery on a dying patient.

*Impossible (31):* Perform open-heart surgery with only a first-aid kit.

### **Melee Weapon Combat**

Some folks prefer their combat up close and personal. Others don't look for a fight, but know how to handle themselves if one comes looking for them. This Skill makes you proficient with knives, clubs, swords, and anything else you can swing, poke, or bash in a fight.

**Specialties:** chains, clubs, knives, melee weaponsmithing, polearms, swords, whips.

*Easy (3):* Hold a weapon properly; sharpen a blade; attack a stationary and unaware target.

*Average (7):* Twirl a knife impressively; deflect a slow thrust; block a jab to the gut.



*Hard (11):* Disarm a proficient opponent; keep out of reach of their weapon.

*Formidable (15):* Slash their wrist or hand so they can't hold a weapon in it; knock out a surprised target.

*Heroic (19):* Deflect arrows or thrown weapons; disarm a highly skilled opponent; target a weakness in someone's defenses.

*Incredible (23):* Block attacks coming from behind, fight while blindfolded.

*Ridiculous (27):* Disarm a superior, better-armed opponent; trick two enemies into stabbing each other.

*Impossible (31):* Take out a spacegoing vehicle with a melee weapon.

### Perception

You've trained yourself to be aware of your circumstances. Clueless, you are not. This Skill lets you notice someone sneaking around, find a hidden clue, or spot the tell when your opponent is bluffing. It can be vital in a day and age when few people can be trusted.

**Specialties:** deduction, empathy, gambling, hearing, intuition, investigation, read lips, search, sight, smell/taste, tactics, tracking.

*Easy (3):* Figure out the end of badly-written novel; spot someone trying to get your attention from across the room; know when a child is lying to you.

*Average (7):* Gather basic forensic evidence; spot a non-moving object in light undergrowth.

*Hard (11):* Notice obscured clues; determine the physical characteristics of a possible culprit from crime scene evidence; sense hidden emotion or motives; determine a likely spot for an ambush.

*Formidable (15):* Discern well-concealed emotions; notice when a trained professional is lying to you; listen in on a whispered conversation next door.

*Heroic (19):* Pick a man out of a crowd by a small facial tic; react instinctively to battlefield maneuvers; guess the Cylon's next move in an engagement.

*Incredible (23):* Determine the background or employment of a person based on a quick glance; taste the poison in your food; smell the ambrosia on the officer's breath from the other side of the CIC.

*Ridiculous (27):* Spot a guilty conscience in a lineup without any prior information.

*Impossible (31):* Notice the glint of light off a scope moments before the distant sniper fires.

### Performance

On the dance floor, you got the moves. In the concert hall, you can belt it. When you need

to, you can *be* someone you're not. This Skill covers dancing, singing, acting, playing an instrument, and other performed art. It's also what you use to lie convincingly.

**Specialties:** acting, dancing, costuming, impersonation, instrument (pick one), oratory, singing, sleight of hand, stage magic.

*Easy (3):* Strum a few guitar chords; sing in a local volunteer choir.

*Average (7):* Act in amateur productions; star in a local band; mask surface emotions.

*Hard (11):* Understudy in a professional production; write a decent screenplay; pick up an unfamiliar dance; radically alter your apparent age.

*Formidable (15):* Take the lead in a grand performance; create a dead-on impression of any character from film or theater; display any emotion regardless of your own feelings.

*Heroic (19):* Disguise yourself successfully as a member of the opposite sex; convincingly pretend to be from a different place of birth.

*Incredible (23):* Improvise a musical arrangement after only hearing the melody once; switch between false personas in an instant.

*Ridiculous (27):* Deliver a speech that sets the audience's blood on fire; disguise yourself so well that the target's own family would be fooled.

*Impossible (31):* Completely alter your identity and personality to the point where even you might have trouble determining which is the "real" you.

### Pilot (Skilled Only)

You got your wings and you can make that Viper do backflips. If it's a flying or spacegoing vehicle, you got it covered. Pilot lets you control a craft under adverse conditions and deal with small problems. Serious mechanical trouble requires Mechanical Engineering.

**Specialties:** aerial craft (pick type), astrogation, small spacecraft (pick type), large spacecraft (pick type), capital ship (pick type), ship's guided weapon, ship's cannons.

*Easy (3):* Take off or land in good conditions; set a simple course.

*Average (7):* Fly through mild turbulence; land or take off quickly; plot an unusual course.

*Hard (11):* Fly through difficult conditions; land or take off while under fire.

*Formidable (15):* Fly through an extremely hazardous environment; conduct a combat landing on a moving battlestar; attempt a highly risky maneuver.

*Heroic (19):* Maneuver, take off or land while experiencing a critical malfunction; locking your



*Heroic (19):* Perform highly dangerous tricks and stunts; jump vehicle into the open hanger of a flying ship; navigate through a major storm at sea.

*Incredible (23):* Drive through a massive earthquake or tornado; exceed the normal capabilities of the vehicle; maneuver at a high speed in reverse.

*Ridiculous (27):* Drive while blindfolded and taking direction from passengers; control the roll of a vehicle.

*Impossible (31):* Stopping without using the brakes; use a huge whirlpool to slingshot you to

Viper onto another in order to bring both in for a combat landing, under hostile fire, just before a battlstar makes a hyperlight jump.

*Incredible (23):* Navigate using only the stars during conventional travel; making an uncalculated hyperlight jump and survive.

*Ridiculous (27):* Fly a stealth ship through an enemy fleet undetected; piloting an organic craft by hand after ripping out the brain.

*Impossible (31):* Fly through a battlestar's flak screen and land on its flight pod just before the doors slam shut.

## Planetary Vehicles

The fighter jocks can keep their birds, you are a wheel ace. Cars, busses, boats, submarines—don't matter to you. Planetary Vehicles lets you control these craft in bad conditions and perform basic maintenance. Serious problems require Mechanical Engineering.

**Specialties:** bus, car, canoe, industrial vehicle, military combat vehicles, powered boats, submarines, yachts.

*Easy (3):* Go for a short drive around town; park; fix a flat tire; row a boat.

*Average (7):* Maneuver at moderately high speeds; navigate difficult terrain; sail through strong winds.

*Hard (11):* Sail through a storm; maneuver over good terrain at high speeds; perform stunts like fast turns or reverses.

*Formidable (15):* Perform cinematic stunts like jumps or rolls; move at a high speed under hazardous conditions; minimize the effect of mechanical problems while driving.

safety.

## Ranged Weapons

Guns are useful but there're times when you don't have one. That doesn't worry you. If it can be thrown, aimed, or released, you got it covered. These are not generally accepted military weapons, but they can hurt people all the same.

**Specialties:** blowguns, bolos, bows, crossbows, darts, grenades, javelin, ranged weaponsmithing, slings, throwing knives.

*Easy (3):* Identify different types of ranged ammunition; hit an immobile target at short range; care properly for a bow.

*Average (7):* Hit a man-sized, stationary target across the room; replace a bow string.

*Hard (11):* Hit a hand-sized target from across the room; hit a moving person at the same distance; time a grenade throw properly.

*Formidable (15):* Hit tiny, stationary targets; create well-made bows and arrows; make significant improvements to ranged weapons.

*Heroic (19):* Shoot two arrows from a bow at once; hit a minuscule target.

*Incredible (23):* Cut a thick rope with a single arrow or thrown knife; pop a tire on a fleeing vehicle.

*Ridiculous (27):* Toss a grenade into the intake of a launching ship's exhaust system after it is already in the air.

*Impossible (31):* Disable an armored vehicle with one well-placed rock.

### Scientific Expertise (Skilled Only)

Studying history, politics, and human emotions is all well and good, but in today's technology-oriented fleet, science is king. You possess advanced scientific knowledge, understanding complex processes and concepts. Chemists, physicists, and botanists, among others, use this Skill. Specialties are broad categories of study—for example, geosciences includes both chemistry and geology.

**Specialties:** geoscience, environmental science, life sciences, mathematics, physics.

*Easy (3):* Relate common theories; reenact famous experiments to demonstrate simple principles; know where to find research information.

*Average (7):* Operate most laboratory equipment; translate scientific jargon into everyday prose.

*Hard (11):* Recall obscure discoveries and principles; explain detailed theories to people with little scientific background; operate complex laboratory equipment.

*Formidable (15):* Produce complex chemical compounds in a makeshift laboratory; operate specialized equipment.

*Heroic (19):* Find and correct flaws in popularly accepted equations; synthesize an exact compound without time to properly prepare or use the proper measuring equipment.

*Incredible (23):* Re-create an unexplained phenomenon in controlled conditions to gain a better understanding of it.

*Ridiculous (27):* Accurately predict seemingly random events using probability and logic.

*Impossible (31):* Determine detailed and accurate coordinates for Earth using references from otherwise overlooked sections of the Sacred Scrolls.

### Survival

Modern living is all about convenience. The mess hall, rack mattresses, running water, the head—it may not be luxury but it's better than being out in the wild. You don't need all that. You can find food, water, shelter, and your way around when civilization ain't available. This Skill can even keep you alive in the face of extremes of weather or when hindered by minor injuries.

**Specialties:** camouflage, find shelter, first aid, foraging, outdoor life, specific environment, tracking, trapping, woodcraft.

*Easy (3):* Build a campfire; forage for food in farmland; build a shelter with a tarp or thick branches.

*Average (7):* Hunt or trap small game; identify the signs of habitation, animals, or events; perform first aid on cuts or broken bones.

*Hard (11):* Hunt dangerous wild animals; find food, water, and shelter in bad weather; perform first aid for simple poisons; treat conditions caused by a harsh environment like frostbite, sunburn, or dehydration.

*Formidable (15):* Evade dangerous, aggressive predators; deter animal pursuit; perform first aid on serious wounds or deadly poisons; build shelter to protect against extremely harsh environments.

*Heroic (19):* Find food, water, and shelter in desert terrain or other barren environments; locate trails that are nearly invisible.

*Incredible (23):* Survive for an extended period on the open ocean with no food or fresh water.

*Ridiculous (27):* Track a small animal through thick forest in a storm; hide from a full-out manhunt in light scrub.

*Impossible (31):* Survive in a drifting, powerless lifepod for weeks with little food or water.

### Technical Engineering (Skilled Only)

If scientists are better than historians in keeping the fleet flying, tech specialists are even more useful. Complicated electronics, computer systems, and programming don't scare you. You're up to snuff in hacking through a database, rewiring a security system, creating a computer network, or even working on electronic sentience. Watch your step, however. Lots of folks haven't forgotten the way technology failed humans in the First Cylon War. Knowledge in some of these fields has been stifled, if not lost.

**Specialties:** astrogation, communications systems, computer programming, hacking, create technical devices, electronics, repair electrical systems, disable devices.

*Easy (3):* Repair a simple short-range comm device; operate most basic computer or electronic equipment, hook up a computer network.

*Average (7):* Operate most advanced computer equipment; override standard directive protocols and basic computer security; write a simple program; repair moderate system damage.

*Hard (11):* Build and program a functional computer; operate specialized electronic devices; override standard security codes; repair heavy system damage; reconfigure a large computer network; identify hidden code or programming; hack into a moderately well-protected computer system.

*Formidable (15):* Build an advanced or specialized computer; operate innovative or unusual technology; override heavy computer security or lock-codes;



repair severe system damage; hack into a heavily protected computer system.

*Heroic (19):* Construct ground-breaking electronic equipment; open corporate high-level electronic locks or gates; repair a completely fried system.

*Incredible (23):* Hack into top-secret military or government computer systems; reprogram an entire computer network; create highly advanced computer systems.

*Ridiculous (27):* Program artificial sentience; hack into Cylon equipment and disable it.

*Impossible (31):* Reprogram Cylon life forms.

## Unarmed Combat

You are a brawler—a good man to have around in a bar fight. You might have a bunch of fancy moves or you might just slog ahead until the other guy throws in the towel. However you do it, you are good with your fists, elbows, knees, feet, or even a head butt.

Specialties represent different styles of combat. They are used the same way most of the time, but your Game Master may wish to differentiate between different martial styles. For example, boxing might be used when kicking or grappling.

**Specialties:** boxing, brawling, martial art (pick type), wrestling.

*Easy (3):* Smack an unsuspecting person out of their seat; elbow someone who's not looking in the gut; distinguish between a friendly brawl and a

serious fight; stay standing after taking a punch to the stomach.

*Average (7):* Identify a specific style of martial arts; secure prize money in a small-time contest that is not played out in detail.

*Hard (11):* Knock out an unsuspecting opponent; judge the level of someone else's capability; come away even in a prominent tournament that is not played out in detail.

*Formidable (15):* Break thick boards with a quick strike; know specialized techniques for dealing with different kinds of opponents; understand how to disarm or disable as well as to kill.

*Heroic (19):* Use little-known pressure points and techniques to achieve unexpected levels of ability; break cinder blocks with a punch; block or deflect melee weapons without hurting yourself.

*Incredible (23):* Take on a crowd or mob all at once and survive.

*Ridiculous (27):* Kill or paralyze with a single hit.


*Impossible (31):* Hit a Cylon Centurion bare-handed in a critical spot that instantly shuts it down.

# CHAPTER FOUR



**RULES**

## *GALACTICA*, CIC



**Q**UIT making excuses. You're hungry, you're tired, you're over-stressed. Any one of us can say the same gods damn thing. Take a good look around—you're not the only one having a hard time of it. You frakked up, and when you frak up around here people are gonna die.

We're all hungry and exhausted. The Cylons keep coming for us again and again. Yes, it's hard. And yes, we're all expected to do our jobs. The enemy doesn't get tired and is probably counting on wearing us all down. Pay attention, check what you're doing and when you have a moment's peace, double-check.

Man your post and do your job until you can't—and then you'll be relieved of duty. Just remember that we don't have the manpower to let everyone take a nap every time they're tired and haven't had their morning coffee. If we're short-handed, things could go south real fast.

When you're in this room you can't afford to make mistakes. Save your frak-ups for the rec room. Dismissed! Don't come back until you've pulled yourself together.



—Col. Saul Tigh

You might be running from Cylons, looking for cover. You spot some crates, duck behind them, and prepare to take a stand. You might be reporting to your superior, bucking for promotion. You might be issuing orders and making plans for the next engagement. You might be repairing a damaged Raptor, rushing to get it back into the fight. When you need to know if you succeed or fail, the Cortex System stands tall.

Don't start giving the rules more than their due, though. The rules help tell the story; they ain't the story. If a mechanic gets in the way, scrap it. Know that your Game Master (GM) is going to keep, change, or scrap rules as necessary. That's on the up and up.

Don't get brash. The rules do serve a purpose. They keep everyone on the same page. They call the shots on how different parts of the *Battlestar Galactica* universe interact. They help decide, in all fairness, whether the pilot can pull a hard six when he needs to. Ignoring the rules all the time leaves you with no frakking idea as to what characters might or might not be able to do. No GM should dispense with rules just to suit his personal goals. That way lies mutiny.

Everyone, players and Game Masters, should understand the basics of these rules. It's a good idea to at least know where the specifics can be found. When they come into a game, you'll know where to look. As time goes on, you'll master more.

## PLAYING THE GAME

Apollo only has two explosive rounds left, and the toasters are coming around the corner. Baltar stares at thousands upon thousands of genetic samples; all must be tested and fast. Commander Adama makes a life-or-death call while he tries to keep his XO's head in the game. How's it all play out?

In the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game*, the answer is simple: you roll dice.

The Cortex System is designed for fast, exciting, dramatic story. Some actions are no sweat—working out in the rec-room or walking down the hall. No need to roll. Others can be screwed up—making a combat landing on *Galactica* fast enough for her to jump out before a Cylon nuke blows a hole in her side! In that case, you roll dice and add modifiers, hoping for as high a result as possible. Victory can be as sweet as ambrosia, but Lady Luck isn't always kind. Fortunately, you have some influence on the outcome of the dice.

If the game goes sour, change the rules—with Plot Points. These heavy lifters alter the course of the game in the your favor. They can add an extra die to difficult rolls, turn a mortal wound into a

## GAME BASICS

Mess of details in this chapter. Throughout, remember one thing and you'll be fine. The basic game mechanic is:

$$\text{Attribute} + \text{Skill} = \text{Result}$$

When a character tries to do something, roll the appropriate dice for that situation and add the numbers. Higher means better. The exact circumstances, as well as the total rolled, allow the Game Master to imaginatively describe the outcome—not just whether the attempt succeeded or failed, but to what degree.

graze, or even add characters, background elements, and events to the world. There's not a lot of them, and they don't trump the GM's authority in guiding the story. Still, Plot Points should be spent, and they give player characters (PC) an edge that others just don't have.

That's the basics. You decide what your PC wants to do. You might have to roll dice, and you might spend Plot Points. You then tell the GM the total—and hope the Lords of Kobol are smiling.

## USING THE DICE

Most actions involve an element of chance, and they almost all have consequences. When a character really needs to get something done, he brings together all his natural abilities, talents, and skills to make it work. Hopefully, that's enough.

Characters all have natural Attributes, learned Skills, and personal Traits. Each of these are represented by a die type showing its strength. For example, a d4 Intelligence character is not the sharpest tool in the shed: someone rolling a d12 Intelligence might out-think Baltar. Of course, not everyone is great at everything. That's not a problem. You may not need to outthink Baltar if you can just knock him on his backside. Each character has his own strengths and weaknesses.

Most actions call for an Attribute die and a Skill die to be rolled and the numbers added together. If your character doesn't have the right Skill (but is still allowed to try it—some actions require the proper training), roll only the Attribute. The character might have a Trait that helps out. Either way, don't forget that you can spend Plot Points to gain a bonus die.

## WHEN TO ROLL

Rolling dice is part of the fun. Just like when off-duty personnel sit down to a game of Triad, taking a chance is what makes the game interesting. Still, too much rolling and the game bogs down. The first thing to know is when to roll. That's the Game Master's call.

Walking down the corridor, calling up the XO, stowing gear, talking things over with your bunkmate—none of these actions can be messed up easily. They should happen in the normal course of the game and are done. The story moves along. No need to worry about their success.

Some actions have a chance of failure, but aren't meaningful to the storyline. Indeed, dice rolling and the resultant chance of failure only serve to derail the plot. Taking off from *Galactica's* flight pod is not without risks. Things can and do go wrong in even the most routine of actions. That's why pilots train hard to make sure basic maneuvers like that go smoothly. Same deal with basic maintenance on a combat craft, or injecting someone with an antidote, or debriefing a superior after a mission. Despite the chance of failure, if pausing to determine success or the consequences of blowing it are irrelevant to the storyline, don't roll. Just let it happen and move on. Hell, even if there's a good chance of failure, your GM may not ask for a roll. Noticing a crucial clue in the ruins of a temple is not easy, but if the plot requires it, it's done. Flip side: the clue may be blatant but the plot requires that the PCs miss it. Again, no rolling.

In sum, two factors must exist before any roll is made. First, the chance of success must be meaningful. Second, failure should not delay the game or play havoc with the story.

## UNOPPOSED ROLLS

Most actions that a character attempts are unopposed. That means their difficulty depends on the situation and the goal, not some opposing force. Piloting a craft into *Galactica* in calm conditions, with ample time, is Easy (or might not be rolled at all). Making a combat landing on a luxury liner with damaged flight pods is Hard or worse, even in the best of conditions.

In these cases, the Game Master sets the Difficulty before the roll is made, depending on his view of the innate challenge of the task under average circumstances. If it is at or above the Difficulty, you're good to go. If not, you've got trouble. **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** lists instructive examples of Difficulties under each Skill.

The Difficulties Table lists the most common ones. That ain't anywhere near the last word on the subject, though. GMs could shift those numbers based on the circumstances, and those shifts need not be in groups of four points. Hiking up a hill might be Average (7) Difficulty most of the time, but a light rain might bump it up to a nine, or spending a Plot Point to find a good trail might reduce it to a five.

Some Complications negatively affect a character's unopposed action. In that case, the Complication increases the Difficulty after the GM has otherwise set it for the conditions present at the time.

## Degrees of Success

Sometimes the degree of success or failure is important. In that case, look at how much ground separates the roll result and the Difficulty. When the result equals the Difficulty, you've got the barest, razor-thin success. When the result is several points too low, it's not even close.

A monumental failure, accident, or problem is called a botch. That happens when all the dice rolled show ones. In that sorry situation, the GM should be creative in describing how bad things are. Botching a roll to jump start an engine, Chief Tyrol crosses two wires. He not only takes d2 Stun damage but he fries out the starter. Outcomes should be appropriate to the situation—botching dinner shouldn't frag a character, but it could set the place aflame.

Extraordinary Success is near complete victory. That arises when the sum of the dice rolls is seven or more points higher than the Difficulty. This time the GM gets to be creative in a positive light. Chief Tyrol's engine starts up promptly and from now on responds

**TABLE 4.1—DIFFICULTIES**

Action	Difficulty	Extraordinary Success
Easy	3	10
Average	7	14
Hard	11	18
Formidable	15	22
Heroic	19	26
Incredible	23	30
Ridiculous	27	34
Impossible	31	38



to the ignition switch (no more jury-rigging). Extraordinary Success does not increase the damage dealt in combat; a higher roll is its own reward (see p. 94). However, such success can inflict injury that creates problems beyond damage, such as bleeding, broken bones, and the like.

## OPPOSED ROLLS

When two characters are acting directly against one another, an opposed roll results. Doesn't really matter how well they do, as long as one does it better than the other. No need to sweat a Difficulty number. Each character makes an appropriate roll, and victory goes to the one with the highest total. Ties mean no one wins and the contest goes another turn, unless the GM has a different take on it.

In some cases, both characters roll the same Attribute and Skill. In others, different combinations are called for. As in all actions, the GM considers the situation and decides what each character has to roll.

---

*President Roslin and Doctor Baltar have opposing views on an issue, and each seeks to persuade the Quorum of Twelve that their way is better. Both roll Willpower + Influence/Debate.*

*Starbuck tries to sneak past a group of Cylons in a room down the hall ahead of her. You roll her Agility + Covert/Stealth. The GM compares that to the Cylons' Alertness + Perception/Hearing roll.*

*Two star-quality Pyramid players compete to see which of them is the best. One relies on endurance to outlast the other. He rolls Vitality + Athletics/Pyramid. The other's game is speed. She rolls Agility + Athletics/Pyramid.*

---

Some events seem like opposed rolls but really aren't. If the action directly pits one character against another, use opposed rolls. If a minimum level of success exists, however, it's just two folks making unopposed rolls and seeing who does better.

---

*Billy and a very drunk Starbuck are playing darts. If one rolls better than the other, we have a winner. Still, they have to actually hit the dartboard. The GM decides that's an Average (7) Difficulty. Billy rolls an 8, smack into one of the outer rings—not great, but a hit. Starbuck, who has a penalty for being drunk, slings a 5. She completely missed the board! If she'd rolled a 7, at least she would have hit the blasted board. If that was the case, they both would have succeeded. The GM might declare Billy the winner, but with only a difference of one point, they'd probably each have to take another toss to see who was better!*

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## ATTRIBUTE ROLLS

Some things don't depend on training. They use only a character's Attributes—their personal physical and mental qualities. The Game Master might ask for two Attributes to be rolled together, or one Attribute to be rolled twice. As usual, Traits and Plot Points can be added to the mix.

---

*A Strength + Strength Attribute roll could be made when performing a brief feat of strength, such as shoving something heavy. Strength + Vitality is rolled when engaging in an extended feat of strength, such as carrying a heavy load.*

*Memorizing important information could require an Intelligence + Alertness Attribute roll. Recalling what was memorized uses Intelligence + Intelligence.*

---

Certain Attribute rolls are so common that they have specific names.

**Endurance:** Vitality + Willpower. Among other things, this roll keeps a character alive after he has suffered Wound damage in excess of his Life Points.

**Initiative:** Agility + Alertness. This is rolled at the beginning of combat to determine how quickly a character reacts. It could also be rolled in the face of sudden danger, like poison gas, a grenade, or a collapsing floor.

**Resistance:** Vitality + Vitality. This roll resists environmental hazards, such as poison, radiation, or disease.

## SKILLED ROLLS

Attribute rolls are important, but most rolls involve a Skill. Unlike Attributes, Skills are never rolled by themselves. They are always combined with a single Attribute. Trait and Plot Point dice are added when applicable.

When you want your character to do something skillful, the Game Master considers the action and the situation, and decides which Attribute and which Skill are most appropriate. If the character doesn't have a precisely appropriate Specialty, his closest General Skill is used instead. Roll the dice, find the total, and see if that beats the selected Difficulty.

---

*Reviewing some supply reports, Billy discovers some serious errors. He decides to buckle down and fix them. The Game Master decides—without telling you—that it will be Hard (Difficulty 11) to fix all the problems in the documents. The GM asks you to make an Intelligence + Knowledge/Bureaucracy roll. You pick up the dice.*

---

No Attribute is permanently paired with any particular Skill—the combination rolled depends entirely upon the situation and the task at issue. The Game Master should keep this in mind when deciding applicable Attributes and Skills. They won't always be the same, even in very similar situations. While you are free to suggest a suitable combination, the GM has final say.

---

*While working on the reports, the GM gives Billy a chance to realize that the errors were deliberate, an attempt to skim supplies from the stores without drawing attention. This time, he asks you to roll Billy's Alertness + Knowledge/Bureaucracy in order to recognize the clues of embezzlement.*

*Starbuck, Tigh, and Boomer are playing cards. The GM decides that the highest roll wins but each player is taking a different approach. That varies the Attributes and Skills used. Starbuck is trying to win by looking for tells in her opponents. The GM asks her player to roll Alertness + Perception/Gambling. Colonel Tigh is trying to win by bluffing his opponents. The GM asks for Willpower + Perception/Gambling. Boomer is trying to win through strategy and caution. The GM calls for Intelligence + Perception/Gambling.*

---

## UNSKILLED ROLLS

Some folks don't have the right Skills for the job. A tech-specialist might find herself in a combat-heavy ground action. The officer in charge might be trained to run avionics and electronics, not lead a squad in a desperate situation. A combat marine might need to perform battlefield first aid.

When your character doesn't have the right Skill, you just roll his Attribute. General Skills are very broad, but they don't cover everything. A kind Game Master might allow you to use a related Skill instead of the most appropriate one, but don't count on it. No Skill should become a replacement for all the others. If it's really grim, tap into those handy Plot Points.

Remember, some actions require a Skill to be attempted at all. Surgery, computer programming, and other highly specialized fields are examples. **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** designates which Skills can only be used after training.

## COMPLEX ACTIONS

Most actions are resolved with only a single roll, usually taking only a moment or two of game-time. They are called standard actions. Other tasks are longer and more involved. Complex actions require a lengthy process or multiple stages, like extensive

surgery, rebuilding a Viper engine, or testing hundreds of samples of DNA for traces of Cylon technology. These actions take more time in-game to complete, and require multiple rolls.

When a character attempts a complex action, the Game Master sets the applicable Attribute, Skill, and Traits as usual. He also sets a Threshold. That's like a Difficulty but the number to be reached is daunting. The Complex Actions Table (see Table 4.2) presents a range of numbers and their descriptive terms. Note that the simplest Threshold (15) would be a Formidable standard action. That's because complex actions are expected to take more than one roll.

The GM makes two more decisions: how much in-game time each roll represents, and the limit on the amount of time that can be spent. The time per roll varies widely. Taking a flight exam might require ten minutes per roll, while repairing damage to the *Galactica* could require a day for each roll. The most important thing here is the time limit, however. If Doc Cottle has all day to mix up an antidote and an unlimited amount of supplies, even botches are meaningless. He gets the job done. If the poison running through Adama's system will kill him in an hour, the Doc better get a move on. Complex actions only come into play when the amount of time that a task takes is important.

Now it's time to roll the dice. Add each roll result to the total accumulated so far. Once the total passes the Threshold you have completed the task.

Botches are a problem. Any botch during a complex action increases the Threshold by one category. A Hard (55) Threshold would become a Formidable (75) one. Two botches, at any point during the process, and the whole project is torpedoed. Gotta start over, if there's time. Extraordinary Successes don't apply to complex actions. A character can keep working on something to make it better, even after the Threshold is reached, but he risks a botch undermining his work.

No opposed complex actions exist. Two people might be working on similar projects, but that's just a race to see who reaches the Threshold first.

Plot Points spent for bonus dice on complex actions only apply to one roll, though more can be spent each turn in order to keep rolling bonus dice.

---

*Lt. Gaeta is trying to calculate a hyperlight jump. It's a very complex task and he is forced to network several computers together to accomplish it. That allows the Cylons access to Galactica's command and control systems; only a few hastily rigged firewalls keep them at bay.*

The GM tells you to use Intelligence + Technical Engineering/Astrogration, gives it a Formidable (75) Threshold, and sets each calculation at two minutes. The GM decided how long it will take the Cylons to break through, but he doesn't tell you that.

Gaeta, muttering a prayer to the Lords of Kobol, starts to work; you make your first roll. The dice total is 17—a good start!

Two minutes later, however, not so lucky—a 4. The accumulated total is now 21. The GM calls out, voicing a nervous NPC: “The Cylons are through the first firewall!”

Starting to get worried, you spend 3 Plot Points, adding a d6 to your roll for the third time increment. This pays off—it's a 20, and Gaeta's running total jumps to 37.

If, at any time, Gaeta botches, the Threshold rises to Heroic (95). That could all but guarantee that the Cylons subvert the computer system.

After another three rolls, the accumulated total reaches 75. The jump is successful, and Galactica reunites with the fleet. The final firewall did not fall but Gaeta can't be sure that the Cylons hacking attempt has ended completely. Nothing seems wrong, but only the GM knows whether the Cylons completed their complex action.

## MODIFIERS

Circumstances affect the chances of success. When it's smooth sailing or when you've got help, life is a little easier. When everything gets frakked up, coping is much harder. Here's how it all works.

**Change of Circumstance:** If the conditions surrounding a roll vary from plain vanilla, the Difficulty should be adjusted. Conditions are beyond the direct control of the character: weather, lighting conditions, environmental factors, and the like. If they favor the character—say spotting Cylon movement on a sunny day—the Difficulty should drop. Otherwise—heavy woods cover the Cylon approach points—the Difficulty goes up. The GM can simply push the Difficulty up or down levels (Average to Easy; Hard to Formidable) or he can set a specific increase or decrease.

Galactica's marines have been ordered to retrieve supplies from rebellious civilian ships. Colonel Tigh made it clear what would happen if they lost their cool while doing so. The GM decides that staying calm in the face of taunts, shouts, and harassment is an Average (7) Willpower + Discipline/Mental roll. When the civilians start throwing coffee cans and other

### TABLE 4.2—COMPLEX ACTIONS

Action	Threshold
Easy	15
Average	35
Hard	55
Formidable	75
Heroic	95
Incredible	115
Ridiculous	135
Impossible	155

hard objects, the soldiers feel physically threatened. That bumps the Difficulty by 4, making it a Hard (11) roll. Hopefully, the soldiers' training keeps them out of Tigh's doghouse.

In opposed rolls, external modifiers generally aren't applied. The circumstances apply equally to both sides and thus cancel each other out. In some cases, one side gets a benefit, say background noise aiding an infiltrator. The GM adds a bonus to one side, or a penalty to the other, or both, as he sees fit. These adjustments rarely should go over +4 or -4.

**Personal Edge:** If the circumstances are internal, affecting a character's abilities, the actual dice rolled are subject to change. Dice are arranged in steps, and such modifiers create step bonuses or step penalties. A +1 step changes a d8 into a d10, or a d10 into a d12. A -2 step drops a d8 to a d4, and so on.

A +1 step above a d12 adds a new d2, and each step beyond that increases the new die. If penalties reduce a die below d2, it is eliminated completely and the extra penalty is ignored. It's possible that circumstances completely eliminate all dice; the action automatically fails. Because of this, the exact die modified should be made clear. Steps due to equipment or instructions apply to the Skill die. The effects of poisons, disease, injury, or stims should be applied to the Attribute die. A circumstantial bonus or penalty to a Skill the character doesn't possess is ignored.

Trapped in a dangerous situation with few supplies, a squad of troops has suffered some injuries. The medic has a Medical Expertise/First Aid d10 for treating wounds in the field. The first aid kit has been ransacked for supplies though. The GM imposes a -3 step to that Skill. Her d10 becomes a d4. It's looking bleak.

## ASSISTANCE

Sometimes you can't do the job alone. When Chief Tyrol decided he wanted to build a new fighter-craft, he handled most of it himself, but he just didn't have all the skills necessary. When this happens, other characters can help out.

**Direct Assistance:** When two or more can combine efforts directly, the characters roll as usual and the totals are combined. For example, three characters could try heaving a large cargo crate onto a lift. Depending upon the circumstances, the GM may limit the number of characters that can combine efforts at one time.

**Indirect Assistance:** When one character can only offer aid to another, rolls are not added together. Rather both characters roll, and the highest one is used. This occurs when a nurse assists a doctor, a copilot aids a pilot, and so on.

## PLOT POINTS

So, you wanna be a hero? That's admirable, but it can't be done if you don't survive. And it ain't heroic to screw up when the team's counting on you. Plot Points help with all that.

Plot Points let major characters, both player characters (PCs) and nonplayer characters (NPCs), throw their dramatic weight around. They give the characters—and their players—a little more control over the storyline.

Plot Points should be tracked by something physical during the game. Poker chips, colored beads, or the like work well. This allows Plot Points to be exchanged by the GM and players regularly, quickly, and in varying amounts. That makes the game run much more smoothly; handing them out and taking them back is much less distracting. Once everyone knows how Plot Points work, best that you don't discuss them at all. Instead, concentrate on translating their use into interesting and imaginative game play.

*Chief Tyrol is running damage control on the Galactica after a Cylon attack. You decide to spend two Plot Points to get his engineering crew up and running faster. You hand the GM two poker chips and adds an extra d4 to your roll. Tyrol is successful, but the GM warns that a fire is spreading dangerously. Colonel Tigh gives the order to blow the airlocks in that section, putting the fire out the hard way. Since that would mean the death of more than a score of his crew, the Chief is incensed—but the Colonel is right, and waiting to evacuate the men would put the whole ship in danger. Reluctantly doing his duty, the Chief gives the order. Impressed at the role*

*playing involved and the hard decision-making, the GM quietly hands you a Plot Point as a reward.*

## GAINING PLOT POINTS

Characters start each new campaign with six Plot Points. During play, characters can have no more than 12 Plot Points at any one time, but can otherwise spend or save them as they see fit (if they already have 12, they can't gain any more until they've spent some). If they earn or spend them in a way that makes the game more interesting, they may gain an additional Advancement Point to increase their abilities with (see **Chapter Two: Characters** for more details on advancement and Advancement Points). Between sessions, record each character's current Plot Point total—they carry over.

Plot Points are a primary reward in the game. They are handed out for good role playing, good ideas, completing goals, and adding excitement—even if that means the going gets tougher!

### Plot Point Rewards

Plot Points should be awarded throughout play. Their allocation is the GM's call, but don't be shy about nominating other players for rewards based on good role playing or cleverness. Use these guidelines, and suggested numbers.

**Frakking Awesome! (1):** You came up with an awesome idea, some superior role playing, a great line, or something else so cool that everyone enjoyed it. A Plot Point award encourages more of the same. No problem if this reward comes up multiple times during a game session.

**Complications in Play (1-3):** More on this shortly.

**Completed a Challenge (2-4):** A character (or the entire group) overcomes an important challenge, such as successfully finding a new source of fuel, discovering an important clue on the path to Earth, or preventing disaster from striking their ship or home. The more dangerous or challenging the situation, the more Plot Points come your way.

**Personal Goal (3-5):** The character achieves a personal goal—bringing a hated foe to justice, gaining important information, or almost anything else significant to her in a dramatic sense. The numbers suggested are for smaller stories and goals; life-long dreams, when accomplished, should merit an even larger reward.

**Crew Goal (4-6):** This reward should go to each player when the team completes an important, challenging mission. When they successfully

restock the *Galactica* for combat, when they defuse a dangerous situation and save some prisoners, or when they uncover the high level Cylon infiltrator, everyone deserves a reward for moving the game forward.

### Complications in Play

A character's Complications do just that—complicate. If played well, they should be a regular source of Plot Points. Still, suffering from problems should give kick-backs only once per situation—Tigh getting into trouble because he's a drunkard should be rewarded, but he doesn't gain Plot Points for every shot he takes or every individual person he alienates. When those shots add up and he can't do his duty, or when one of those people decides to take a swing at him, then he gets his Plot Points.

**Character Initiated:** Many Complications are personality quirks, and they come up when you role play your character's less-than-perfect side. When this happens, you should be rewarded.

---

*Starbuck's rebellious streak lands her in loads of trouble. When she calls Colonel Tigh "a superior asshole" to his face, she gets some Plot Points. And tossed in the brig.*

**GM-Initiated:** Complications from a character's background or personal history sound off when GM chooses. If a story arc or adventure revolves around them, Plot Points are awarded when the root problem is revealed, not every time the Complication pops up.

---

*Laura Roslin's political Rival plots against her. She doesn't receive Plot Points whenever her foe tries to discredit her with a fabricated rumor. She gets the points only when the source of the rumors is revealed.*

**Situational:** Some Complications require a trigger, usually out of your direct control. Plot Points should only be awarded if the Complication places the character in direct danger, or causes him a significant difficulty.

---

*Cally and her team are supposed to execute a near-suicidal attack on a group of Centurions. Not surprisingly, her Combat Paralysis kicks in. Not only does this mean the entire group is endangered by the Cylons, it also forces her commanding officer to point a gun in her face and demand that she obey a direct order. The GM awards you several Plot Points.*

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**Constants:** Some Complications cause ongoing or unavoidable problems, such as

Blind or a missing limb. In these cases, Plot Points are not awarded in ordinary, day-to-day situations. Rather, they are granted when the Complication becomes a significant hindrance.

---

*Laura Roslin does not receive Plot Points for living with terminal breast cancer. When she suffers serious attacks of pain or medicine-related hallucinations due to the disease, then the GM awards a few Plot Points.*

**Unanticipated:** Sometimes, the plotline places one character in a particularly dangerous situation. Perhaps the GM decides that his food was recently poisoned, or he was the one exposed to the nearly-fatal disease. This might be worth a few extra Plot Points, even if no specific Complication brings on the problems. This should be rare, reserved for the extreme circumstances when the GM feels a specific character has been singled out for trouble, with little or no chance to avoid it.

### SPENDING PLOT POINTS

Earning Plot Points is a sign that things are going well. Also means they are about to get much worse. You're going to need those dramatic kickers. Here's how Plot Points can make your day.

**Improving Actions:** Plot Points can be spent before a roll to add an extra die. The more points spent, the bigger the die—a single Plot Point adds a d2, two Plot Points add a d4, and so on. This die becomes part of the roll, just like any other, and is added to the total. The Plot Point die does have one special trait: it cannot roll lower than the number of Plot Points expended on it (half the maximum value of the die). If it shows a lower number, it counts as equal to the points spent. When two dice are added by Plot Points, their total cost is the minimum total result, not the minimum result on each die.

---

*You spend 3 Plot Points to add a d6 to your roll. If that d6 rolls a 1 or a 2, the actual result is ignored and it is counted as a 3. If 6 Plot Points are spent, and the d12 rolled comes up 5 or less, it counts as 6. Spending 8 points gets you a d12 and a d4. The combine total of those two dice cannot be less than 8.*

---

**Saving Your Bacon:** Sometimes, you fail when you least expect it, and often when you can least afford to. In these situations, spend Plot Points after the die roll to increase your final total. Hindsight has a cost though. Each Plot Point spent adds exactly one to the roll. Not as valuable a windfall as if you spent them

**TABLE 4.3—BONUS DICE**

Plot Points Spent	Die Type	Minimum Bonus
1	d2	1
2	d4	2
3	d6	3
4	d8	4
5	d10	5
6	d12	6
7	d12+d2	7
8	d12+d4	8
9	d12+d6	9
10	d12+d8	10
11	d12+d10	11
12	d12+d12	12

before rolling (that nets you up to twice the value of your Plot Points), but it's a last resort.

**Staying Alive:** Good chance your character takes a wound that knocks him out or kill him. Or maybe, you just don't want to take damage at all! When this happens, you can spend Plot Points to reduce the hurting. This is done only when the damage is declared, not after the fact. The plot change can't heal anyone—it just makes the blow less devastating than it seemed. When Plot Points are spent this way, you buy a bonus die just like when you try to improve actions, but this time the result is subtracted from the damage taken. Wound damage is reduced first; any remaining points drop Stun damage.

**Assets:** Some Assets require you to spend Plot Points to activate them or the special abilities they grant. See **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** for details.

**Story Manipulation:** For the most part, the GM sketches out the plot and guides the action. You get in the mix through your character's actions, but that's not the only means you have to impact the storytelling. Plot Points allow you to modify that story in small ways. Mostly, you do this to help the gang. Whatever the case, it should always be done to make the game more interesting and fun for the players (though not necessarily the characters).

Don't get cocky. The GM has the power to veto plot-twisting Plot Points if they undermine the storyline. Plot Points cannot change core aspects of the tale, alter the very nature of a character, overturn prior events, or wrap the adventure up in a neat package.

Plot Points let you alter the story in convincing ways, stretch things a little bit, or add or subtract subtle details. A young military woman might find the bumbling but sincere attitude of a civilian clerk charming and attractive. A Viper engaged in a light skirmish could sustain some battle damage that turns out to not be as hard to repair as it made it to land. Seems unlikely that a downed pilot could stumble upon the brain-dead carcass of a Cylon raider that is intact enough to fly manually. Still, it sounds just possible, and is too frakking cool to ignore!

When you want to spend Plot Points to change the story, make a suggestion and hand the GM the number of Plot Points you are willing to spend, based on how far you think you are stretching things. If the GM is agreeable, he keeps the Plot Points and incorporates the suggestion—perhaps altered as he sees fit. Remember, he has a better idea what's coming, so cut him some slack. If he likes the idea, but thinks the payment is too chincy, he could reduce the impact of it and use it that way, or ask for more Plot Points. If the GM doesn't buy it, he simply rejects the Plot Points bribe.

The Plot Points and Story Impact Table gives some pointers. Keep in mind that Plot Points are never a license to derail the story, to ruin another player's fun, or to destroy the adventure or an important premise of the campaign.

## COMBAT

Combat is dirty, dangerous, and chaotic—it ain't pretty, or for those with weak stomachs. For the most part, combat involves opposed actions: whoever rolls higher does better. Keep that in mind, and the rest should fall into place.

Combat rules most often are used in violent situations, but not always. Whenever things get tense, when you need to know who acts first, what happens before what, or how quickly someone can respond, the combat rules help organize things—they zoom in to moment-by-moment.

## THE TURN

Time during tense situations is broken down into "combat turns" or just "turns." Turns last approximately three seconds, and are meant to be just long enough for a character to do one, or maybe two, different things. Combat moves fast. You may want to spend time planning, plotting, and deciding on the best possible action, but your character doesn't have that luxury. In order to keep from getting bogged down, the GM should encourage

players to make snappy decisions and deal with the consequences. Too much hesitation and your character loses the chance to act that turn.

activity during a turn is an action or not. Actions take some degree of concentration. One action is generally all a character can perform in one turn.

**TABLE 4.4—PLOT POINTS AND STORY IMPACT**

Cost	Impact
1-2	Inconsequential: You find just the right shoes in the quartermaster's stores.
3-4	Minor: You remember you brought an extra clip of ammo on the mission, stuffed into a little-used pocket.
5-6	Moderate: You stumble upon a supply of food and medicine that will last through several weeks of hiding on Cylon-occupied Caprica.
7-8	Significant: Turns out that among all the new emergency recruits, you find a handful of trained, half-competent pilots who can learn to fly Vipers quickly.
9-10	Major: Just when the fleet desperately needs it, you stumble upon an asteroid rich in tylium ore.
11+	Defining: They're transmitting Colonial signals, sir!

Certain activities don't amount to actions. They are too short, automatic, or otherwise inconsequential to occupy a character's attention. Shouting a brief warning or order, looking around quickly, or anything else that doesn't actually interfere with your character's ability to perform other actions fits in here.

When an activity doesn't amount to an action, it can be done at any time, even during another character's turn. Nonactions can be combined too, as much as makes sense. Your GM

may cut you short on "free" actions. A character can't speak more than a few seconds worth of words during a turn, for instance. Use common sense.

Everything else a character does counts as an action. Taking a shot or a swing, diving for cover, steering the Viper, staunching blood flow and slapping on a field patch, sneaking past the sentry, sweet talking the bartender out of a drink without paying—all those and more are actions. They take time and concentration.

### Initiative

When combat starts, the GM decides who acts first. Usually, it's the person initiating action, hostile or otherwise. That person gets to make one action right away. After that, the players roll their character's Initiative—an Agility + Alertness Attribute roll.

Each turn, characters act in order of Initiative result—highest goes first, followed by next highest, and so on down the line. Should you wish, at the beginning of a subsequent turn, you may spend one Plot Point to reroll Initiative. The reroll is used for the remainder of the fight if it is higher than your character's original Initiative; it's ignored if it is lower.

If two characters have the same Initiative result, they act at the same time. If a finer distinction is needed, the tied characters roll Agility in an opposed action until an order is established.

### Actions

Many types of activities are possible during a turn. All brief in duration granted, but role playing is about imagination.

Act as you see fit; the GM will reign you in if needed.

An important distinction in the *Battlestar Galactica* game is whether a character's

For the most part, a character's actions take place during his turn. Some actions, such as dodge, however, occur during another character's turn.



## OPTIONAL INITIATIVE

If you don't like the way Initiative is calculated, change it. Here're some suggestions, subject to the GM's approval.

**Static Initiative:** Calculate Initiative as a static number. Add together the maximum values of all the dice included in your character's Initiative, and record that number on your character sheet. Instead of rolling, characters always act in this order, using dice only to break ties when absolutely necessary. Plot Points spent on Initiative rolls add a die as usual—the maximum value of that die is added to your Initiative for that combat.

**Group Initiative:** Rather than rolling Initiative for each character, one Initiative is rolled for each side. All the characters on each side act simultaneously, only rolling against each other when order is absolutely vital. Use the character with the best Initiative dice on each side when rolling for his group.

Opposed rolls most often require actions from both sides. Some situations—a character uses an action to sneak by some guards and the guards roll their perception as a nonaction—vary from that general rule. Your GM makes the call, as usual.

Actions cannot be saved from one turn to another. Turns happen too fast for that to be possible; any hesitation means the character has to wait until the next turn to act.

In certain circumstances, it's possible to get in more than one action in a turn. In that case, multiple action penalties apply.

### Multiple Actions

It's possible for a character to take multiple actions in one turn. Again, the watchword is "sensible"—your GM will keep a close eye on multiple actions in a turn. Characters have only three seconds in which to act; only so much can be done in that time. Your character can't divide his concentration too far. If the GM thinks the character is attempting too many things at once, he should cut her off at an appropriate number of actions.

As a general rule of thumb, three separate actions is pushing the limit. Certain actions almost certainly chew up an entire turn (attempting to guess and input

the password on a lock, attempting to break down a door). In that case, multiple actions are not possible.

When more than one action is possible, initial actions are more controlled, later ones more ragged. The first action your character makes in a turn suffers no penalty. Every action after that accumulates penalties. The second action of a turn gets hit with a  $-1$  Skill step. The third applies a  $-2$  Skill step, and so on.

If a multiple action penalty, by itself, would completely eliminate the applicable Skill die, that action cannot be attempted. If an action doesn't require a roll (running, for example), it still increases the penalty. Your GM then makes the call whether it can be attempted or is somehow hindered.

Remember, activities that don't count as actions have no effect on multiple action penalties.

*Helo, running from a toaster patrol on occupied Caprica, is moving quickly through the woods, trying to avoid fire. Before it's his turn to act, he is forced to dodge, reacting to an attack and using an action—no penalty yet. When his Initiative comes around, he runs 30 feet, stopping behind a tree. That uses a second action for that turn. The action generates a  $-1$  Skill step, but it's meaningless because no roll is needed. In a panic, Helo pulls out his pistol and squeezes off a shot. The  $-2$  step penalty reduces his d6 Guns skill to a d2. He can't take any additional shots because it would reduce his skill die to zero. As it is he'll be lucky to hit at all.*

## MOVEMENT

For the most part, characters can move about as they please—not much to stop them. Sometimes it's important to know how far your character can move in a given amount of time. Pretty much, that happens during tense moments or action sequences.

### Walking

Characters walk their base movement in one turn. For most, base movement is equal to 15 feet, but that might be altered by Traits. Walking does not count as an action.

### Running

Running covers double a character's base movement (usually 30 feet) in one turn. This expends an action.

Characters can run for the number of minutes equal to the maximum roll on their



## CHASES

Chases can be exciting—pounding down a deck, along a street, or through dusty corridors, one step ahead of your foe! Here's how they play out.

First, check to see if one person (or group) is clearly faster than the other. Unless hampered, a significantly speedier character almost certainly wins the chase, either escaping or catching his quarry. No rolls are necessary most of the time, although navigating rough or dangerous terrain at full speed might require a roll of some kind—failure lets even a slower opponent win the chase.

If both opponents have roughly the same base movement, the outcome is in doubt. Chases are played out as a series of standard actions that are compared (note that they aren't opposed rolls). The distance between the pursuer and the pursued is abstracted onto a sliding scale:

Escaped—Distant—Far—Close—Caught

When the chase begins, follow these steps:

1. Set starting distance (usually either Close or Far).
2. Each turn, at the same time, each character rolls for movement. They usually make the same roll; the Attribute, Skill, and Difficulty are based on the situation. Flat, clear terrain is Average (7) Difficulty and uses Strength + Athletics/Running. A rocky hillside or twisting spaceship's corridors would be a Hard (11) Alertness + Athletics/Running roll. Quickly climbing a ladder up to a catwalk would be a Hard (11) Agility + Athletics/Climbing.
3. If all movers succeed, fail, or gain Extraordinary Successes, they remain at the same distance. If one succeeds and the other fails, or one succeeds and the other achieves an Extraordinary Success, the distance slides on the scale one level in the favor of the winner. If one fails and the other gets an Extraordinary Success, the distance slides two levels in the favor of the winner. When the distance reaches Caught, the two parties are close enough to engage in combat, grappling, and so on—the chase ends in favor of the pursuer. If the distance reaches Escaped, the pursuers are left behind or lost—the pursued gains enough time to catch their breath before they are spotted again.

Each turn that one party moves faster than the other (for example, if one of the parties runs out of breath and is forced to stop sprinting or running, or chooses to move more slowly), the distance automatically slides one level in their favor for each speed level (standing still, walking, running, sprinting) of difference.

Vitality dice. After that, they must slow to a walk for at least 10 minutes, or rest for five minutes, before they catch their breath.

### Sprinting

Sprinting triples the character's base movement (usually to 45 feet per turn). This costs an action, and also prevents all other actions during the turn—shooting and reloading become impossible when moving at this rate. Dodging is also impossible, but innate defense may be used with a +1 Step bonus.

Characters can sprint for a number of turns equal to the maximum roll on their Vitality dice. After that, they can no longer sprint or run, and must slow to a walk for at least 10 minutes, or rest for five minutes, before they catch their breath.

### Jumping

Adult characters can jump gaps of less than three feet from a standing start, or five feet with a moving start. No roll is needed. In a dangerous situation, over longer distances, or when an action is hindered, a roll is made, usually Strength + Athletics/Jumping. The Jump Difficulties Table shows how tough it is to jump a certain distance, depending on the character's movement before the jump (a – means the jump ain't gonna happen under any circumstances). Jumping counts as an action.

### Climbing

If your character is in a controlled environment and using safety equipment, or is tackling a particularly easy tree or ladder, no climbing roll is needed. Otherwise, use Strength + Athletics/Climbing. The

**TABLE 4.5—JUMP DIFFICULTIES**

Difficulty Number	Distance (Standing)	Distance (Running)
3	3'	5'
7	5'	8'
11	7'	12'
15	9'	16'
19	11'	18'
23	—	20'
27	—	22'
31	—	25'

Difficulty depends on the surface being traversed—a tree with many limbs might be Easy (3), the side of a house would be Hard (11). The roll is made at the start of the climb, and the climber does not need to roll again unless conditions change (they are attacked, harsh weather sets in, etc.), or if they are climbing for more than a minute. If things do get tense, the GM may require a roll each turn, or each turn something impedes the climber (say, a successful attack). Climbing counts as an action.

Characters move vertically or horizontally five feet per turn if climbing “freestyle”—on an unprepared surface. If using a knotted rope, ladder, or similar aid, 10 feet per turn can be covered going up, 15 feet going down.

Climbing characters cannot dodge or perform other actions, at the GM’s discretion. They do apply their innate defense against attacks they are aware of, as usual.

## ATTACKING

Sometimes, you gotta sail into the teeth of the enemy. Better know how to attack before you do.

Attacks are skilled actions: roll the appropriate combination of Attribute and Skill, and if the total equals or beats the Difficulty, the attack hits. For the most part, a ranged attack uses Agility or Alertness and a Skill; close combat attacks (with or without a weapon) use Strength and a Skill. The Difficulty of hitting an unmoving or unaware human-sized target is Easy (3). Most times, the target is going to bust his hump to avoid getting hit. In that case, the Difficulty depends on the target’s defense choice. Attacks are actions unless otherwise stated.

The roll result determines the initial damage of the attack. Subtract the defense Difficulty from the attack roll result. If it’s zero, no initial damage is done. Initial damage is almost always Basic type.

If the attack has a damage die (such as when a weapon is used), roll that and apply it after initial damage is done. Weapon damage type varies.

That’s the basics, but things can, and usually do, get hairier.

**Aim:** Your character can aim a ranged weapon for up to three combat turns, as long as he does nothing else (some nonactions, such as talking, may be allowed; walking or hitting the dirt is not). Aiming grants a +1 Skill step for each turn spent aiming.

**Called Shot:** Called shots target a specific part of the body or other small area or object. They increase the difficulty because of the smaller target area, but bring on a world of hurt.

*Full Target:* In general, assailants target the central body mass—or, an object about the size of a person, doorway, etc. No additional difficulty.

*Moderate Target:* This includes targeting a leg, arm, or torso, or an object about the size of a chair. The attack action difficulty is increased by +4.

*Small Target:* Attacking a hand, foot, or head, or an object about the size of a book, rifle, or helmet. The attack action difficulty is increased by +8.

*Minuscule Target:* Targeting something as small as a heart, kneecap, or eye (or doorknob, poolball, etc) increases the difficulty by +12.

Called shots to specific body parts cause greater harm. The exact results are up to the Game Master, but some suggestions follow.

*Leg/Arm:* The limb is useless, which may reduce or eliminate movement or the ability to take certain actions. The damage should not kill the target outright (reduce the damage or convert it all to Stun).

*Torso/Stomach/Back:* Target must make an Endurance roll with a Difficulty equal to the attack roll. If failed, the character is winded—stunned for two turns.

*Vital Area:* An attack to something like the heart, head, or eye causes additional Wound damage. Increase the attack’s damage die based on the size of the area targeted (Moderate +2 steps, Small +4 steps, Minuscule +8 steps). The damage die inflicts Wound damage (no matter its damage type before), and the target begins bleeding. For example, if the called shot imposed a +8 Difficulty to the attack, the damage die is increased by four steps. This can apply to shots to vital areas on the torso (kidneys, groin), almost any shot to the head, and even to shots to areas on limbs (arteries, etc). Remember a difficulty should be adjusted based on the specific result desired by the attacker. (A shot aiming for an arm is different than trying to pierce an artery!)

**Covering:** Covering an area is a good way to deny it to the enemy. If anyone enters that area (comes through a doorway, comes around the corner, stands up from behind the barricade, etc), you start swinging or firing. Covering is an action, and the area covered must be declared when it starts—as a rough estimate, you can't cover an area much bigger than a double-doorway or a corridor on *Galactica*. If something happens in the area, the attacker can act immediately even when it's not his turn to act. If nothing happens, the attacker loses his chance to perform any action until his initiative comes up again. Covering can carry over from turn to turn as long as the attacker performs no other action during that time (nonactions, like talking, are possible), or move out of range. This does not accumulate an aiming bonus, however.

When a covering attack is declared against a single target, it's called threatening. If that sucker moves or does anything undesirable, the threatening character can attack immediately even when it's not his turn. Unlike regular covering, threatening someone for more than one turn does grant aiming bonuses. In addition, threatening a person adds a +2 Skill step when intimidating the target, or anyone who cares about the target in a significant way.

**Crowds:** Firing into a crowd is an act of the desperate or the criminal. When firing at a target in a crowd, or at someone engaged in close combat, any near miss is problem. Any roll that comes up with all dice showing ones or twos is considered a botch (instead of just ones). Botching causes a separate, unintentional attack roll against a nearby target determined either randomly or by the GM. This attack replaces the intended one.

**Disarm:** A close combat attack to disarm imposes a  $-2$  Skill step; a ranged disarm suffers a  $-4$  Skill step. If the attack succeeds, no damage is inflicted but the target must make a Hard Agility + (weapon Skill) roll. If failed, the target drops the weapon.

**Feint:** Only possible in close combat, a feint uses an opposed roll. The attacker makes an Intelligence + combat Skill/Specialty roll against the defender's Alertness + combat Skill/Specialty. If the attacker is successful, the defender can use only Innate Defense against the attacker's next strike.

**Grapple:** Grabbing someone requires an Agility + Unarmed Combat/Specialty roll. Instead of any of the usual defenses available, the target can spend an action to roll Agility + Unarmed Combat/Specialty.



If the attacker succeeds, no damage is inflicted. In subsequent turns, the grappled opponent is an Easy target for close combat attacks. Maintaining the grapple does not count as an action, but the grappled person is the only target that can be attacked. In order to escape a grapple, the target must spend an action and beat the attacker in a opposed Strength + Athletics roll.

A grapple can also be used to push or knock over a target, making them prone. In that case, the attacker can maintain the hold, falling to the ground as well, or release the target to fall on his own.

TABLE 4.6—RANGES

Range	Distance in Range Increments	Modifier
Point Blank	15' projectile 5' thrown	+1 Skill Step
Short	1	—
Medium	2	$-1$ Skill Step
Long	4	$-3$ Skill Step
Extreme	10	$-6$ Skill Step

**Improvised Weapons:** A good soldier always has a weapon handy, but it doesn't always work out that way. When your character grabs a bottle, chair, stick, or other improvised weapon, ask the GM what rules apply. The more unwieldy the item, the greater the penalty (-1 to -4 Skill step generally). Most common items also have fairly small damage dice. On the other hand, the weapon does Basic, not just Stun damage (as fighting unarmed does).

The range increments listed in **Chapter Five: Gear** only apply when the weapon is used as intended, and is designed for such use. Heaving a pistol has nothing to do with the gun's normal range increment. A pointy piece of metal may cause damage like a knife but it sure doesn't throw like one. Again, improvised weapon rules apply and your GM decides the Skill step penalty depending on the range and the unwieldiness of the item.

**Prone:** Attacking while prone incurs a -2 Attribute step.

**Range:** If you really want to hit something, get as close as possible. Point blank range is 15 feet for projectile weapons, five feet for thrown weapons. Getting that close grants a +1 Skill step. Otherwise, accuracy depends on a weapon's range increment. At or below the first increment, the attack is at close range and no modifier is applied. Beyond that, and up to double the range increment is medium range. That range imposes a -1 Skill step. Up to four times the range increment is long range, and a -3 Skill step. Beyond that lies extreme range. That attack suffers a -6 Skill step. Your GM may decide that anything beyond 10 times the range increment is a waste of ammo (no chance of hitting). The Ranges Table summarizes.

**Sneak Attack:** Hit them where they ain't looking. Attacks from behind, or on an unaware target have an Easy (3) Difficulty, unless the target is moving erratically enough to warrant an Innate Defense roll. This gets particularly ugly if the attacker has time to aim.

**Throwing:** Tossing a weapon designed for throwing (such as a throwing knife) is handled like any other ranged attack. The attack might use Strength or Agility, depending on the weapon. Chucking a rock or a grenade has an Average (7) Difficulty to hit the correct area if it's no farther than 100 feet away. If the target is beyond 100 feet, the thrower also has to make a Strength + Athletics/Throwing (or other Skill) roll. The maximum distance reachable is (100 + roll's result) in feet. If that isn't enough, the throw falls short. In that case, if the thrower fails the roll to target the right area within range, it lands where the GM judges.

**Two-Weapon Fighting:** Fighting with two hands imposes a -2 Attribute step on the off-hand attack. The main hand attack is one action; the off-hand attack a second one.

**Unarmed Combat:** Much harder to kill someone by slugging him. Unarmed combat is resolved normally, but initial damage is all Stun type, instead of Basic type. Traits may alter the damage dealt.

When it comes to bonuses to damage dice, treat unarmed attacks as d0 Stun—any increase raises this to an actual die type.

**Visibility:** Smoke, fog, and dim light make tagging a target much harder. Darkness or blindness really messes you up.

*Dim Light, Thin Smoke/Fog:* -2 Skill step to all attacks or attempts to see beyond 10 feet (except spray fire).

*Dark, Thick Smoke/Fog:* -4 Skill step to all attacks or attempts to see beyond 10 feet (except spray fire).

*Pitch Black, Blinded:* Hard to hit something you can't see. Gotta find some other way to find the target. Make an Alertness + Perception/Hearing (or other sense) roll to attack someone under these conditions. The Difficulty is Average (7) for a target who is shouting or making a lot of noise, Hard (11) for anyone talking or making a moderate amount of noise, Heroic (19) for someone not moving or making much noise, and Ridiculous (27) for someone making a stealth roll (the roll must also be higher than the target's stealth roll). That just gets the attacker a clue about where the target is. Hitting that target still requires a roll with a -6 Skill step at range, or with a -4 Skill step in close combat.

## DEFENSE

Targets rarely just stand there and take it. That means the Difficulty of an attack is rarely the default Easy (3). The defender's choices depend upon the situation and how much concentration is devoted to defense. As with attacks, most defenses combine an Attribute and a Skill.

**Innate Defense:** Keep your wits about you. You'll live longer. If the target is aware of the attacker or the attack, or is moving around at walking speed or faster, he can roll Agility dice (unskilled, paired only with Traits or bonus dice from Plot Points) to raise the attack Difficulty. The GM might give him a +1 or +2 Agility step if his character is moving very quickly, in an unexpected direction, or through areas with some cover. Innate defense cannot be botched, but if the roll result is lower than three, use the lower number. It's frakked up when you put yourself

in more danger trying to avoid danger. Innate defense rolls are nonactions.

**Blocking:** Keep your guard up. Blocking, or parrying, intercepts an opponent's attack with a limb, object, weapon, or shield. Roll Agility + close combat Skill/Specialty; if the character happens have a shield of some sort, use Melee Combat/Shield with a +1 to +4 Skill steps. The result is the attacker's Difficulty. Blocking is an action that occurs in response to another character's action.

It's possible to block a weapon while unarmed, it just ain't smart. If successful, the defender suffers damage (minus armor, if any) from the damage die the weapon would have inflicted on a hit. Better than getting stabbed someplace more vital, but it still hurts like hell.

Guns and ranged attacks can't be blocked. If the shield is sturdy enough, it might provide cover though.

**Dodging:** You live longer if you stay out of an enemy's line of fire. Ducking, leaning, sidestepping, jumping to the side—all that is called dodging. Roll Agility + Athletics/Dodge.

Dodging counts as an action. Your GM may allow your character to throw himself to the ground as a nonaction, but no further movement or dodging is possible that turn. Hitting the dirt is rolled as a regular dodge. After that, the character is prone. Hitting the dirt gets you out of the way fast, but can cause problems later.

**Cover:** Want to keep your insides where they belong? Find and use cover. Put a hard object, as large as possible, between you and danger. Cover doesn't use rolls; it adds a flat number to a character's defense, depending upon how much concealment exists. Hard objects also protect against explosive damage. Four levels exist:

*Light Cover:* Up to half the body is covered. This adds 4 to the defense Difficulty. Remove one die of explosive damage.

*Medium Cover:* More than half the target is safe. Add 8 to the defense Difficulty. Drop two dice of explosive damage.

*Heavy Cover:* Almost all the defender is protected. Add 12 to the defense Difficulty. Three dice of explosive damage are left off.

*Total Cover:* Target can't be hit. If a hit is possible for some reason (defender is peeking through a hole in a bulkhead), or might do damage anyway (a heavy, but portable piece of metal could push back on the target), add 16 to the defense Difficulty. Explosive damage loses four dice.

Cover bonuses only applies if the GM deems the blocking object tough enough. Substances that conceal but don't block fully are treated as armor, with an armor rating determined by the GM based on the type of material.

Called shots to a visible target behind cover only receive half the normal difficulty increase due to cover. For example, if an attacker shoots at someone's head poking up from behind Medium cover would have a difficulty increase of +12 (+8 for the cover, and half of +8 for the called shot). The GM may adjust the difficulty based on a specific situation.

**Prone:** In a firefight, being face first in the mud is safer than being upright out in the open. Still, it's no picnic. You can't dodge when your prone, or use innate defense. Being prone is generally the equivalent of light cover. Also, being flat on your back is a real liability against close combat attacks. An attacker gains a +2 Skill step. At the GM's discretion, blocking may not be possible.

**Protective Gear:** If you can't stay behind large, hard objects, strapping on Kevlar and wearing your protection around is the way to go. Armor doesn't stop you from getting hit like cover does, it just makes the hurt less bad. The heavier the armor, the more hindrance it imposes.

**Chapter Five: Gear** lists the Armor Rating of certain types of armor. The GM determines the Armor Rating of any ad hoc armor (e.g., an object that isn't hard enough to amount to cover). The Armor Rating is subtracted from any damage inflicted. Wound damage is reduced first, then Stun damage.

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*A Colonial marine wearing a combat helmet (4W protection) takes a shot to the head. The blow does 2 Wounds and 3 Stun damage. The helmet shuts down the 2 Wound and 2 Stun. The remaining Stun damage gets through, but is little more than a bruise.*

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Attacks that garner Exceptional Success ignore armor.

Heavier body armor interferes with movement, range of motion, and perception. Such armor lists a step penalty that is applied to Agility, Alertness, or any other rolls the GM deems proper. The penalties shouldn't be applied blindly however. Your GM should take into account the type of armor and the circumstances. A combat helmet might interfere with perception rolls, but it wouldn't affect attacks, dodging, running, or other movement. On the other hand, a full suit of body armor that includes gloves makes fine manipulation, like that required to repair something or pick a lock, much more difficult.

## SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Combat is chaotic, frightening, and impossible to predict. And then you get the unusual situations. Here's a few of them.

### Automatic Weapons

Some guns can fire more rapidly than one bullet per trigger-pull. **Chapter Five: Gear** tells you whether a weapon can fire bursts, autofire, or spray. If not, each shot is an action.

**Burst:** The attacker fires three bullets using one attack roll against one target. The weapon's damage die each gain +1 step. Extraordinary Success on a burst attack adds an extra stepped-up damage die to the total. Burst fire counts as one action, but cannot be done more than twice in one turn. Called shots cannot be bursts.

**Autofire:** One autofire attack roll expends a third of the weapon's ammo (to a maximum of 40 bullets) against one target. The weapon's damage die gains a +4 step. Autofire is an action, and no other attack action is possible that turn (either before or after the autofire). Autofire cannot be a called shot.

**Spray:** Spray fire uses as many bullets as autofire but directs them at an area roughly 5-10 feet wide, not a single target. As long as the attack roll meets an Easy (3) Difficulty, everyone in that area must defend against the attack. Cover bonuses to Difficulty are halved (round up) in the face of spray fire. Those that are hit suffer a +1 step to the weapon's damage die. An Extraordinary Success on the attack roll adds an extra stepped-up die to the weapon damage roll. Spray fire is an action, and no other attack action is possible that turn (either before or after the autofire). Like other automatic fire, spray cannot be called.

Filling an area with lead avoids most visibility problems. Spray fire into a dark or concealed area imposes an Average (7) Difficulty (rather than the usual Easy (3) Difficulty). As long as the muzzle is

pointed generally in the right area, everyone in that area must defend as normal to avoid being hit. No Skill step penalties are applied. This exception does not apply to burst fire or autofire; normal visibility penalties are applied in those cases.

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*Helo steps out from behind his cover with his submachine gun set to autofire with his aim on the lead Centurion. A hail of bullets flies from his gun and scores a hit. The d6 normal damage from weapon is increased four steps to become d12+d2. The damage rolled reduces the lead toaster to a flailing pile of scrap metal. On the next combat turn, Helo fires a spray at the remaining Centurions. He rolls an 8, higher than the Easy difficulty needed. The Cylons are forced to defend against his 8 attack roll. One of the Centurions rolls a 4 and is hit, and Helo's player rolls a d8 (stepped up by one die) for damage—scoring a 5. The Cylon takes a total of 2 Stun and 7 Wounds before its armor reduction is applied.*

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### Breaking Objects

Maneuvering is great, but sometimes you just gotta go through something. When your character needs to hack through a door, smash a box open, or otherwise break stuff, that attack is just like any other. Objects have Armor Ratings and Life Points, but are immune to Stun damage. Once sufficient Wounds have been inflicted to overcome the object's Life Points, the thing is busted. Your GM sets the objects specs; the following are illustrative examples.

**Handcuffs:** Armor Value 6, Life Points 2.

**Rope:** Armor Value 2, Life Points 2.

**Standard Door:** Armor Value 4, Life Points 6.

**Reinforced Door:** Armor Value 10, Life Points 8.

### Drawing a Weapon

Unless a character has an applicable Asset, drawing a weapon is an action. For those without weapons at the ready, drawing and firing imposes a multiple action penalty.

### Explosions

Grenades, missiles, mining charges, ordnance, ships—lots of things go boom. Best to be as far away as possible.

Explosions or explosive weapons list a number of damage dice (explosives don't cause initial damage, unless you get conked in the head with one) and a blast increment. Anyone within one blast increment



suffers the full damage rolled. Those beyond one increment and within two increments take one less die (the one with the highest roll) in damage. Keep moving out one blast increment at a time, always removing the die with the highest result, until no more dice are left.

If circumstances create a damage step bonus or penalty in an explosive attack, the damage die is affected, not the number of dice rolled.

The truly heroic and truly insane sacrifice themselves for their comrades. Diving on a small explosive, like a grenade, removes the highest die from the damage. That only applies to others. The hero suffers full damage.

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*Crewmembers on Galactica's flight deck are caught in an explosion resulting from poor maintenance on a missile. The GM decides that the damage is 5d6 Wound, and the blast increment is 15 feet. He rolls the dice; they come up 5, 4, 4, 2, 1, for a total of 16 Wound damage. The unlucky bastards within 15 feet of the explosion are most likely killed outright. Those between 15 and 30 feet suffer slightly reduced damage. The GM removes the die that rolled a 5, leaving 11 Wound damage. Those between 30 and 45 feet take only 7 Wound; one of the 4 result dice are dropped.*

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## Restraints

There's a reason prisoners are bound, handcuffed, or otherwise restrained. A target that can't move is an Easy (3) Difficulty to hit. If your character's hands are bound, he suffers a -2 Skill step to attack rolls made with pistols and close combat weapons. He can't use any form of rifle, and is extremely limited in terms of non-combat actions—the Game Master should exercise common sense here.

Escaping from restraints depends entirely on the binding—handcuffs, for example, must almost always be broken, opened with a key, or picked. Your character might wriggle out of a binding with an Agility + Athletics/Escape Artist roll against a Difficulty set by the competence of the person doing the binding (GM discretion, but usually Hard or Formidable).

## INJURY

So you got tagged. That happens in combat. Suck it up and get your butt to the medic. He'll patch you up—as soon as he does, get back to work. Job's still gotta get done, right? No time for goldbricking.

Every character has a certain number of Life Points based upon Vitality, Willpower, and certain Traits. Damage is subtracted from Life

Points. When the total damage taken, regardless of type, is greater than your character's Life Point total, he probably drops unconscious. When total Wound damage exceeds Life Points, he is dying.

## DAMAGE TYPES

Damage comes in two forms: Stun and Wounds. A third type, Basic, combines the two.

### Stun

Stun damage represents light injuries—bruising, scrapes, fatigue, shallow cuts, and so on. Stun damage is recovered quickly, and at worst results in nothing more than unconsciousness.

Stun damage can exceed Life Points. If your character remains conscious, the extra damage simply accumulates and is recovered normally.

**Shock Points:** If an unconscious character receives Stun damage, it is recorded as Shock Points. If Shock Points rise above your character's maximum Life Points, he falls into a coma.

### Wound

Wound damage is much more dangerous than Stun damage. Broken bones, punctured organs, internal bleeding, and anything else that could eventually result in death are considered Wound damage. That kind of hurt causes intense pain; wounded character suffer penalties. When Wound damage gets high enough, the character risks death.

### Basic

Initial damage—imposed when subtracting the Difficulty from an attack roll result—is almost always Basic type. Basic damage is divided between Stun and Wound types, favoring Stun with any excess. For example, if your character takes five points of Basic damage, he suffers three Stun and two Wound.

## EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS & DAMAGE

Injuries are always a problem, but some are a damn sight worse than others. A bullet might put a hole in you, but if it pierces a lung or a kidney you're seriously screwed. A club could leave some nasty bruises, or you could wind up with a concussion. That's how Extraordinary Success works with damage.

If an attack results in an Extraordinary Success, the victim must make an Average (7) Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll. A failed roll imposes the following additional damage (based on the weapon's damage type, if any):

## Stun

The character falls unconscious immediately, taking a number of Shock Points equal to the Stun damage inflicted during the attack. (Even if he doesn't have enough Stun to put him out!)

## Wounds

The character suffers a serious injury. Without successful treatment, the character is bleeding, and suffers an additional d2 Basic damage every ten minutes, and every turn that he performs strenuous activity.

## Basic

The character suffers a debilitating injury, either a broken limb (which is useless until treated), or being rendered blind, deaf, immobile, or under some similar condition. The exact nature of the injury is determined by the GM, depending on the situation.

## FALLOUT

Getting hurt messes you up. Here're the specifics.

**Damage Penalties:** Wound damage causes serious pain. When your character has accumulated half his Life Point total (rounded down) in Wound damage, he suffers a -2 Attribute step to all actions until he recovers or is treated thoroughly enough to stop the pain (at the GM's discretion—some injuries may not be treatable in this way).

**Passing Out:** When your character's damage, regardless of type, is greater than his Life Points, he risks falling unconscious. Roll Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) against an Average (7) Difficulty. Success keeps him on his feet—or at least awake. Every turn thereafter, the character repeats the roll with a cumulative +4 to Difficulty each time.

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*Starbuck, stranded on Caprica, takes a bullet in the gut in a Cylon ambush. She suffers some Wound damage, and that hurts like hell. The immediate problem is the additional Stun damage, which puts her total damage over her Life Points. Starbuck has to make an Average (7) Resistance roll to stay conscious; she rolls a 9 and keeps her feet this turn. She spends a moment assessing the damage—it doesn't look good. The next turn, she must make a Hard (11) Vitality + Vitality roll to stay conscious. This time, she rolls a 10 and blacks out, collapsing to the ground.*

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**Dying:** When your character suffers Wound damage greater than or equal to his Life Points, roll Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) every minute to stay

alive. The first time, the Difficulty is Easy (3), but it increases by 4 each minute. Once the character succeeds, no further rolls need be made, unless he is injured again.

A dying character can be treated with a Hard (11) Alertness + Medical Expertise/First Aid roll. This increases the time between Endurance rolls to one hour. A Hard (11) Alertness + Medical Expertise/Surgery roll, or a Formidable (15) First Aid roll stabilizes the wounded without further rolling.

If Wounds exceed double a character's maximum Life Points, he dies immediately—most likely in an extremely brutal fashion.

## OTHER INJURY

Getting shot, stabbed, broken, or beaten is bad enough, but that's not the only way to get hurt.

**Drugs & Poison:** Alcohol, drugs, and poisons can cause a variety of effects, but they are all fought off with a Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. The exact Difficulty and effects are up to the Game Master. As a guideline, the downside of heavy drinking starts as a Hard (11) Difficulty and gets worse as the character drinks more. A rare poison that causes unconsciousness and, later, death if left untreated might be Formidable (15) to resist.

**Environmental:** This includes all damage caused by (non-instantly fatal) extremes of temperature. Every hour of exposure without adequate protection causes d2 Stun damage. GMs may also impose frostbite, heatstroke, and similar risks if they wish.

**Falling:** Dropping more than a few feet can cause damage. The falling character must roll Agility + Athletics/Gymnastics to avoid damage. The Difficulty is Easy (3) if the fall is 10 feet or less. The Difficulty increases by +4 for each 10 feet beyond that. If the damage is not avoided, the fall is treated as an attack with a roll result equal to its Difficulty. Damage is Basic type.

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*Sharon falls from the top of a ruined building when the roof gives way beneath her feet. She drops 30 feet. She makes a Hard (11) Agility + Athletics/Gymnastics roll. If her player rolls a 7, she takes damage, perhaps a severely sprained ankle. Treating the Difficulty as an attack roll result, Sharon subtracts her "defense" roll (7) and the damage is 4. As Basic damage, Sharon suffers 2 Wound and 2 Stun.*

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Agility penalties from armor almost always apply to falling. Armor Rating almost never protects the character.



**Fire:** Burns are Wound damage caused by heat or fire. They heal at half the normal rate and often leave disfiguring scars.

**Illness:** Character fight off disease through Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) rolls. The Difficulty and effects depend upon the disease. Illness effect could range from a -1 Attribute step to all actions for a minor cold, to almost certain death.

**Radiation:** Exposure to harmful radiation causes damage—first Stun, and then Wound. Like burn damage, radiation injury is difficult to treat. Stun does not begin to recover until the character receives proper medical treatment; Wound damage takes twice as long to heal.

When exposure begins, the GM determines a time increment—1 day for light radiation, 1 minute for heavy radiation, or even one turn in extreme cases. Exposed character suffer d2 Stun damage each increment. When Stun reaches a character's maximum Life Points, he begins to suffer d2 Wound damage each increment. Radiation injury can be prevented with proper precautions, such as inoculations or radiation-proof haz-mat suits. These measures increase the time increment, or the character is rendered immune to the radiation.

**Suffocating:** Humans, skinjobs, and other living creatures need to breathe. When prepared, a character can hold his breath for 30 seconds with an Easy (3) Resistance (Vitality + Vitality) roll. Each 30 seconds beyond that, the Difficulty increases by 4. Once the character fails a roll, he begins to suffer d2 Stun damage every turn. Once the character has passed out, suffocation causes d2 Shock Points and d2 Wound damage every turn.

If unable to prepare by drawing a quick breath, a suffocating character's Resistance roll Difficulty starts at Hard (11).

## CONDITIONS

Being banged up or wounded is a problem, but it doesn't exhaust a character's problems. A variety of conditions make life a bear.

**Bleeding:** Bleeding characters take d2 Basic damage every turn that they perform strenuous activity. Even if they lay still and breath easy, they suffer the same damage every 10 minutes.

**Fatigued:** Characters who stay awake longer than 24 hours suffer penalties from fatigue. Every eight hours they remain awake past 24 causes two Stun damage. As fatigue poisons drain their strength, they also suffer a -1 Attribute step for every 24 extra hours they remain awake. If any Attribute

is reduced to less than d2 this way, the character passes out.

Combat causes exhausting adrenaline rushes and often involves strenuous activity. Your GM may rule that every half hour of battle-readiness, combat, or similar activity counts as being awake for eight hours for fatigue purposes.

Fatigue penalties can be staved off by napping. Sleeping for 10 to 30 minutes removes a number of "awake" hours equal to the result of a Willpower roll. Resting an hour or two removes a number of "awake" hours equal to the result of a Willpower + Discipline/Specialty roll. A character can gain napping benefits once every 12 hours.

A full night's rest (8-12 hours) zeros out "awake" hours and removes all fatigue damage and penalties. Fatigue damage and penalties can be temporarily alleviated by stims or other amphetamines.

**Intoxicated:** Drugged characters are affected in various ways based on the drug in their system. Being drunk imposes 4 Stun that clears up only after sobering up. Drunk characters also suffer a -2 Attribute step.

**Stunned:** Stunned characters cannot perform actions. They defend themselves with innate defense, if at all.

## COMBAT EXAMPLE

*Cylon Centurions have boarded Galactica, and are attempting to make their way to a control station that will let them vent air out of the battlestar. Apollo (played by Joe) and a couple Colonial marines have stationed themselves just outside the access door leading to this station. They have a clear line of sight to a T-intersection. The tromp of approaching Centurions sounds to the right.*

*Unknown to Apollo and his crew, Billy (played by Lisa) got caught up in the attack and is trying to hide in the passage to the left of the T-intersection.*

**Game Master:** The Cylons' heavy footsteps come closer—what do you do?

**Joe:** Speaking for Apollo, "We only have a few rounds of explosive ammunition—we need to wait for them to get closer!" We hide behind the metal boxes and storage crates near the door.

*Joe hands the GM three Plot Points to cover the cover story edit. No one mentioned any crates or boxes by the door previously. The GM accepts the Plot Point bribe with a smile.*

**GM:** Alright, you and the marine take up positions. You hear two, maybe three Centurions approach the corner, but they stop before rounding it. Any actions?

**Joe:** I want them to get closer—we wait to see what they do.

**GM:** You wait. After a few moments, you hear something out of sight to the left. A shuffling noise. Suddenly, the Centurions start firing. They haven't turned the corner yet, and they appear to be targeting something down the passage to the left.

*The Cylons caught sight of Billy but weren't sure where he was until he made a noise. They initiate combat. As the first to make a hostile action, they get one immediate action. Both autofire at the place where they heard the noise. They can't see Billy so the GM rolls their Alertness + Guns/Cylon Automatics. The first one's roll result is 7; the second's is 10.*

*If standing still, Billy would be defenseless; the Cylons would need only a 3 to hit. The GM decides that by pressing himself against the bulkhead, Billy can use his innate defense. Billy's player is lucky, he rolls a 6. Billy is also behind cover. He's making himself as small as possible, so the GM calls it heavy cover. That adds +12 to Billy's defense, raising Billy's rolled 6 to an 18. More than enough to avoid the Cylon bullets.*

*The two ruthless killers spray the area, but the bullets ping harmlessly off the sturdy walls of Galactica.*

**GM:** Okay Billy, you're safe for now! The bullets ping harmlessly off the sturdy walls of *Galactica*. Combat's begun—everyone roll Initiative.

*Apollo, Billy, and the marines roll their Initiative dice; the GM rolls for the Cylons. Consulting the totals, the Cylons go first, then Apollo, then the marines, and then Billy.*

**GM:** The toasters go first, but they autofired. They can't make any other attacks this turn. They move forward slowly and assess the situation. They clear the corner and come into view of Apollo and the marines. Apollo, you're up.

**Joe:** Frak this—they aren't going to be coming any closer until they've killed whoever that is. They're clearly distracted so we might as well take the fight to them. Apollo shouts "Fire!" and stands up to attack.

**GM:** Shouting is a nonaction. I'll call rising up from behind cover the same. Any other movement is going to cost you an action.

**Joe:** That's okay, I'm just going to fire my pistol. I'm going to make a called shot at the closest Cylon's back.

**GM:** Mostly their left sides are to you, but you can see enough back to get a called shot in. Roll your Agility + Guns/Pistol, with a -2 Skill step for the moderate target called shot.

*Joe makes the roll, reducing his Skill die from a d8 to a d4 because of the penalty.*

**Joe:** 10 total. Do I hit?

**GM:** Well, you shouted, but that happens basically at the same time as your shot. The Cylons are unaware—they're Easy targets. You hit! Roll damage.

**Joe:** My total minus their 3 defense means seven initial damage. That's 4 Stun and 3 wound. d6 Wound for the pistol, plus 2d6 for the ammo, gives me (rolling) a 10. That's 4 Stun, 13 Wound total!

**GM:** The Cylon's armor soaks 4 Wounds and it's immune to the Stun damage, but it's still a devastating shot. The one you hit staggers back, stunned for two turns—it failed its Endurance roll against the called shot. You can see sparks and fused wiring through the gaping hole in its back.

*The marines take their turns and manage to finish off the wounded Cylon. The other one is now aware of the incoming attacks and uses its dodge. No bullets hit it. Billy decides to remain behind cover, and the turn is over. The next combat turn begins, with the remaining Cylon going first.*

**GM:** The Centurion barely reacts to the destruction of its fellow—no emotion, no expression. Ignoring Billy, it turns toward the soldiers. It fires three separate shots, staccato beats echoing in the tight corridors.

*The GM rolls the first attack, Agility + Guns/Cylon Automatics, targeting one of the marines. The attack roll result is a 14. The marine tries to dodge, spending an action to roll Agility + Athletics/Dodge. His total is a paltry 5, plus 8 for medium cover—not good enough! After the damage die is rolled, the damage is 3 Stun, 8 Wound. The marine's armor has an Armor Rating 3W. The Wound damage is reduced from 8 to 5, but he's still hurting.*

*The Cylon targets the same marine with its next attack. This second action suffers a -1 Skill step. The roll result is 10. The marine tries another dodge, also taking a -1 Skill step. He rolls a 7, and after the damage die and armor are both factored in, takes 2 Stun and 1 Wound. Unfortunately, this puts his total damage over his Life Points. He makes an Endurance roll to stay conscious, fails to roll a 7 or higher, and collapses to the deck plating.*

*The Cylon's last attack is targeted at Apollo, who is still partially behind cover. The attack suffers a -2 Skill step as the third action of the turn. Despite that, the roll result is a good one, an 11.*

**Joe:** I'm going to save my actions for attack. I'll roll innate defense, using my cover for all its worth.

*Joe rolls his Agility, and gets a 5. Combined with the +4 light cover bonus, his total defense is 9. The GM rolls the weapon damage die.*

**GM:** The machine tags you. Total 1 Stun, 5 Wound.

**Joe:** Oh no you don't. I twist just as the bullet hits—it's only a graze.

*Joe hands 4 Plot Points to the GM, picks up a d8, and rolls a 7.*

**GM:** Your "twist" is timed perfectly. The bullet passes harmlessly through your uniform sleeve. All the damage is negated!

**Joe:** Alright, time to take out the last chrome job. We've got wounded to tend to, Billy to save, and I'm running out of Plot Points.

## RECOVERY

Once the firing stops, it's time to gather the wounded and bury the dead. Take a breath, pull yourself together, and break out the medic kits. Healing takes time, and sometimes Skill and resources. Serious injuries, if left untreated, can prove fatal.

## RECOVERING STUN DAMAGE

Stun damage is the easiest to recover. As long as the character has no Shock Points and no special condition applies, Stun heals at the rate of 2 points per hour of rest, or 1 point per hour of light activity. Combat, high stress levels, or heavy work are not light activity—reading, talking, and eating are.

If your character is unconscious, he wakes when enough Stun damage is recovered that total damage drops below his maximum Life Points.

If unconscious, any Shock Points must be removed first. Shock Points ensure unconsciousness for at least one hour. After that, your character makes an Average (7) Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll once per hour to recover one Shock Point. Once all Shock Points have been removed, your character recovers Stun normally.

**Second Wind:** Aside from Plot Points, Player Characters have an extra edge here. Once per day, they can use second wind to recover some Stun instantly. Choose either Vitality or Willpower, roll the chosen Attribute, and immediately reduce current Stun damage by the result.

## RECOVERING WOUND DAMAGE

Wound damage is much harder to cure. Nothing is going to get better without sufficient rest and nourishment. Light activity is possible but it must be limited in duration.

After two days of rest, your character makes an Endurance (Vitality + Willpower)

### TABLE 4.7—WOUND RECOVERY

Wounds	Recovery Difficulty	Surgical Threshold
1-2	No Check Required	—
3-4	3	15
5-6	7	35
7-8	11	55
9-10	15	75
11-12	19	95
13-14	23	115
15-16	27	135
17-18	31	155
19-20	35	175
21-22	39	195
23-24	43	215

roll. The Difficulty depends on the amount of Wound damage inflicted. The Wound Recovery Table has the details. Major injuries (over six Wounds) are extremely difficult to recover from without medical aid. If the Endurance roll is failed, your character must wait until the next day to try again.

Once the appropriate Endurance roll succeeds, your character begins recovering. From that point on, he cures one point of Wound damage for every two days of rest.

**Getting Worse:** If you botch the Endurance roll to begin recovery, your character gets worse. Every day, he suffers d2 Wound damage, and must make another Endurance roll, based on current Wounds, to halt the deterioration. Once the damage is stopped, another Endurance roll is needed to begin recovery.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

A medic might keep you alive on the battlefield. Once things settle down, a doc gets you patched up the fastest. Listen to what the man says and do what he tells you. You're no good to anyone all shot up.

**First Aid:** When your character has lost all his Life Points to Wound damage or is bleeding, First Aid keeps him alive until the docs arrive. The medic must spend several turns working and make a Hard (11) Alertness + Medical Expertise/First Aid roll. If successful, the time between the patient's Endurance rolls to stay alive increases from one minute to one hour. An Average (7) success stops most bleeding, but that rises to Hard (11) when treating bleeding caused by an Extraordinary Success on an attack. It takes a Formidable (15) First

**TABLE 4.8—FIRST AID**

First Aid Conditions	Skill Steps
Improvised supplies, heavy distractions	−2
Limited supplies, light distractions	−1
Standard supplies, no distractions	—
Superior supplies, ambulance conditions	+1
Cutting-edge supplies, hospital conditions	+2

Aid roll to stabilize the dying completely, preventing further rolls—this can only be attempted once per First Aid situation, though the treatment to extend the time between rolls can be attempted multiple times.

First Aid rolls assume that the treating character is in the field with a standard First Aid kit. Other conditions, or levels of supplies, apply step bonuses or penalties as detailed in the First Aid Table.

**Waking the Unconscious:** Characters who are out, but have no Shock Point can sometimes be roused with a slap, a shout, cold water, or the like. They make an Average (7) Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll to wake up. This can be done once per turn.

If the character succeeds, his Stun damage is reduced to the point that total damage is one less than his maximum Life Points.

**Reviving the Dead:** State-of-the-art medicine in the *Battlestar Galactica* universe is remarkable. Even after your character dies, it is possible to revive him. The medic performs First Aid, but the Difficulty starts at Formidable (15) and increases by four for every minute the character has been clinically dead. If successful, the patient makes an Endurance roll at the same Difficulty that caused her death (see Dying, p. 95). If that works, the character is alive but still dying. He can be treated or stabilized but must still make Endurance rolls to stay alive.

Characters who die from massive damage (double Life Point maximum in Wounds) cannot be revived.

**Stims:** A jacked character is highly alert. For six hours, he experiences a state of heightened awareness—all fatigue penalties are eliminated and a +1 step is granted to Alertness and Agility. After six hours, the character crashes, and returns to whatever fatigued state he started in. He also suffers

an additional −2 Attribute step until he gets at least 12 hours of rest or takes another dose of stims. Each six-hour up cycle imposes cumulative Attribute step penalties. Using stims continuously for more than 12 hours can be extremely dangerous.

Stimulants also temporarily heal Stun damage, but when they wear off (in about six hours), that damage returns. Stims heal d2 to d12 Stun, depending on the dosage.

**Sedatives:** Barbiturates temporarily inflict Stun damage on a character. This last for roughly six hours, and imposes d2 to d12 Stun, depending on the dosage.

**Painkillers:** If there's no time for healing and you gotta push on, painkillers can at least relieve the agony. Field painkillers temporarily relieve any damage penalties imposed by Wounds. These drugs are designed to be applied by anyone; no roll is needed. With other medicines, the user must make an Intelligence + Medical Expertise/Pharmaceuticals (Easy (3) Difficulty for common drugs, Hard (11) Difficulty for complicated or rare compounds) roll to determine how much of what will be useful, rather than fatal or impotent. Most painkillers last 6 hours, but some might last as long as 12.

**Surgery:** Lots of times characters are so badly injured that they cannot begin recovery on their own—they need a bullet taken out, a heart bypass, that sort of thing. In that case, surgery is needed. Surgery is a complex action, usually with time increments of 10 or 30 minutes, using Agility + Medical Expertise/Surgery. The Threshold is based on the number of Wounds the patient has taken—see the Wound Recovery Table. For badly injured and dying patients, the surgery prevents the character from having to make Endurance rolls during the operation.

If the surgery is successful, the patient begins to heal. Particularly bad injuries might require advanced treatment, therapy, or even more surgery to put the character back in fighting shape. Just because your character is healing from the mangling of a limb, that doesn't mean he gains use of that limb back yet.


Botching surgery is a terrible thing. If a surgeon botches twice, the complex action fails and the patient suffers an extra d2 Wound damage. The entire process must be started again.

# CHAPTER FIVE



GEAR

## CYLON-OCCUPIED CAPRICA



I was never supposed to tell you any of this. You were in love with the Chief, everyone knew that, and I didn't want to mess it up for you. We were friends, and we worked so well together, and I didn't want to mess that up either. After everything went so wrong, when the time came, I gave up my seat and watched you fly away. That was supposed to be the end. My final sacrifice.

But it wasn't the end. My life wasn't over and—thank the gods—it also wasn't my last chance to be with you. I still can't believe you disobeyed orders and came back for me. That you left everything else behind and risked it all to save me.

But I believe that the human race is going to make it. Mankind will find a safe home, the fighting will be over, and everyone will get a fresh start. You and I are going to make it, too. We've got someone watching out for us, and so far we've dodged the toasters, found food and medicine. All we need now is a way off this rock.

Shh... Don't get up. You need your sleep. I'll keep a look out.

I love you.



—Lt. Karl "Helo" Agathon

A soldier brings training, motivation, and grit to the fight. That don't mean squat if his kit is obsolete, incomplete, or poorly maintained. For everyone else, survival is possible without equipment, but it is damn sight harder. This chapter runs down certain economic issues, including how to fit your player character with gear, then lists a mess of useful items from the *Battlestar Galactica* setting.

## ECONOMY OF THE TWELVE COLONIES

The former economy of the colonies was complex, integrated, and governed by more regulations and laws than you could shake a stick at. The system kept a population of billions fed and supplied, even on colonies that were far from self-sufficient. Unification introduced more layers of bureaucracy, but broke down trade barriers and inefficiencies.

Certain cities and colonies excelled at a small number of products, and those exports sold well. The value of those specialty goods helped establish the wealth and sophistication of the colony. Most worlds featured a variety of industries as bulk shipping goods between planets remained expensive. A briefing on each colony can be found in **Chapter One: Twelve Tribes of Kobol**.

## ECONOMY OF THE FLEET

No one was thinking about economics during the Cylon assault. After that, basic survival, basic needs, and basic exchange was all that was possible. Under the auspices of the reconstituted government, the military conducted a fleet-wide inventory. Supplies were collected and rationing instituted.

The process was chaotic and slow, the military distracted by constant attacks from the Cylons and the civilian government by trying to establish civil order. People who had, by luck or good planning, stores of valuable items often saw them taken for the good of the fleet. Individual captains retained some rights and responsibilities, but it was made clear that the Colonial Fleet was in command and cargoes were subject to redistribution.

In the face of severe shortages and mandated collections, cubits and other symbolic forms of wealth became nearly worthless. Bartering was the name of the game for anything not deemed crucial to the safety and survival of the fleet. The rich and influential had to deal with a loss of power, unless they had needed skills or knowledge. Didn't matter who you used to be—if you brought no special talent to the fleet, you were “unskilled labor” and put to work.

Once what was around got counted, it was time to take stock of what could be produced. As it turned out, lots of items could be manufactured, grown, or collected in some manner. The fleet had refining capacities for fuel, organic capacities for growing food, and manufacturing facilities for certain goods. Items made after the fall of the colonies aren't as solid or efficient as pre-assault good. Given that, they aren't as highly valued as comparable colonial goods. Still, it's better than doing without.

Some goods, found in the pockets of refugees or the holds of fleeing merchant ships, instantly became irreplaceable. Their sources were back on the Colonies, possibly lost forever. These treasures won't last forever, but they'll remain dear until the survivors no longer look backward, and new colonists replace them who have no memory of, or nostalgia for, the lost colonies. If tradition and respect for ancestors are maintained as they should, that day may never come.

‘Course, scarcity brings out the scroungers, smugglers, and other black marketers. An underground economy is always present to some degree. The tougher the controls on supplies, the more the black market thrives. With the right pressure or motivation, you can always find some government and military official willing to let a little “fall off the back of the truck.” Travel between ships is infrequent at best, allowing several centers of underground commerce to grow. Some are relatively clean, some are real dirty (supplying stuff or services considered criminal even before the fall of the Colonies), all are places you want to keep your eye on your valuables, including your life.

Recently, initiatives have been floated about reintroducing currency-based commerce to the fleet, starting with non-essential goods and services. Naturally, those who were wealthy on the colonies want their former assets recognized. Those who used to be without see a chance to establish more equality in wealth and opportunity. Fleet Command opposes the idea, worried about destabilization and the loss of guardianship over essentials. Countless people, pro and con, have petitioned the President, her advisors, and the Quorum of Twelve directly on this issue.

## EQUIPPING THE TROOPS

In a fleet-based campaign, your characters are given whatever gear they require. They hold any personal items they brought with them, or acquired while with the fleet (hoarding rationed items is done illegally). Doctors receive medical equipment, whatever drugs are available, and a limited command

over military resources in the name of the well-being of the survivors. Military characters have uniforms, perhaps a sidearm, and personalized gear, such as flight helmets or pressure suits.

Most are lucky to have a place to sleep, a regular source of food, and a way to contribute to the health or success of the fleet. They often have little more than the clothes on their back. Most everything they get comes from rationed supplies dispensed by the military. Few nonmilitary personnel have secure storage space for their things—keeping only what you can carry is a natural limit for possessions.

On an occupied colony, scrounging opportunities are much greater. Just got to avoid the Cylon Centurion patrols. Significant military hardware or military vehicles are rare, and all spacecraft and aircraft are likely destroyed or under Cylon control. With those caveats, members of a resistance campaign have whatever they can steal or salvage.

In campaigns with smaller surviving fleets, equipment becomes a matter of what exists and what doesn't. Everything ideally goes to whoever can use it best, but luxury items and food would undoubtedly be hoarded.

## AVAILABILITY

Supplies, gear, and a sample of other valuable items are described in this chapter. Most are difficult to get; some are oversupplied. A cargo carrier or tramp freighter that joined the fleet might have a huge supply of one, two, or even a half a dozen particular items. Gods willing, it's food, fuel, or gear. Likely, it's party favors, ceramic doodads, or tanning lotion.

A well-known list of items are rationed when available; distribution is managed by the government. Food, medicine, manufacturing tools, military gear, weapons, ammunition, communications gear, celestial databases, and other key technologies fall into this category. These items are secured in controlled storage, either aboard *Galactica* or on one of a small number of vessels in the fleet guarded by Colonial marines. All other items are available for barter.

Whether currency has been re-established yet in the fleet or not, each item is given a value in cubits (see accompanying tables). This can be used as a base bartering value, but particular scarcity and personal influences affect actual value greatly.

In the end, your GM decides if a given item is available for requisition or barter. Each item bears a designation to aid in that task. As a rough guide, anything with a common can be found relatively easily. Uncommon items are more difficult to track down but enough effort turns them up. Rare, military,

or military/security objects are rationed, highly restricted, or near non-existent.

## GENERAL GEAR

General purpose items were plentiful before the Cylon invasion. Some ain't so common anymore, but you're bound to find everything here somewhere in the fleet. Getting a hold of it—that's another story. Most folks know whether something they have is worth something, and how much. They'll be looking for that, or more, in trade.

Lots of general gear requires batteries. Luckily, most every ship in the fleet has a store of rechargables. Whenever batteries run out, visit your supply officer or clerk; they take your old ones and give you fresh. Batteries tend to last a long time though, so trips to supply are a pretty rare thing.

**Ambrosia:** Ambrosia is a popular alcoholic beverage. It is green in color, and slightly viscous in consistency.

**Audio recorder:** These tiny digital recorders are about half the size of a deck of Triad cards. They record up to eight hours of audio, and can be networked to a computer for data transfer. The microphones aren't very strong; they only pick up sounds within 10 feet.

**Backpack:** This good-sized civilian backpack is made of tough water-resistant material. It has two main sections (usually one for clothes, the other food and other gear), as well as several exterior pockets and straps for attaching tents, bedrolls, or other equipment. It can carry up to 60 pounds.

**Binoculars, Civilian:** Standard issue civilian binoculars help you see far-away objects, like birds, deer, or Cylons, up close. Unlike military binoculars, these don't usually have a range finder built in. Binoculars have a maximum range of around 300 yards.

**Binoculars, Military:** Military issue binoculars are more powerful (have a longer range) and come equipped with a digital range finder. Line up the target box found in the view with an object. A digital readout in the top left corner of the view tells the distance to that object. Military binoculars have a range of nearly a mile and a half, and have an auto-adjusting focus.

**Book:** Colonial books have die-cut corners. They have become a prized commodity since the Cylon invasion. Regardless of the topic, most people collect any book they can get their hands on. Commander Adama has one of the only surviving sets of books outlining the laws and legal system of the Twelve Colonies.

**Briefcase:** Briefcases come in various sizes and fashions. The two most common are a



hard leather-covered one, and one made of soft leather. The hard case has a handle and can be locked, though the lock is usually pretty weak. The soft case has a handle and a shoulder strap. Both come in a variety of colors, though the military standard is black or brown. A briefcase case can hold between five and ten pounds of items.

**Camera:** Digital cameras hold around 300 pictures that can be easily downloaded to a computer or other database. Occasionally someone scrounges up an old film camera. One of the shops on *Galactica* still has a dark room, though it probably hasn't been used since the First Cylon War.

**Chronometer:** A chronometer is a digital timekeeping device commonly worn around the wrist. Most chronometers have alarm and stopwatch features.

**Cigar:** Cigars are a favorite among Viper and Raptor pilots, many of whom love nothing more than to relax with an ambrosia and a cigar after a particularly stressful mission. As time wears on, cigars are becoming a more rare and precious commodity. Cigars are made from rolled, dry fumarella leaves.

**Cigarette:** Cigarettes are also becoming rare as time passes. Cigarettes are also made from fumarella leaves. The dried leaf is shredded and chopped before being rolled in a thin tissue-like paper.

**Climbing Gear:** The gear includes ropes, pulleys, helmet and pads, gloves, spikes, chocks, ascenders, pitons, a handax, and a harness. Most of this stuff is useless these days, though the cruise ship *Cloud 9* is supposed to have a great climbing wall.

**Dice:** Dice are variously shaped pieces of plastic or wood that have numbers etched or carved into each flat surface. They are rolled to randomly generate numbers. Dice are used in a variety of different games of chance or in gambling. Six-sided, cubed shaped dice are the most common, but four-, eight-, ten-, and twelve-sided dice can also be found.

**Fire Extinguisher:** These portable bottles contain the liquid or foam necessary to put out just about any kind of fire. Common throughout the fleet, a fire aboard a ship can spell disaster if not put out in a hurry. It's not unusual to find a fire extinguisher next to every hatch (doorway) aboard a ship.

**First Aid Kit:** First aid kits are fairly common throughout the fleet. They can be used to treat minor cuts, scrapes, and burns. Any first aid attempt without a kit suffers a -2 Skill step. Anything beyond minor injuries requires a military med kit or a doctor.

**Flashlight:** A long, thin cylinder with a light at one end, and a button to turn it on and off.

Aboard military vessels such as the *Galactica*, every duty station has a working flashlight.

**FET (Foldable Entrenching Tool):** The FET is basically a portable shovel. Commonly carried by Colonial marines on planet-side missions, the FET can be used in dozens of ways, then stowed away in a relatively small package.

**Glowstick:** This plastic tube holds one chemical in an outer tube, and a small glass vial filled with another chemical. Bending the glowstick breaks the glass vial and mixes the two chemicals, producing light.

**Handcuffs, Steel:** Standard metal, circular handcuffs that can be opened and closed with a key. Military and civilian police forces use the same model.

**Handcuffs, Zip-tie:** These one-time use plastic handcuffs resemble small but thick zip-ties. If put on correctly, they cannot be wormed out of, regardless of how small a person's hands may be.

**Hand Jack:** This rolling device is used to move extremely heavy objects, as long as they are solid, or on a pallet of some kind, and the hand jack can get underneath it. A hand jack can lift up to 500 pounds.

**MRE (Meal, Ready-to-Eat):** They ain't tasty but they will keep you alive. Marines and Fleet personnel are supplied with MREs during planet-side operations, or anytime an organized food facility is not readily available. It contains an entrée, a side dish, dessert, crackers or bread, peanut butter or a vegetable spread, beverage powder, coffee, disposable utensils, chewing gum, toilet paper, and a non-flammable food heater, all packaged tightly in a sealed plastic bag. Grunts call them "Meal, Rejected by the Enemy," "Meal, Rarely Edible," "Meal, Rejected by Everyone," or even "Three Lies for the Price of One—it's not a Meal, it's not Ready, and you can't Eat it."

**Musical Instrument:** Few musical instruments are left—just what people brought with them on their various ships, or the instruments that belong to the couple of bands that survived the invasion. That said, the right instrument can be extremely valuable to the right person these days.

**Multipurpose Tool:** A soldier's best friend, these all-in-one tools have pliers, two different kinds of screwdrivers, a couple of knife blades, a file, a can opener, a bottle opener, a short ruler, tweezers, and wire cutters. And all that folds down into handle just bigger than two fingers. Don't usually find these in tool kits, however. Most mechanics and technicians prefer to have many tools with a single use than one tool with many uses.

**TABLE 5.1—GENERAL GEAR**

Item	Cost (pre-invasion)	Availability	Notes
Ambrosia (bottle)	30 cubits	Common	Popular alcoholic beverage
Audio Recorder	15 cubits	Common	8 hours recording time
Backpack	85 cubits	Common	Holds 60 pounds
Binoculars, Civilian	50 cubits	Uncommon	300 yard range
Binoculars, Military	2,000 cubits	Military	1 1/2 mile range
Book	Varies	Uncommon	
Briefcase	40 cubits	Common	Holds 5 to 10 pounds
Camera	200 cubits	Common	300 picture capacity
Chronometer	50 cubits	Common	Digital timekeeping
Cigar	10 cubits	Uncommon	
Cigarette	5 cubits for 20	Uncommon	
Climbing Gear	350 cubits	Uncommon	Aids in climbing
Dice	6 cubits for 5	Common	Used in games of chance or gambling
Fire Extinguisher	30–180 cubits	Common	Firefighting aid
First Aid Kit	20 cubits	Common	Treats minor wounds
Flashlight	5 cubits	Common	For emergency use
FET	20 cubits	Uncommon	Small, portable shovel
Glowstick	1 cubit	Common	Lights 10-foot radius
Handcuffs, Steel	150 cubits	Military/Security	For detaining criminals
Handcuffs, Zip-tie	10 cubits	Military/Security	For detaining criminals
Hand Jack	350 cubits	Common	Can lift and move up to 500 pounds
MRE	10 cubits per meal	Military	Complete meal in a bag
Musical Instrument	50 – 200 cubits	Rare	Hard to find after the invasion
Multipurpose Tool	95 cubits	Common	Handy all-in-one tool
Night-vision Goggles	3,000 cubits	Military	See in the dark
Plasma Torch	150 cubits	Uncommon	Mechanical and industrial tool
Portable Video Camera	250 cubits	Uncommon	2 hours of recording
Pyramid Ball	15 cubits	Uncommon	Regulation Size
Rope	20–100 cubits	Common	10-, 20-, or 50-foot length
Shelter Half	20 cubits	Uncommon	Basic shelter from the elements
Sleeping Bag	30 cubits	Common	Warmth and comfort
Tent	50 cubits	Uncommon	Mobile shelter
Tool Kit, Basic	100 cubits	Uncommon	Standard tool kit
Tool Kit, Electrical	250 cubits	Rare	Standard tool kit plus electrical tools
Tool Kit, Mechanical	300 cubits	Rare	Standard tool kit plus mechanical tools
Triad Cards	5 cubits	Common	Hexagonal playing cards

**Night-vision Goggles:** These devices use a combination of passive light amplification and active IR projection technologies to produce a low-light or no-light picture that is almost as clear as a bright, sunny day. In most situations, the view from night-vision goggles is tinted green because the human eye is most sensitive to that color and can discern more shades in green.

**Plasma Torch:** Used in a variety of mechanical and industrial applications, a plasma torch is capable of welding or cutting through some metal, depending on the torch's setting.

**Portable Video Camera:** A digital video camera that can be held in one hand, it holds up to two hours of video before it must be erased or downloaded elsewhere. A few are floating around military ships, but most of what's left is with the civilians in the fleet.

**Pyramid Ball:** A six-inch ball used in the court-based game Pyramid. True or high quality balls are rare, but lots of folks have jury-rigged something similar that can be used to play pick-up games.

**Rope:** A standard nylon rope usually found in 10-, 20-, or 50-foot coils.

**Shelter Half:** A tent with no walls, the shelter half provides cover from the elements, but does nothing to keep out the cold, wind, or morning dew.

**Sleeping Bag:** This lightweight sleeping bag can roll up into a compact cylinder for easy storage. It keeps a person warm, even in severe weather. If need be, it can also double as a stretcher.

**Tent:** A standard two-person tent made out of a lightweight, waterproof nylon. It can be folded up into a small rectangle for easy storage.

**Tool Kit, Basic:** Most households had a basic tool kit before the Cylon assault. It holds two sets of different size screwdrivers (Phillips and flathead), a claw hammer, a set of small wrenches, a larger adjustable wrench, a pair of needle nose pliers, a ratchet set, and a tape measure. It's rare to find an intact basic tool kit these days.

**Tool Kit, Electrical:** Whether running wires through a ship or working on a circuit board, an electrical tool kit has the tools to get the job done. A typical kit contains the tools normally found in a basic tool kit, plus electrical tape, friction tape, combination pliers, needle nose pliers, a voltmeter, a multimeter, a roto-split, wire strippers, a soldering gun, solder, tweezers, and safety goggles.

**Tool kit, Mechanical:** This tool kit is intended for work on bigger machines, such as a car engine, a Viper, or ship's main engine. It has many of the same tools as the other types of tool kits,

but it also includes cable cutters, a directional lamp, a number of specialty wrenches, and other various specialized tools.

**Triad Cards:** Triad is a card game in which two or more people bet money or objects that their collection of cards has the highest value. The cards are hexagonal, all of which have the same image on the backs, and symbols and colors denoting what the card is on the front. The highest winning hand in Triad is Full Colors. Triad cards can also be used to play a cut-throat game called Dead Man's Chest.

## CLOTHES

On any military ship worth it's name, pretty much everyone wears a uniform. Only visiting dignitaries or specialized civilians pressed into auxiliary military service might wear regular clothes. In the fleet though, most ships and their personnel are civilians. Finding someone in uniform is much more rare, unless the ship captain requires some standard gear for the operational personnel.

Whatever folks wore when the Cylons attacked is pretty much what they have now. The fleet contains no textile factories, and damn few sewing machines. *Galactica's* supply officer hoards a small number of uniforms, but not enough to clothe all forty-seven some odd thousand people who still survive. Best be careful with your clothes, washing and mending them carefully. Until the fleet finds a place to settle down, that's all there is.

## MILITARY UNIFORMS

**Fleet Enlisted Uniform:** Enlisted personnel wear a double-breasted green uniform, except on the flight deck. Flight deck crews wear color-coded jump suits that indicate their occupational specialty. For example, Chief Tyrol and other flight engineer mechanics wear an orange jumpsuit. These jumpsuits have pockets and pouches useful for holding tools, repair manuals, and anything else needed to do their job. A round command identifier patch is worn on the left shoulder of both the double-breasted uniform and the jumpsuit.

**Fleet Pilot Flight Suit:** Flight suits are worn by those in flight status, usually pilots and ECOs. Occasionally a specialist of some kind is assigned to a Raptor and given a flight suit to wear. The Fleet flight suit is a life-support garment designed for hostile environments up to and including total vacuum and absolute zero temperature. Flight suits have a metal collar that attaches to a flight helmet and maintains an airtight seal. When not flying, pilots often wear their suit with the top half rolled down and hanging at their

waist, revealing the T-shirt, tank top, or other light garment worn underneath.

Pilots and ECOs wear several patches on their flight suits. On the left shoulder is a round command identifier patch and on the right a patch for what craft they are assigned to, usually a Viper or a Raptor. Most pilots wear a squadron patch, worn on the left breast under the outer layer of the suit. Flight suits usually have a chronometer in the cuff of the left sleeve.

**Fleet Officer Working Blues Uniform:** A single-breasted dark blue, called Fleet Blue, duty uniform is the daily working uniform worn by officers. Lighting sometimes makes the uniform appear black. The left side of the uniform jacket folds over the right and is secured by column of buttons. Working blues have large patches on the shoulders. These are a darker shade than the rest of the uniform. A round command identifier patch with the Colonial seal and the wearer's duty station name (i.e., *Battlestar Galactica*) together

on inner edge. Admirals have two different kinds of piping depending on their seniority. A junior admiral has a red line on the outer edge, a gold line in the middle, and a silvery-white line on the inner edge. A senior admiral has just a single line of gold piping.

If the officer is a pilot, his qualification wings are worn over the breast pocket on the left. Junior Wings have two chevrons on a golden diamond and small swept-back wings to each side. Senior Wings have larger outstretched wings and an additional silver lining behind the diamond. The latter are awarded based on rank and experience in flying small craft.

**Fleet Officer Dress Gray Uniform:** The officers' dress uniform, known as dress grays, is modeled after the working blue uniform with a few key differences. It is gray, lacks a pocket or shoulder patches, features a sash hanging over the right shoulder to which flight wings and other decorations are affixed, and

**TABLE 5.2—CLOTHES**

Item	Cost (pre-invasion)	Availability	Notes
Casual Clothes	10 - 150 cubits	Common	
Dress Clothes	50 - 400 cubits	Uncommon	
Fleet Enlisted Uniform	70 cubits	Military	Working uniform
Fleet Enlisted Jumpsuit	50 cubits	Military	Working uniform
Fleet Officer Working Blues	70 cubits	Military	Working uniform
Fleet Officer Dress Grays	250 cubits	Military	Dress uniform
Fleet Pilot Flight Suit	1000 cubits	Military	Self-contained flight suit
Ghillie Suit	150 cubits	Military	+3 steps to Covert when in woodlands
ID "Dog" Tags	15 cubits	Military	Identification tags
Marine Khaki Uniform	70 cubits	Military	Marine working uniform
Marine Combat BDUs	70 cubits	Military	Marine combat uniform
Military Undershirt	5 cubits	Military	

with its Battlestar Group (i.e., BSG 75) is worn on the left shoulder. Two rank insignia pins are worn on the jacket collar. Medals, ribbons, and awards are worn on the left breast of the working blue uniform, particularly by high-level command and flag officers.

Working blue uniforms have a colored piping around the edges, which, along with the rank insignia pins, denote the rank of the wearer. The piping for ensign to major is a single silvery-white line. A colonel's piping is a red line on outer edge and a silvery-white line on inner edge. A commander's piping is similar, a red line on outer edge but a gold line

is secured by a single clasp rather than a column of buttons. Epaulettes are worn at the left shoulder. Senior officers' uniforms also feature a dark gray or bronze bar around the neck. While the working blue uniform is a tunic that tucks in at the belt, the dress uniform is more like a jacket that extends below the hips and features an external belt made of the same material as the sash. White gloves are also part of the dress gray uniform.

**Ghillie Suit:** This camouflage poncho worn by marines is to help them blend in to their surroundings in a woodland setting. The

poncho is covered in loose strips of cloth and twine made to look like leaves and twigs, allowing the wearer to blend into the brush with relative ease. These outfits grant a +3 Skill step to rolls to hide in woodland environments.

**ID “Dog” Tags:** All members of the Colonial military wear hexagonal ID tags that list their full name, identification number, blood type, and homeworld. Typically worn under the uniform T-shirts, some choose to wear them outside. They are never worn outside a uniform top or blouse.

**Marine Corp Uniform:** Colonial marines, when not in combat gear, wear a khaki uniform. The shirt is simple with a row of buttons down the middle, and a down-turned collar on which rank insignia pins are worn. It has two breast pockets on the front secured by clasps. A command identifier patch is worn on the left shoulder. Those assigned to security aboard a battlestar also wear a black armband with “Security” spelled out in white letters on their right arm.

In battle gear, the Marine uniform is imposing. Those assigned to ship duty on a Fleet vessel wear black BDUs (uniform top, pants, T-shirt, and boots) and are outfitted with a load-bearing vest, helmet, communications gear, knee and elbow pads, gloves, and goggles. They wear body armor and carry weapons. When on a mission planet-side, the colors of the BDUs are determined by the mission terrain. Colored BDUs have three related tones distributed in a digital pattern over the uniform. Desert BDUs are khaki, light brown, and dark brown. Woodland BDUs are green, brown, and black. Urban BDUs are dark grey, light grey, and black. Arctic BDUs are solid white. A command identifier patch is worn on the left shoulder, and usually matches the color of the uniform (i.e., khaki patch for a khaki uniform or desert BDUs).

**Military Undershirt:** A grey sleeveless T-shirt covered by a brown tank top is the standard issue undershirt worn by all members of the Colonial military.

## CIVILIAN CLOTHES

**Dress Clothes:** For civilian men, a formal outfit includes slacks, dress pants, plain colored button-up shirts, ties, sport coats, blazers, suits, and tuxedos. For women, these clothes include tailored dresses, business suits, modest skirts, fitted blouses, and ball gowns.

**Casual Clothes:** These every-day clothes include T-shirts, jeans, casual slacks, sweaters, and sweatshirts.

## WEAPONS & ARMOR

Without weapons, it’d be a sorry Colonial Fleet and Marine Corps. Not much use in defense and not even worth mentioning on attack. Until the Cylons invaded, the different Colonial worlds produced a ridiculous number of different weapons and weapon systems. Sure, most were variations on the simple gun or rifle, but each had its own style and spin. Scorpia, Picon, and Caprica were best know for work in weapons R&D and manufacturing, particularly in advanced or heavy weapons.

Now that the colonies are gone, what’s among them is all that’s left. *Galactica* has a decent stock of weapons, and better yet, most are standardized. It’s also got ammo production facilities. As long as raw materials are available, the Fleet’s got a nearly endless supply of all but the heaviest types of ammo.

## MELEE WEAPONS

**Baton:** A metal or wooden blunt weapon, used as a nonlethal weapon by security personnel. Easy to improvise, most sticks and pipes operate in the same fashion.

**Baton, Shock:** With the touch of a button, an electrical capacitor causes the next attack to deal an additional d4 + d4 Stun Damage if it successfully hits (if the attack misses, the charge is wasted). 10 charges expend the battery. Operates as a normal baton when the battery is dead or a charge is not used.

TABLE 5.3—MELEE WEAPONS

Weapon	Damage	Cost	Availability
Baton	d4 B	20 Cubits	Common
Baton, Shock	d4 B, Special	80 Cubits	Military/Security
Cestus	Special	15 Cubits	Rare
Knife	d2 W	5-40 Cubits	Common
Sword	d6 W	100-200 Cubits	Rare

**Cestus:** Brass knuckles, spiked gloves, or a metal bar held in the fist all add a little extra power to a punch. Rather than adding a damage die, these weapons cause the user’s “unarmed” punching attacks to deal Basic damage, rather than Stun. Such items are not usually designed or crafted as weapons; they are home-made by thugs and the occasional shady supplier.

**Knife:** Knives ranges from small, dull kitchen appliances to larger combat versions.

**Sword:** Swords are extremely rare even for decorative purposes. Those that can be found come in a variety of designs, from the elaborately crafted cavalry saber to the crudely efficient butcher's cleaver.

## HANDGUNS

Semi-automatic pistols fire one bullet per trigger-pull. They are not capable of burst, autofire, or spray.

**Aquarian PM:** This sidearm was used by the Aquarian military and police forces prior to the formation of the Colonial government. Since then, it has largely fallen out of use, and has become a collector's piece. It is semi-automatic and uses 9 mm ammunition in an eight-round clip.

**CAL Mark 23:** The Caprica Arms Laboratory developed the Mark 23 for use by Colonial Marine Special Forces units. This semi-automatic uses .45 ammunition and comes equipped with a fire suppressor (silencer). It's laser aiming module (LAM) projects a tell-tale red dot on a target and grants a +1 Skill step when aiming; the silencer makes it Hard (11) to hear the shot from more than ten yards away, and Formidable (15) to identify the location or direction of the shooter.

**CAL P9:** The Caprica Arms Laboratory manufactured this handgun for a short time before the Cylon invasion. It is semi-automatic but has only a limited nine-round clip.

**Dragon Mark XIX:** This large-caliber, gas-operated semi-automatic pistol was developed by Jewel Research and manufactured by Scorpia Military Industries (SMI). It uses .357 ammunition and holds nine rounds in a clip. This beast is not for the weak-armed—you suffer a Skill step penalty to all attacks equal to the number of steps your Strength is less than d10.

**Picon Five-sevenN:** The Picon Five-sevenN is the standard issue sidearm for the Colonial military, developed and manufactured by Picon Firearms. Not surprisingly, it uses 5.7 x 28 mm ammunition. It is semi-automatic and uses clips of 10, 20, or 30 rounds, which fit into the handle of the gun. The 30-round clip



Picon Five-sevenN

extends almost 2 inches below the butt of the pistol.

The Five-sevenN has a second barrel mounted beneath the main barrel for firing explosive rounds. Each explosive round must be loaded individually.

**Stallion:** The small, four-barreled pistol of compact design was originally designed by Picon Firearms. The semi-automatic has never been a military issue sidearm. Each barrel holds one .357 round.

**Viktor CPI:** Viktor, a small firearms manufacturer from Virgon, manufactured the CPI. The only gun Viktor ever produced came to be widely use throughout the Colonies. Designed to be a concealed-carry weapon, it is semi-automatic. A single clip holds 12 rounds of 9 mm ammunition.

**VZ 52:** This military and police issue pistol saw wide use on Virgon prior to the formation of the Colonial government. Two brothers designed the gun, and it was manufactured by the Virgon government. It is semi-automatic with an eight-round clip using 7.62 x 25 mm ammunition.

## SUBMACHINE GUNS

All submachine guns can fire semi-automatic, burst, autofire, and spray.

**CAL USG:** The CAL Universal Submachine Gun saw wide use in the Marine Corp before the relatively recent introduction of the P90. While not as common as it once was, the USG remains a favorite among older Marines due to its reliability. A single standard clip holds 25 rounds; a bull clip, which is an inch wider except for where the clip feeds into the gun, holds 40 rounds. The USG uses .45 ammunition.

**Leo M12:** The Leo Model 12 was the official weapon of the Leonis military prior to the formation of the Colonial government, and was still in wide use up to the Cylon invasion, though law enforcement agencies used it more than the military. Varying clips of 20, 30, or 40 rounds used 9 mm ammunition. All are freely exchangeable with the Leo Storm carbine.



Leo M12

**Picon P90:** This compact submachine gun developed by Picon Firearms is used by the Colonial Marine Corps as the primary weapon for urban and close-quarters fighting. The P90 has a

short barrel and bullpup configuration. This places the 50-round, translucent magazine on the top of the gun parallel to the barrel. The gun has a low recoil, allowing for accurate burst fire. The P90 uses 5.7 x 28 mm rounds.

## SHOTGUNS

**Mossova 500:** This pump-action shotgun was used primarily as a hunting weapon. Still, marines have been known to use the Mossova in certain situations, and all are trained in its use. Security forces aboard many civilian ships use the Mossova. It is a 12-gauge shotgun, holding 5 shells in the magazine and one in the firing chamber.

**Striker:** This semi-automatic shotgun is commonly used by assault troops and riot control forces. Its circular magazine holds a dozen 12-gauge shells. The regular ammunition can be replaced with explosive shells that act much like grenades when fired.

**Zeus Model 37:** This pump-action shotgun was the oldest still produced in the colonies. Its spare, clean design and reliability won it common use among the military, law enforcement, and civilians alike. Its 12-gauge shells load and eject from the bottom; four shells are held in the magazine and one in the chamber.

## RIFLES AND CARBINES

**GMAR:** The Gemenon Military Assault Rifle is a recent product, an attempt by the Gemenon-based Tacatta Arms Factory to break into the colonies-wide arms industry. The Colonial Marine Corps purchased several thousand GMARs about a year before the Cylon invasion, so they are relatively common among the fleet. The gun has a bullpup configuration with the pistol grip forward of the magazine. It uses a 5.56 x 45 mm round in 25- and 30- round clips.

**Leo Storm Carbine:** This carbine was the primary combat rifle of the Leonis military up to the formation of the Colonial government. Even afterward, it saw extensive use. Designed to use clips and ammunition freely interchangeable with the Leo M12 submachine gun, it uses 9 mm rounds. Clip sizes vary, but most users opt for the 15- and 20-round varieties. The Storm is semi-automatic, and usually comes equipped with a RedDot Aiming sight (+1 Skill step when aiming).



**Milirem 700:** The Milirem 700 is an extremely popular hunting rifle; the military version is the standard Colonial Marine Corps sniper rifle. Originally manufactured on Aereon before the formation of the Colonial government, the military version was produced primarily on Picon prior to the Cylon invasion. The 700 is a bolt-action rifle with a standard five-round magazine of 7.62 x 51 mm ammunition. It comes equipped with a 10x telescopic sight with a Mil Dot reticle (+1 Skill step when aiming; cannot be used during autofire).



**Milirem 4700:** This is a popular civilian hunting rifle has never seen use by military or law enforcement personnel. The 4700 is a rotating bolt-action rifle that uses a four-round magazine of 30-06 ammunition. It has an 4x telescopic sight.

**SMI 80:** The Scorpia Military Industries 80 is one of the standard combat rifles used by the Colonial Fleet and Marine Corps. It has a bullpup design, with the pistol grip forward of the magazine and the firing mechanism in the buttstock. This allows for a long, accurate, free-floating barrel in a rifle of compact design. It fires a 5.56 x 45 mm round from a clip that can hold up to 30 rounds. Most SMI 80s are equipped with a 4x optical sight with a powered glowing pointer for limited night sight (cannot be used during autofire).

## HEAVY WEAPONS

**CAL/SMI 92 Flying Needle:** The Caprica Arms Laboratory and Scorpia Military Industries jointly developed the Flying Needle as a man-portable surface-to-air missile system. The original design was used against the Cylons in the First Cylon War, but has since been updated. It was used successfully a few times during the Cylon invasion against raiders, but were quickly overwhelmed. The Flying Needle consists of a fiberglass launch tube, a small sighting computer, and a 10x auto adjustable sight that is connected to the sighting computer. The user tracks the target visually until the sighting computer is able to lock on to the target's heat signature, which it then downloads into the missile in the launch tube. Once this is done, the pistol grip handle emits a subtle but noticeable vibration signaling lock. The user pulls the trigger and sends the missile after the target.

**TABLE 5.4—RANGED WEAPONS**

Weapon	Damage	Range Increment	Cost	Availability
Aquarian PM	d6 W	12 yards	600 cubits	Rare
CAL Mark 23	d6 W	15 yards	700 cubits	Military
CAL P9	d6 W	15 yards	350 cubits	Rare
Dragon Mark XIX	d8 W	20 yards	1,500 cubits	Rare
Picon Five-seveN	d6 W	12 yards	500 cubits	Military
Stallion	d4 W	6 yards	200 cubits	Rare
Viktor CP1	d6 W	10 yards	400 cubits	Rare
VZ 52	d6 W	12 yards	300 cubits	Rare
<b>Submachine Guns</b>				
CAL USG	d6 W	40 yards	1,000 cubits	Military
Leo M12	d6 W	65 yards	950 cubits	Military
Picon P90	d6 W	55 yards	1,200 cubits	Military
<b>Shotguns</b>				
Mossova 500	d10 W	8 yards	350 cubits	Rare
Striker	d10 W	8 yards regular 16 yards explosive	750 cubits	Military
Zeus Model 37	d10 W	8 yards	150 cubits	Rare
<b>Rifles and Carbines</b>				
GMAR	d8 W	125 yards	3,350 cubits	Military
Leo Storm carbine	d8 W	130 yards	1,700 cubits	Military
Milirem 700	d8 W	400 yards	4,500 cubits	Military
Milirem 4700	d8 W	125 yards 500 yards w/ sight	620 cubits	Rare
SMI 80	d8 W	150 yards 600 yards w/ sight	2,100 cubits	Military
<b>Heavy Weapons</b>				
CAL/SMI 92 Flying Needle	By Ammo	1 mile	23,000 cubits	Military
SMAW	By Ammo	1/8 mile	20,000 cubits	Military
<b>Grenades and Explosives</b>				
Grenade, Concussion	4d6 B	8 feet	500 cubits	Military
Grenade, Frag	5d6 W	35 or 15 feet	600 cubits	Military
Grenade, Incendiary	4d10 W	3 feet	1,000 cubits	Military
Grenade, Riot	1d4 S	25 feet	350 cubits	Military
Grenade, Smoke	d4 S	20 feet	200 cubits	Military
Grenade, Stun	2d6 S	20 feet	200 cubits	Military
G-4	3d12 W	10 feet	600 cubits	Military
<b>Ammunition</b>				
Standard	Varies		15 cubits / 30 rounds	Rare
Armor Piercing	Varies; ignores 3 W of armor		10 cubits per round	Military
Explosive	Add 2d6 W to weapon damage		50 cubits per round	Military
HEDP rocket	1d6 B Vehicle		See SMAW	Military
HEAA rocket	1d10 W Vehicle		See SMAW	Military
Needle RMP missile	1d8 B Vehicle		See CAL/SMI 92	Military



**SMAW:** The Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon was originally designed by Scorpia Military Industries during the First Cylon War to combat Centurions and armor vehicles. The SMAW consists of a fiberglass launch tube, a spotting rifle (capable of firing five 9 mm tracer rounds before reloading), open battle sights, and a mount for optical or night sights (when present, night sight reduces darkness penalty to -2 Skill step). It is capable of firing HEDP and HEAA rockets.

## GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Grenades are small hand-held bombs meant to be thrown or fired from launchers. The Fleet does not have much use for them; they are a ground combat weapon extensively employed by the Colonial Marines.

**Grenade, Concussion:** This antipersonnel grenade harms those in its blast radius with the sheer concussive power of its explosion.

**Grenade, Fragmentation:** Frag grenades are antipersonnel devices designed to fill a blast radius with bits of flying shrapnel. Some older ones have a blast radius of about 160 feet, larger than the distance it can be thrown. Most newer models, however, have a smaller blast radius of about 70 feet. It's a good idea to find cover before using one.

**Grenade, Incendiary:** These explosives produce a heat so intense it can melt metal. The chemical reaction does not require oxygen, which means incendiary grenades work under water or in a vacuum. These are particularly ugly weapons, producing some of the worst and most painful injuries imaginable.

**Grenade, Riot Control (Gas):** Gas grenades are generally used to control or disperse large groups, or to force enemies out of whatever cover they may be using. The gas causes extreme irritation to the skin, eyes, nose, and throat, and can incapacitate someone if they are exposed long enough.

The cloud of gas remains effective for five minutes. When entering or initially exposed to the gas, characters suffer 1d4 Stun damage. For every 10 turns (30 seconds) they remain in the gas, they suffer an additional 1d4 Stun damage.

**Grenade, Smoke:** These grenades are generally used as ground signaling or marking



devices or as a means of screening troop movement (treat as thick smoke, see p. 91). They can be offensive; the smoke produced by one of these grenades can be somewhat irritating to the skin, eyes, nose, and lungs. (See "Visibility" in Chapter Four, Attacking.)

**Grenade, Stun (Flashbang):** Stun grenades produce an intense "flash" of light and extremely loud "bang." They temporarily stun an opponent for anywhere from five seconds up to a minute. Stun grenades are used to incapacitate an enemy long enough for them to be captured or fully incapacitated.

**Grade 4:** G-4 is a military grade plastic explosive. It is a mixture of explosive compound, plasticizer, plastic binder, and a marker chemical so it can be detected and identified. G-4 can be molded into any desired shape, making it easy to insert into cracks or gaps in a target. It can also be placed into an empty shape-charged case. G-4 is known for its durability and reliability. Detonators or blasting caps are needed to trigger it. It can be shot, hit, cut, or even thrown into a fire without detonating. Stories circulate that soldiers have lit small chunks of slow-burning G-4 on fire to heat field rations. Heat and pressure together may cause G-4 to explode; it pays to be careful around any explosive. If lit on fire, don't stomp on it to put it out.

## AMMUNITION

Standard bullets come in a variety of sizes. They are all highly effective at stopping a human or a skinjob. They are largely ineffective against a Centurion. Standard is not the only flavor ammo comes in, however.

**Armor-Piercing Round:** This ammunition is designed to pass more easily through armor. This is the round to fire at a Centurion.

**Explosive Round:** Almost like a tiny grenade, this round creates a small explosion on impact. These rounds cannot be fired from a conventional weapons, but the pistols used by the Colonial military all have a second barrel dedicated to just that purpose. Explosive rounds cannot be manufactured on *Galactica*, so they are used sparingly. They come in one size.

**HEAA Rocket:** High Explosive Anti-Armor rockets are most effective against armored vehicles. It focuses its explosive force on a small area. This allows for maximum damage against armored foes. A HEAA rocket can penetrate up to 22 inches of steel.

**HEDP Rocket:** The High Explosive, Dual Purpose rocket is most effective against masonry, bunkers, concrete walls, and light armor. With a specially designed "crush switch" in the nose, a HEDP rocket is

capable of penetrating eight inches of concrete, twelve inches of brick, or seven feet of wood-reinforced sandbags before exploding.

**Needle RMP Missile:** The missile used in the CAL-SMI 92 Flying Needle detects both infrared and ultraviolet radiation to better distinguish between its target and any countermeasures used against it. It features a set of four processors that process tracking information fed to it by the sighting computer. The Needle RMP missile is equipped with an impact detonator and self-destruct timer (set by operator when launched).

## ARMOR

Heavier armor hinders the combatant. The Armor Table indicates the step penalties to Attributes imposed by armor.

**Body Armor:** Despite its expansive name, body armor is simply a vest that covers the torso. Made of Kevlar and ceramic plates, it greatly reduces the damage inflicted by most weapons, but is designed primarily for stopping bullets.

Body armor absorbs one Wound point from any attack to the torso. Against normal bullets, it converts all Wound damage to Stun damage (or ShockPoints if the victim suffers too much Stun). This effect is lessened by armor piercing rounds, and doesn't apply to explosive ammunition.

**Combat Helmet:** This basic black military-issue Kevlar composite helmet is covered with a cloth to match the wearer's uniform. Hits to a helmeted head do not add extra damage, except on an Extraordinary Success.

**Combat Suit:** Body armor material distributed evenly over the body offers much better protection. The main effects of the suit still apply only to



TABLE 5.5—ARMOR

Item	Armor Rating	Agility/Alertness Step Penalty	Cost	Availability
Body Armor	1 W	—	750 cubits	Rare
Combat Helmet	4 W	—1 Ale	250 cubits	Rare
Combat Suit	3 W	—1 Agi/—1 Ale	1,500 cubits	Military

bullets, but the Armor Rating reduces damage from all attacks (the suit includes a combat helmet with face plate). Unfortunately, the helmet impairs hearing and vision, and is a bit bulky.

## COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

In the *Battlestar Galactica* universe, computers are the ultimate double-edged sword. They allowed amazing scientific discovery, such as FTL drives and the Cylons. They also gave the Cylons the means to fight against, and nearly destroy, humanity. When the Cylons rebelled, they infiltrated the computer systems of the Twelve Colonies and used them against their former master. Humankind had to regress technologically to defend themselves and drive the Cylons away. Forty years later, complacency set in and vast computer networks again became common. Once again, the Cylons took advantage, using a “backdoor” to subvert the military's freshly minted Command Navigation Program. They jammed the controls of the latest and best Vipers, battlestars, and



other military vessels, leaving them dead in space and ripe for destruction. Obsolete military ships, using technology secure in first Cylon War, such as the *Galactica* and the Viper Mark IIs, were able to withstand this technological attack. Networked computer systems remain suspect still.

## MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT COMPUTERS

**Colonial Defense Mainframe:** The CDM was the brains of the Colonial military prior to the Cylon invasion. This central computer, located within the Ministry of Defense in Caprica City, held all Colonial military logistical information, such as deployment, supply, and defense grid assignments. It was also the central database for all Colonial military knowledge. The CDM was connected to all newer, advanced ships in the Fleet, which is how the Cylons were able to infect those ships with the compromised Command Navigation Program. The CDM was destroyed during the Cylon invasion.

**Military Simulators:** Simulators of various types allow military personnel to train without expending resources or taking risks with themselves and expensive military hardware. Flight simulators are the most common. Viper and Raptor pilots use them to learn how to control and pilot their craft before actually taking the controls of a real one. Battlestars usually have flight simulators onboard, but the simulators on *Galactica* were removed well in advance of her decommissioning. New pilots on board *Galactica* train in real-world situations with their craft.

The Colonial Marines train using ground combat simulators. These systems have hundreds of scenarios that lead marines through situations they may encounter in the line of duty and evaluate them on the decisions they make. Although not 100% realistic (the scenarios are projected like a film onto a large screen or wall), they do offer marines a chance to train during long flights between planets.

Fleet and Marine officers train on the War College simulator. This program presents the officer with tactical and combat situations, and evaluates the decisions they make. This helps officers to learn tactics and battlefield leadership. Although a helpful learning tool, not every tactic calculated by the simulator turns out the way the simulator says when used in a real world situation.

For example, the EMP tactic Apollo used to make Cylon raiders

believe the nukes they launched at Colonial Heavy 798 had destroyed the ship actually worked during the Cylon invasion—it didn't work when he had tried a similar tactic in a War College simulator scenario.

## CIVILIAN COMPUTERS

**Personal Computers:** Personal computers come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some are highly customizable desktop units. Others are workstations tied to a larger network. Yet others are personal laptops that can be networked or stand-alone as the user wishes. After the Cylon invasion, Commander Adama mandated that no networking exist for fear of Cylon infiltration. Many believe that the Commander is paranoid, but most follow orders.

**Portable Library Readers:** These small, handheld devices are little more than portable encyclopedias. They contain most of the basic knowledge of the Twelve Colonies, but rarely have specific examples of complex ideas or theories, such as the exact formulas used to calculate FTL jumps. They can synchronize some data with other computers, but lack the sophistication to run more than a simple search program.

**Data Disks:** Data disks are octagonally-shaped chips about palm-sized. They are the only reliable way to transfer large quantities of information from one computer to another without using a network. Almost all computers have a drive capable of reading from and recording onto a data disk.

## SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT

This stuff doesn't readily fit anywhere else. It's highly specialized, or just unusual. A lot of it has been inventoried, and some of it has been collected and reserved for official use. That don't mean you can't

**TABLE 5.6—FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

Item	Cost	Availability
Double Jacket Fire Hose*	350 cubits	Uncommon
Fire Gloves	75 cubits	Uncommon
Fire Goggles	20 cubits	Uncommon
Fire Helmet	55 cubits	Uncommon
Fire Jacket	75 cubits	Uncommon
Fire Shroud	50 cubits	Uncommon
Flashpoint Boots	240 cubits	Uncommon
Hand axe	12 cubits	Uncommon
Underglove	30 cubits	Uncommon

\* The Double Jacket Fire Hose is resistant to fire, Heat, abrasion, and puncture

find a stash of it here or there. Amazing what some people with squirrel away when the going gets tough.

## FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

Fire is death to a vessel. Inside a ship's enclosed, oxygen-rich spaces, it can spread fast, killing and injuring many, and compromising essential systems. Fire teams that can respond quickly and decisively keep a ship and its crew alive. Every crewmember on board a space-going vessel is trained in fighting fires, at least in a minimal capacity.

A firefighter equipped with fire gloves, goggles, helmet, jacket, shroud, boots, and undergloves is effectively protected from any fire they are likely to encounter, even on a spaceship. However, the gear doesn't completely protect them if they become engulfed, nor can it protect them from smoke in an otherwise enclosed environment for more than thirty seconds at a time. In situations where the character might take damage from "bleed through" (or a physical attack), a fully kitted-out firefighter has fire-damage 10, Wound 1, and Stun 2 armor (the

puncture, and impact—a sturdy, well-designed helmet.

**Fire Jacket:** This jacket covers the arms, back, torso, neck, and upper legs—it hangs down to mid-thigh, and is made to be flame and puncture resistant.

**Fire Shroud:** This shroud wraps around a fire fighter's head, protecting his ears, neck, and face from direct fire damage.

**Flashpoint Boots:** These boots are made from a fire retardant, puncture-resistant material, and are triple stitched with self-extinguishing Kevlar threads. Flashpoint boots not only prevent damage from direct contact with fire, but are also able to keep a fire fighter's feet and lower leg insulated from the heat. They decrease fire- or puncture-related damage in that area by one Wound.

**Hand Axe:** While useless against bulkheads or hatches, fire teams still carry a hand axe. It is used to cut away burning or smoldering material that may be connected to other flammable material, to keep a fire from spreading.

**TABLE 5.7—EMERGENCY GEAR**

Item	Armor Rating	Agility/Alertness Step Penalty	Cost	Availability
CBRN Mask	2 W	−3 Ale	200 cubits	Common
CBRN Suit	2 W	−2 Agi/−2 Ale	2,500 cubits	Military or emergency units
Space Suit	2 W	−1 Agi/−2 Ale	10,000 cubits	Military or emergency units

“fire armor” does not stack with the normal armor). Unfortunately, because of the hampering nature of the equipment, the firefighter suffers −1 Skill step to movement, dodge, and perception rolls, and a −3 Skill step to rolls involving fine manipulation or dexterity.

**Double Jacket Fire Hose:** This hose is durable, flame retardant, and able to deliver tremendous amounts of water or fire-fighting agent in a short time period. It is also resistant to abrasion and penetration damage.

**Fire Gloves:** These thick gloves are flame resistant, insulated against high levels of heat, and puncture resistant. They cover a fire fighter's hands and half the forearm.

**Fire Goggles:** These goggles are made from a fire retardant material to protect the wearer's eyes and mouth from open flame. They protect most of the face, almost more a mask than goggles, and provide slight protection from smoke.

**Fire Helmet:** These helmets are designed to lessen impact and penetration damage while protecting the head from open flames. They protect from fire,

**Underglove:** The skin-tight, flexible undergarment is made out of a fire-retardant material to give a extra layer of protection to a firefighter's hands.

## EMERGENCY GEAR

**Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Mask:** The CBRN mask covers the entire face, allowing the wearer to see and breathe in the presence of toxic materials or pollutants. It does not protect the rest of the body from radiation or skin-damaging agents. While the CBRN mask offers essential protection, it limits visibility.

**Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Suit:** This full-body, air-tight, hazardous environment suit provides complete protection from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear hazards. The suit's bulky nature makes it difficult to handle small objects or perform feats that require much coordination or manual dexterity.

**Damage Control Suction Cup:** Hull breach is a dangerous event on any space-going vessel. The loss of pressure and breathable air is deadly.

TABLE 5.8—MEDICAL GEAR

Item	Cost	Availability	Notes
Antibiotics	120 cubits	Uncommon	Helps fight infections
Anti-radiation medication	350 cubits	Military or medical	Heal or prevents up to d10 W radiation damage
Medkit	3,000 cubits	Military	Aids medically trained personnel in treating wounds
Morpha	200 cubits	Military or medical	Powerful painkiller
Sedative/sleeping pill	200/60 cubits	Uncommon	Calms or renders unconscious
Stimulants	30 cubits	Uncommon	See p. 99

Sometimes the hull is breached in a section of the ship that can't be sealed off. When this happens, and if the breach is not too large, damage control teams can apply one or more DC suction cups to patch the breach. DC suction cups come in various sizes and are made of the same metal as most ship hulls. It is possible to connect two or more of these suction cups together to cover a larger breach, but a series of linked cups is not as strong as one or two by themselves. The cups create a seal between the edge of the cup and the ship's hull. Once the seal is made, the area can be repressurized. That pressure acting against the absence of pressure beyond the breach makes the DC suction cup impossible to remove unless the area is again depressurized.

**Disaster Pod:** This large container is stocked with supplies necessary to survive a wide variety of calamities. Most importantly, pods are stocked with enough MREs to feed 1,000 people for a month, or longer with strict rationing. A small, portable hospital allows a doctor or EMS worker to perform simple surgeries and dispense basic medications and medical care. Sufficient tents and half-shelters are supplied to protect at least 1,000 people. Basic repair and rescue tools—flashlights, rope, toolkits, etc.—can also be found. Major military vessels like battlestars routinely have four or five disaster pods ready and waiting at all times.

**Distress Beacon:** A distress beacon transmits at extremely high power along a pre-set frequency that is constantly monitored by all military ships and most civilian ships, running for 72 hours on its internal battery. A military ship that receives a signal from a distress beacon is bound by Colonial law to investigate, and aid those who activated the beacon if at all possible. A distress beacon is about the size of a duffle bag, and is standard equipment on Vipers and Raptors. However, while these were greatly useful in Colonial space, where the beacon's

long range could usually reach at least one planet, they are much less likely to attract help in the deep space between jumps.

**Radiation Counter:** A radiation counter recognizes and measures the intensity of all radiation in a 500-foot radius.

**Space Suit:** A full-body, air-tight, fully pressurized suit that allows the wearer to operate in the vacuum of space. These suits are also worn aboard ship by DC teams working in an area of a ship that has been depressurized or suffered a hull breach. Space suits are somewhat bulky, but the gloves are designed for fine manipulation.

## MEDICAL GEAR

**Antibiotics:** Antibiotics help fight or prevent infections and infectious diseases. Antibiotics come in pill form, which take longer to work and are used in non life threatening situations, and liquid form, which must be injected but works more quickly. They grant a +4 Vitality step when resisting bacterial infections.

**Anti-Radiation Medication:** Anti-rads help a body withstand radiation from sources such as the fallout after the use of nuclear weapons. They are almost always injected in the neck, arm, or leg. Many people feel some nausea after being injected with anti-rads.

**Medkit:** Medkits are a step beyond first aid kits. With a medkit, trained personnel can treat major injuries, and even perform minor emergency surgeries. Among the medicines available in a medkit are morpha, serisone, anti-radiation medication, antibiotics, and stimulants. Other contents include bandages, chemical cold and heat packs, and sterile gloves.

**Morpha:** Morpha is a powerful painkilling medication (see p.99).

**Sedatives:** A variety of barbiturates are used to calm patients or render them unconscious. Their duration depends on the strength and the dosage.



A mild form of sedative is a sleeping aid. It is not unusual for a pilot to use sleeping pills to help them sleep after a particularly hair-raising, adrenaline-pumping mission.

**Stimulants:** Stims are a cocktail of herbs and drugs that keep a body alert for longer than natural periods of time (see p. 99). They are mostly commonly taken in a pill form. Prolonged use or overdosing can lead to irrational, violent, and psychotic behavior. Viper and Raptor pilots make use of stims when forced to undergo sustained missions. (See “**Stims**” under **Chapter Four, Medical Assistance.**)

## WIRELESS

Wireless is older than space-travel, if the stories are to be believed. No one knows exactly how it came to be. Many folks believe it a gift from the Lords of Kobol, given to their wayward children as the tribes left their homeworld.

Wireless is short-to-medium-range electromagnetic communications used for ship-to-ship or ship-to-ground communications. The range depends entirely upon the power of the transmitting unit—the more powerful the transmitter, the further the signal can travel. A wireless transmission from *Galactica* might be able to reach a Raptor on extended patrol, but the Raptor

**TABLE 5.9—WIRELESS**

Item	Cost	Availability	Notes
Shortwave Wireless	20–150 cubits	Common	Reception only on pre-set bandwidths
Hand-Held Wireless Communicators (Walkie-talkies)	50 cubits per pair (civilian) 300 cubits per pair (military)	Common (civilian) Uncommon (military)	Civilian models less power than military ones
Emergency Wireless Handset	600 cubits	Rare	Short-term, long-range transmissions
Portable Wireless Transceiver	6,000 cubits	Military	Long-range transmission

couldn't answer because its transmitter is not strong enough. Other celestial bodies, nuclear and man-made EM interference, and transmitter/receiver antenna placement also affect wireless range.

**Emergency Wireless Handset:** These handsets are capable of short-term planet-side transmissions capable of reaching ships in orbit. They only have battery power available for two minutes of talk time, due to the enormous amount of power it takes to transmit their signal. These units are standard equipment in small craft, such as Viper and Raptor, part of their emergency ejection survival kits.

**Hand-Held Wireless Communicators:** These small transceiver units allow parties to speak to each other over short distances. Commonly referred to as walkie-talkies, they allow a user to talk and walk or perform other activities at the same time. Military walkie-talkies are usually more powerful (two-mile range) than their civilian counterparts (quarter-mile range).

**Portable Wireless Transceiver:** These units are used by the military when establishing a semi-permanent base camp during planet-side missions or exercises. They have an effective range of 50 miles and can communicate with ships in orbit above their position. The bulk of this system is contained in a backpack-sized unit that can be easily carried. Maximum range requires that a small dish antenna be set up.

**Shortwave Wireless:** This communication is generally one way, with powerful transmitters broadcasting a signal over an entire city or planet, or throughout a fleet of ships. News organizations use this form of wireless; the first reports about the Cylon invasion came through shortwave wireless. These transmissions are always broadcast within a certain bandwidth, and receiver units are usually only capable of picking up signals broadcast along that bandwidth.

## SERVICES

Before the Cylons invaded, life was pretty easy, 'specially for those with money. Services like limousines, drying cleaning, house painters, maid service, and day care were all available throughout the Twelve Colonies. Travel was also a snap. Some people even took cruises out in space, aboard fancy liners like *Cloud 9*.

Now everyone has to do with what limited resources can be found, and nearly every able body is needed for work details. Services are much more low-key. Survivors got better things to do than dog walking, nail polishing, or birthday party magic tricks.

**Laundry:** No one likes wearing dirty clothes. Every ship in the fleet has at least basic laundry capabilities for its crew and passengers. Ships

like *Galactica* and *Cloud 9* have huge laundries that are staffed by ship's crew and run non-stop 24 hours a day. Laundry service throughout the fleet is free, but it can sometimes take a few days to get clothes back. Military members are used to this, civilians less so. Always write your name, room or bunk number, and ship somewhere on your clothes!

**Mail:** Sending a letter from Qualai, Caprica to Leonis City, Leonis was just a matter of a couple of days. That came to an end with the fall of the Colonies. President Roslin has, in an effort to make things as normal as can be, ordered regular mail service between the various ships of the fleet. It's now possible for a crewman on *Galactica* to send a letter to his honey on the *Gemenon Traveller*, though how the crewman found the time to court a girl on another ship is hard to say.

**Medical Care:** Basic medical care is easy to come by, as pretty much every ship has a doctor among the crew. By order of the President, medical services are free to all survivors. Basic care covers things like physicals, medication for minor illnesses, and on some ships, even minor surgeries. Advanced medical care is another thing entirely. The only ship in the fleet with the facilities for major medical care is *Galactica*. This has set Dr. Cottle and his staff working overtime. Unless it's a flat-out emergency, the waiting list to see *Galactica's* medical staff about major medical issues is weeks long, and getting longer the more time the fleet spends searching for a place to settle down.

**Recycling:** Used to be recycling was a matter of conscience and "saving the planet." Now finite resources dictate recycling as a means of survival. Water is filtered clean whether it was used in the head or to wash a Viper. Biological waste is used as fertilizer on the few ships that have the capability to growing things. All paper is pulped and reused. People are finding new ways to use things that would have been trash to them before the invasion. Recycling is on everyone's mind, and new ways of recycling things are quickly disseminated throughout the fleet when discovered.

## UNIQUE EQUIPMENT & UPGRADING

The quartermaster cannot always scrounge up a given item, and some necessities are in short supply. Still, just because something is unusual doesn't mean it's unavailable. You may want equipment that is not listed in this chapter, or you might want something upgraded, altered, or refitted to better suit your needs. When this comes up, your Game Master is the final arbiter of what is available and what can be built.

Here are some guidelines for creating or adjusting equipment.

## STEP ONE: DESCRIBE IT

Figure out exactly what it is you want. Think about the description, decide what exactly you want it to do, and then talk it over with the GM. He needs to decide if it is something that he'll allow in the game. Hopefully, he says yes, and then you just need to work out the details.

If the device or piece of gear is allowed, how will the character get it? Can they build it? Buy it? Find it? If what you want is something that the GM rules is commonly available, and is simply not described here, you can probably purchase it, or even scavenge it for free. Unless you're lucky and it is free, there's more work to do.

## STEP TWO: BASE VALUE

In a post-holocaust society of refugees, the value of goods is hugely important. You may not be able to buy it with cash, but you still need to assign it a value. Anything that can't just be picked up off the floor or out of a trash bin needs a value.

The easiest way to price new equipment is by comparing it to something that already has a value. Is the gear merely something that should be common, but isn't on the lists of equipment? The GM sets a price he thinks is fair, based on the value of comparable goods. This is the "base value" of the item, and in some cases, that's the final value as well.

If the new equipment is actually a combination of multiple items that already exist, combine their prices to find the base value. Then take an extra look—in addition to combining the functions of other items, is it also better than them? Is it smaller and more convenient? More durable? More powerful? If that's the case, the combined base value should be adjusted.

## STEP THREE: IMPROVEMENTS

If the gear you want is "better" in some way, base value must be modified to get final value. The modifier used depends on the level of improvement desired. The suggestions below should be altered by the Game Master if an individual situation calls for special consideration. If they feel a particular improvement should cost more or less than given here, apply a different modifier.

These modifiers also apply when upgrading standard, listed equipment. Want to take a standard

pistol and improve it by extending the clip and fitting it for explosive ammunition? Want a miniaturized computer that is just as powerful as the normal laptop version? Use the standard price as the base value, and modify accordingly.

**Minor or "Flavor" Improvements:** If the only improvement is a single extremely minor change, or the modification is purely aesthetic in terms of game mechanics (e.g., a pistol with five extra feet added to the range increment; a combat knife with a hollow handle containing a tiny fork, spoon, and mess kit; a waterproofed shirt), the Game Master should either modify the value by x1.1, to represent a very slight increase, or let it go at the base value. Some things aren't worth sweating over.

**Basic Improvements:** Improvements that provide a single basic, low-level, but potentially significant bonus (e.g., +1 Step to the damage die of a weapon; a significant increase to the range increment of a gun; a first aid kit with special supplies that add +1 Step to the user's First Aid Skill rolls; a "survival pistol" that includes a GPS tracking unit or an emergency radio) should come with a modifier of x1.5.

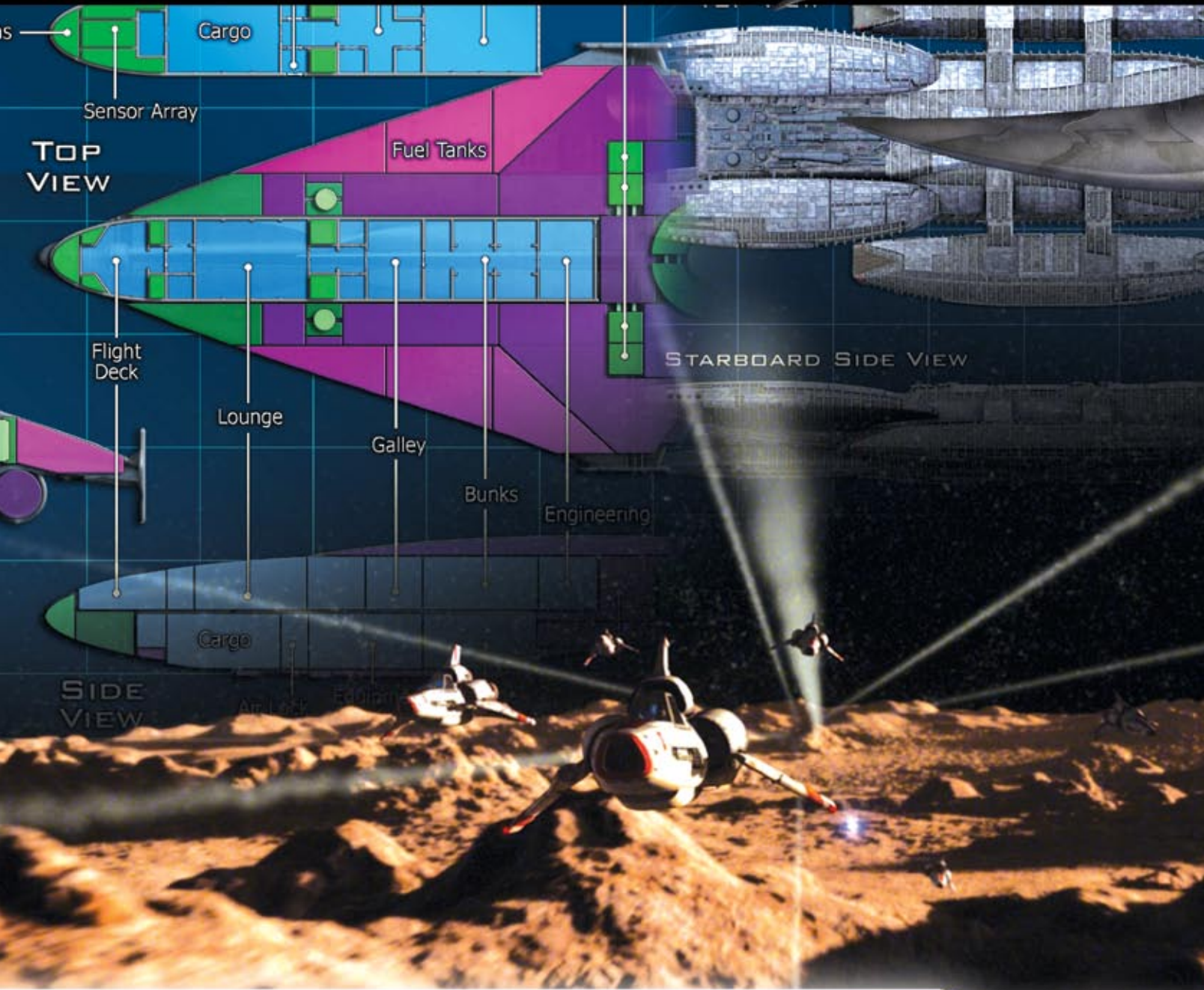
**Significant Improvements:** Alterations that add major functions or abilities to a device (e.g., combining two or more important pieces of gear; miniaturizing a gadget by 50%; adding advanced stealth capabilities to a ship; giving a weapon +2 Step to its damage die or +1 Step to its attack rolls), or that include more than one basic improvement, apply a modifier of x3 to the base value.

**High-End Improvements:** If the changes made to a piece of equipment are drastic (e.g., extreme miniaturization; made "impossible" to break; more than a doubling of range), or many completely separate devices are being combined together, the GM should apply a modifier between x5 and x10. He should disallow improvements, at any price, that he feels are unfair, would break the story or the fun of the game, or go against the flavor or background of the *Battlestar Galactica* universe. Being able to create unique and interesting equipment is not a license to introduce technology that the Game Master feels should not exist or is unavailable to the characters.

**Inferior Quality:** Modifiers are also used to downgrade equipment. Want a shoddy, out-of-date, or backwards version for some reason? In those cases, use a modifier of x0.75 (for only moderately out-of-date equipment) to x0.1 (for extremely old pieces of junk that barely work).



# CHAPTER SIX



## VEHICLES



## ***GALACTICA,*** **READY ROOM**

**A**TTENTION on deck.

Get on your feet, nuggets! I scrub pilots who don't listen, because pilots who don't listen end up getting themselves killed or, even worse, wreck one of our planes.

You're entering the Colonial Fleet, and assuming you make it through basic flight, that means you'll be part of the first-line defense against the Cylons. Gods help us. Today we're putting you in the cockpit of a Viper Mark II, a craft that's more responsive and maneuverable than anything you've ever flown. Twitch the wrong way with your hand on the stick and you'll smash into your wingman. Problem is, without any simulators on-board the only way to be worth a frak out there is to get you some practice—out there.

Flying a Viper is a tricky thing, boys and girls. There are rules to follow—important rules—that keep you and the rest of us alive. But when you've got Cylon Raiders bearing down on you, the rules aren't going to save you. There are tactics that can be learned, but it's your reflexes and individual flying style that will keep you alive. So you find your own style. Find your own way to stand out and you'll do just fine ... as long as you remember the most important rules of all: Stay out of my way and do exactly as I say.

You three are up first. Pre-flight briefing in twenty minutes.



—Lt. Kara “Starbuck” Thrace

Everybody's trained, geared up, and ready to go, right? Better be. The bad guys aren't sitting around sipping ambrosia. They're gunning for you whether you're ready or not.

Now, we got to get from here to there. Among the stars, that means spacecraft. Otherwise, we're talking air, ground, or water vehicles, or, as we like to call them, "planetcraft."

The Colonial Fleet has the best damn spacecraft humans have ever built. The Colonial Marines are the most mobile force ever trained and fielded. Problem is, the once proud Fleet and Marine transports are little more than debris these days. When they came in, the Cylons took damn near everything over, or simply turned off the power and left us dead in the water.

Now we're stuck—you're stuck—with what's left. The Mark II isn't new, and it sure isn't pretty, and you can count on it never being 100%.

Tough.

The deck crew does its Gods best to keep the fighters flying smooth. You take care of sending the tin-cans straight to hell.

## SPACECRAFT

Historical and religious texts tell us that the Twelve Colonies were settled when the original tribes, borne by a spacecraft known as *Galleon*, traveled from Kobol. Soon after that, humans lost the ability to travel among the stars. No one's sure why. Some claim it was planned destruction—a deconstruction of science and technology ordered by the gods. Others think it was a simple, even massive, breakdown in the social order that set us back. Whatever the cause, those dark ages past, and humans remastered the sciences and relearned the lessons needed for both short-distance and long-distance space travel.

All Colonial spacecraft are capable of sublight flight—wouldn't be much of a spacecraft otherwise.

Ships can travel from planet to planet within a star system in relative comfort and speed, especially compared to short-range vessels which might

take years to make it from one Colonial homeworld to another. More advanced spaceships have faster-than-light (FTL) technology. That drive jumps a ship light years in distance at near instantaneous speed.

The spacecraft of the Twelve Colonies range from military vessels to corporate cargo hauling to private transportation and entertainment. A few are designed to perform rigorous industrial tasks, such as mining and processing of raw materials. They are moving plants and storage facilities, able to travel from one natural resource to another (such as hoping from one asteroid-body to another in a given asteroid field).

Just after the Cylon holocaust, a small, rag-tag fleet, led by the *Battlestar Galactica* fled Colonial space. The fleet is composed of dozens of FTL-capable ships of varying size and purpose and is now home to tens of thousands of refugees and survivors. Without those ships, the survivors would have long since perished. Their preservation keeps humankind alive and fighting.

## PLANETCRAFT

The term "planetcraft" encompasses anything that is not designed for, or capable of, space operations. That means cars, trucks, VTOL craft, motorcycles, tanks, jets, even asteroid-crawlers.

The Colonial fleet has very little in the way of ground vehicles, and likely no aircraft or watercraft to speak of. Still, such vehicles were manufactured in abundance on all the Colonies. With each world having its own specific challenges to overcome, various planetcraft were designed and manufactured to meet those needs. For instance, Aquaris featured large bodies of water and so established a tradition of seamanship. Hundreds of types and models of boats roamed the surface of Aquaris. Few other Colonies would need or want such a fleet.

With the Cylon attack on the Colonies and the subsequent flight of the *Galactica* and its protectorates, few examples of planetcraft of any type still exist. Back

## A MATTER OF SCALE

Before getting serious about the vehicles of the BSG universe, take a moment and think about scale. Fact is, the damage it takes to put a marine down, blast a Viper out of the sky, and destroy a battlestar differs by a lot.

This chapter adds two scales to the personal one discussed in *Chapter Four: Rules*. They are the planetcraft and spacecraft scale. Planetcraft scale includes trucks, aero-fighters, Vipers, sailboats, and the like. Spacecraft scale covers massively armed planetside fortresses, destroyer-class and above naval vessels, and most space-capable craft. Terms and mechanics such as Life Points, Armor Rating, and others remain roughly the same within each scale, but must be translated between scales.

How all this works is laid out in the rest of this chapter. Just a heads up here.

on Caprica and the other Colonies, where survivors may have struggled against the Cylon overlords, such vehicles aid significantly in battling against Cylon occupation.

In general, Colonial conveyances are similar to Earth's. Players and GMs should have plenty of inspiration regarding planetcraft.

## VEHICLE SYSTEMS

Since the Armistice at the end of the First Cylon War some 40 years ago, thousands of spacecraft and planetcraft have been built for scientific, military, civilian and commercial operations. Despite the wide range of vehicle missions, objectives, and designs, most have several features in common. This section gives a brief overview of those shared features.

### POWER

Power on most Colonial (and Cylon) spacecraft is generated from the fusion of dual-refined tylium ore. Tylium fusion power plants are highly effective, able to operate for long periods of time without major overhaul—so long as the tylium fuel is properly refined and regular maintenance is preformed. Tylium power plants generate a “vase” of electromagneto-gravitic energy that encloses and controls plasma under intense pressure and at extreme temperature. The heat and pressure fuses protons, releasing massive amounts of energy. Along with an outstanding mass-to-energy efficiency, tylium has little radioactive by-product.

Tylium is not native to any Colonial homeworld. It was not discovered until the Colonies began exploring and mining the system's asteroid field. It took decades for humans to become proficient at extracting and refining the ore. It took just as long to perfect the highly efficient processes used today. (One curiosity discovered during the initial mining attempts: nuclear radiation renders tylium ore inert.)

Tylium in its natural state is an extremely stable ore. Once broken down and chemically mixed in the early stages of refinement, it becomes a highly explosive crude sludge. That dangerous mess is then processed into a fairly stable fuel.

Prior to the discovery of tylium, Colonial vessels used a variety of fuels and power systems, including chemical and nuclear power plants. By the time the Cylon's attacked the Colonies, few ships still in service used anything other than tylium fusion plants.

Tylium fusion plants are extremely reliable, but most vessels have a back-up power supply. It's used mostly during high-end maintenance procedures. The most common back-up is a hydrogen-oxygen (HyOx)

## VEHICLES AS CHARACTERS

Some civilian types ascribe personalities to their craft. Over time they come to consider them as pets or even friends. Military types view their ships and vehicles in a far less romantic light. They are valued tools, not treasured companions. This chapter takes the military approach, focusing on operation. Unique ship generation will be covered in greater detail in future supplements.

fuel plant. These clean burning plants are relatively cheap and easy to maintain.

HyOx engines also serve as the primary power plant for very short range spacecraft, and lots all planetary-bound vehicles. Other planetcraft power systems include solar, electrical, fossil-fuel burning, and hybrid fuel power systems. Usually, power in ground and air transport varied depending on the Colony—each has different laws, customs, environments, and natural resources. Something perfectly legal on one Colony might have gotten you fined or tossed in the brig on the next.

### PROPULSION

Power plant and propulsion is basically the same for planetcraft. A hybrid fuel engine on a motorcycle was used to turn the wheels, and little else.

Spaceships, on the other hand, tend toward three major drives. The two standard ones are sublight and faster-than-light (FTL). Short-range systems exist but are limited to fighters and ship-to-ship shuttle craft.

#### Short-Range

A number of secondary Colonial vessels use short-range propulsion systems. These craft operate from larger ships, stations, or bases, and rarely travel far from their docking ports. Traveling even between worlds would take weeks, months, or even years using the primitive booster technologies.

The common Reaction Control Systems (RCS) is less a means of propulsion than a means to maintain course headings and to maneuver. RCS provides control through torque, using small bursts of energy to guide a ship. It can be used to make minor corrections in both atmosphere and space, and allows for much cleaner landings. RCS helps

space stations maintain orbit and position with minimal resource waste.

### Sublight

Sublight propulsion is used primarily within a solar system. Pre-invasion, Colonial sublight ships could travel between worlds and to various satellites and outposts in a matter of hours. Outside of a solar system, sublight propulsion are basically useless—any excursion to another star would take decades if not hundreds of years.

Cylon baseships, unlike Colonial vessels, have no propulsion exhaust ports. It is unknown how they achieve sublight speed. Some scientists have theorized that advanced force field and synthetic gravity generators grant Cylon ships their sublight velocity. Pilots tend not to sweat those things when trying to blow them up or get the hell away from them.

### Faster-Than-Light (FTL)

FTL vessels do not actually travel faster-than-light. Their drives instead fold time and space to create a stellar shortcut from one point to another. Travel through the ensuing, temporary wormhole is near instantaneous. It also sometimes feels like you leave your stomach behind. For most, that passes with time and repetition.

FTL drives are large and complex, needing constant care and supervision. Due to their sensitivity and immense power needs, drives are usually kept inactive. They need to “spin up” to create the spike of energy to fold space.

With the proper calculations, aided by the drive’s dedicated computer, FTL travel can be extremely accurate. It can be used in space or in an atmosphere, but you better have an airtight set of coordinates before trying an atmospheric jump. It’s a good tactic to evade capture or

detection by the Cylons, but if your numbers are off you could end up buried several miles in solid rock.

Colonial FTL navigation systems are limited by a number of factors, including fuel, computer capabilities, and gravitational forces. These conditions create an imaginary sphere enclosing a vessel that denotes the maximum safe limit for an FTL jump. Going beyond “the red line” is possible but highly dangerous. A ship could easily materialize within a stellar body or end up far off course.

Because FTL drives are expensive and need constant maintenance, many Colony vessels did not have them. Those ships were left behind when the *Galactica* and the rest of the fleet fled. Regular jumps are needed to keep the Cylons at bay. Every surviving human ship features an FTL drive.

Cylon advances in FTL technologies outstrip humans. Their drives are more efficient and their navigational systems more advanced. They can jump distances several times longer than the most advanced Colonial drives.

### LIFE SUPPORT

Little is known about Cylon life support systems and presumably only the “skinjobs” even need to worry about them. Colonial spacecraft life support technology, on the other hand, has long since become standardized. Travel through space requires six basic functions from a life support system: waste removal, clean water, fresh air, gravity, controlled temperatures, and fire safety.

Planetcraft, normally operating in stable and friendly environments, do not have great life support demands, other than giving warmth in the winter and cooling in the summer. Those few vehicles that do require life support systems, such as oceanic submersibles or asteroid crawlers, use the same systems as spacecraft do.

## FUEL

No matter how good your engines are, you won't be going anywhere without fuel. *Battlestar Galactica* and its fleet need a constant source of tylium. Any ship that does not secure a sufficient quantity is left behind for the Cylons to pick off. In the “food chain” of tylium distribution, the Fleet is top dog—it monitors and rations tylium extensively.

With this in mind, fuel consumption is best left as a plot device for the GM to use as needed. Specific supply and consumption rates add bookkeeping and calculation. For storytelling purposes, it is not important that players and characters know how much fuel is needed, only that it is needed and where they can get it. A few Plot Points might be all it takes to get enough fuel to perform the task at hand. Alternatively, the GM could make obtaining fuel a entire mission in and of itself.

As a general rule, smaller craft like *Vipers* or raiders are capable of hours of continuous operation on a tank of tylium. Larger ships use more fuel, but are fitted with immense storage tanks. They are capable of weeks or months—possibly even years—of operations.

## Air

The proper air-mixture is needed for breathing. Gases produced by human respiration must be carefully filtered out before they clog up your lungs, or just make you stink to high heaven. Finally, a constant and relatively narrow range of air pressure must be maintained. Most air-tight conveyances use computer systems to monitor air flow and pressure throughout the vehicle, though more antiquated vehicles may use simple pressure valves and gauges to get the job done. Numerous hatches and safety-doors can close off sections that have been breached to maintain atmosphere.

## Environment

Humans need a stable and warm environment. Complex computer and sensor systems keep the deadly cold of space at bay in spacecraft, and the ocean out of an Aquarian deep-sea research submersible. Heat transfer systems, radiators, and humidifiers produce a livable environment. Excess heat is simply radiated out into the surrounding environment.

## Fire

Fire is a constant danger; especially to a vehicle with a closed atmosphere. Can't just stop the craft and head out the door. Long-established safety programs and equipment for fire prevention, detection, and suppression have long rendered Colonial vessel quite safe, but incidents still happen and lives are lost every year to accidental fires.

Since the Cylon attack, overcrowding and limited resources in the fleet have raised the specter of uncontrolled fire. Over time, detectors, alarms, and warning systems entropy. They become less effective, or quit all together. Worse, some hard-pressed survivors have taken to cannibalizing fire systems for "more vital" needs. It is only a matter of time before an accident costs some refugees their lives.

When a fire does break out, sealing the burning areas of the ship and venting them to space is the most efficient method to extinguish it. Aboard a crowded ship with limited space, that is rarely a viable option. In that case, non-toxic portable fire extinguishers and fire protection gear is the first line of defense.

## Food

The fleet feeds its 50,000-odd survivors as best it can. Thank the Gods, a number of commercial ships that joined the fleet were carrying large supplies of food. Through careful rationing, these food stocks have been stretched significantly. The fleet is also served by an agro-vessel, which grows plants and algae that

can be refined into a life-sustaining protein supplement. A lot of it tastes like dirt but it keeps people alive. Food stocks are stored on the agro-ship to improve security, but this does create a slight risk of mass contamination.

## Gravity

Lack of gravity is one of the most detrimental aspects of space travel. Without a way to know which way is "up," the human brain is unable to orient itself. In extreme cases, it's possible to lose sense of where your own limbs are. Without gravity, the nerves in the body's joints and muscles dampen and eventually deteriorate. This leaves you so weak that you cannot lift or carry your own body weight once you return to an environment with gravity. A means to synthesize gravity is crucial for humans to spend any significant amount of time in space.

The earliest form of synthetic gravity was created by rotation technology. The centrifugal force of a rotating spacecraft pushed anything inside towards its outer edge. Rotational gravity, while effective, created a host of other problems. Although scientific advancement in gravity technology rendered rotating ships uncommon, more than a few remained in active service at the time of the Cylon attack.

True synthetic gravity came about with the mastery of magnetic field technology, also known as diamagnetism. The process of setting up a gravity field is immensely complicated (hundreds, if not thousands, of books in the Caprica Colonial Library of Sciences were dedicated to just that), but once a stable field of gravity is established within the confines of a vessel or craft, only minor resources are needed to keep the field in place. Synthetic gravity provides the same stability as normal gravity, allowing for prolonged, if not indefinite, space travel.

For planetcraft, operators constantly struggle to account for the effects of gravity, as opposed to trying to create or simulate it. Submersible craft can only go so deep into the oceans before atmospheric density crushes the vehicle like a tin can. Flyers have to stay in the air or they get splattered all over the countryside.

## Medical Bays

Space travel is a dangerous business at any time, and even more so during war. Not much chance of finding a hospital or calling for an ambulance in space. Because of this, all ships have some sort of medical facility on board. On smaller ships, a medical bay may be no bigger than a closet. It's equipped much like an emergency care vehicle on a Colonial homeworld. Larger ships, with more

extensive crews, or ships where the incident of injury is greater (as on a refining ship) have more extensive facilities. Some even have surgical suites and long-term emergency care facilities, such as ICU units that handle burn-victims.

Planetcraft designed for missions that may include casualties, such as submersibles, ambulances, large cargo watercraft, or vehicles intended for hostile environments may have a medical bay. Basically, the longer it takes or harder it is to get to help, the more likely some form of medical system is designed into the vehicle.

### Waste & Recycling

Waste is dealt with in a number of ways in the fleet: burning, ejection, and storage. The overwhelmingly preferred method of dealing with waste is recycling—from matter breakdown and cleansing systems that turn human waste back into water to the simple re-use of synthetic materials such as plastic. Waste is a valued fertilizer for the fleet agrostarship.

For planetcraft, waste and recycling is less of a problem, though many Colonies had strict laws against pollutant emissions from various planetcraft.

### Water

Modern Colonial water recycling technology is efficient enough that a military ship, such as the *Galactica*, can operate for years without the need of a fresh water source—so long as the tanks aren't sabotaged by Cylon skinjobs, 'course.

This is true of many of the larger ships in the fleet, but not all. In such cases, used water is shipped or pumped over to the ships that recycle more efficiently. Some water is always lost in the transfer, however, and that degrades overall supply.

Drinking recycled water and waste products might sound unpleasant, but it is often much cleaner than potable water on any given

Colonial homeworld. You get used to it, or you go thirsty.

### Redundant Systems

According to Colonial maintenance codes, starships are required to operate with two backup systems. The first, or auxiliary system, allows for limited use of nearly 100% of a ship's facilities. The second system, or emergency system, provides minimal power for the vessel's major systems. Emergency systems are designed to keep the crew alive long enough to return a ship to working order.

For the most part civilian planetcraft have no redundant systems. Military, scientific, and hostile environment vehicles often do.

### CREW & PASSENGERS

Crew quarters differ depending on a vehicle's mission profile. In the case of military vessels, only the highest-ranking officers have single accommodations (unless their family is aboard, which would be rare during normal operations). For the rest of the crew, quarters are shared, usually with personnel from the same work section or those who share a common duty. Crew quarters might also be assigned by Colonial lineage, but that is against Fleet Command Regulations.

In the fleet, space is at a premium. Survivors make do as best they can. The only three ships where overcrowding is minimized are the *Galactica* (only military personnel allowed for any extended time), *Colonial One* (civilian government and press personnel only) and the *Astral Queen* (a penal transport ship).

Most Colonial spacecraft are designed to haul either cargo or passengers. Smaller transport ships can normally dedicate 25% of their total tonnage to cargo and/or passenger space. Larger transports may devote up to 80% of their tonnage to hauling. As a general

## SPACE SICKNESS

In the years before the Cylon attacks, synthetic gravity technology became so widespread and stable among Colonial ships that few citizens bothered to train or prepare themselves for zero-gravity. When a problem did occur, the chaos of a free-floating environment often caused mass cases of "space sickness."

Space sickness usually manifests as mild headaches, vertigo, and nausea. More extreme cases result in prolonged vomiting, which causes dehydration and malnourishment. Space sickness mostly fades after several days as the brain relearns how to decode the information sent to it by the body's sensory system. Anyone is susceptible to space sickness, even the most seasoned veteran of the Colonial Deep Space Program.

Anyone suffering from space sickness incurs a  $-1$  step to all Attributes. Extreme cases impose a  $-2$  step. Vomiting characters are incapable of any actions. GMs are encouraged to award players 1-3 Plot Points should their characters be afflicted with space sickness. Overcoming that sickness takes time, and the characters have to tough it out in the meantime.

rule, passengers can travel in cargo holds—housing a person long term takes up two tons of capacity.

As far as elbow room goes, survivors can be divided into two classes: those who were accustomed to living in space, and those who were not.

For those used to living in space—say a member of the Colonial Fleet—day-to-day life has not changed significantly. They get up, do their duty, maybe get some downtime, and bunk down. That does not lessen the personal sacrifices they've suffered—most of what they were serving to protect is gone. Still, they haven't had to change their lifestyle.

As for those people who lived planetside, life has changed radically. They have had to learn to live in an entirely new environment. Desperate lack of living space, recycled air, concentrated food, claustrophobia, forging a new role in the economy—all are monumental adjustments.

Although the makeshift government and tired military are doing their best to ease the adjustment, survivors do whatever it takes to survive. Some have taken on roles and “occupations” that they are completely untrained for. Others have had to degrade themselves, engaging in crime, child slavery, and prostitution.

Mental health issues are constant. Combat fatigue, survivor's guilt, work-related anxiety, post-traumatic stress highlight the background pressure of space shortage. The simple fact is that people need more space, but there's no relief in sight. Tensions between crew and passengers caused by living too closely together could tear the human race apart as surely as any Cylon attack.

## COM/SEN SYSTEMS

Starships carry a variety of computers and sensor systems. Without them, space travel and communication would be impossible. Planetcraft are less likely to have such extensive systems, but some will, depending on the mission profile they were designed for.

### Computers

The Colonies were stripped of advanced or networked computers during the First Cylon War to avoid infiltration. This was nowhere more true than

in the Colonial military. Once the war ended and the general threat removed, Colonists began to slowly reintroduce linked computer systems into their lives. By the time of the holocaust some forty years later, networked systems were the norm again—even in the military. As it turned out, only non-networked ships (such as the *Galactica*) or those with comparatively primitive computers were immune to Cylon surprise tactics.

Spacecraft are filled with hundreds and hundreds of computers. They regulate thousands of details aboard a ship, from sublight navigation, FTL jump navigation, damage control, fire control, and avionics just to name a few. The key is that the computers are isolated from one another, and from outside interference. Makes things much less efficient, and requires many more technicians to perform basic operations. That's just fine. Personnel can be found; safety from Cylon tampering is paramount.

Planetcraft also have numerous computers in them, all designed for specific functions. Whether in audio entertainment systems, anti-locking braking systems, or other safety controls, more computers are found in some civilian automobiles than were part of Colonial space fighters of the early part of the last war. Although the operator has little to no interaction with the computers, the vehicle would not run without them.

Some planetcraft require more “ignorant automation” with respect to computer systems. Commercial water vessels and air transports use computers for many of the same tasks that a starship does: environmental controls, navigation and the like.

The following computer systems are examples of those found on most spacecraft, and a few planetcraft.

**Avionics:** The computer systems onboard Vipers and Raptors are referred to as avionics. A basic avionics package consists of non-directional medium-range wireless communications for ship-to-ship and ship-to-planet contact, DRADIS hardware for enemy targeting and flight maneuvers, a Colonial transponder for IFF, a stellar navigation system for sublight or FTL travel, and an electronic countermeasures (EC) computer. EC computers control systems that are used to confuse enemy DRADIS and weapons.

## CNP

The Command Navigation Program (CNP) was a system utilized by both the Colonial military and civilian fleets. Created by Dr. Baltar and put into operation in the systems of almost all battlestars (with the exception of *Galactica*) and their support craft—most notably the Fleet's Vipers and Raptors—the CNP was a death trap for thousands. During the program's design phase, a skinjob snuck in a backdoor access point that allowed the Cylons to interface with the CNP and shut down any vessel loaded with the program.



## MAINTENANCE

Science and technology allow humans to travel among the stars, but it's still risky. Constant vigilance and maintenance is required on all ships. Life support systems must be monitored and recharged; filters cleaned and replaced. Engine wear and tear must be addressed. Computers systems should be checked and updated to maintain system integrity. Weapons must be cleaned and calibrated. Hull plating must be cleared of defects and thin spots reinforced.

In the *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game*, maintenance, like fuel consumption, is more about background and plot needs than economics and monthly checks. In the fleet, a down ship is a death sentence for hundreds or thousands of survivors. As a matter of course, maintenance is achieved as best as can be with the resources available. Captains work official channels or the black market, whatever it takes. "Beg, borrow, and steal" is the name of the game when it comes to ship integrity and maintenance.

GMs are encouraged to use maintenance issues for various spacecraft and planetcraft as the plot dictates. If a GM needs or wants PCs to make weekly or monthly (or even hourly) "maintenance checks," a Hard (11) Difficulty is suggested. Circumstances such as the quality of the materials used to perform maintenance, and the current circumstances of the characters (in combat, pressed for time, on stims due to long periods without adequate rest, and so on) affect the Difficulty or impose Attribute or Skill steps.

On a Viper, the EC computer is largely autonomous, releasing the appropriate countermeasures when it detects a threat, though the pilot can override it. On a Raptor, the ECO generally monitors the EC computer during battle and deploys most countermeasures, but the system can be set for automatic response.

**Damage Control:** The DC computer alerts the crew about any damage that craft has received, the extent of that damage, and its repercussions on operational integrity. On larger vessels, the computer can activate remote DC systems to counteract or fix damage received. The main DC computer is located in the CIC of a capital military ship, but the forward, aft, port, and starboard sections of the ship all have auxiliary computers keyed just to those sections of the ship. On smaller craft, the DC computer simply alerts the pilot or driver (and on Raptors, the ECO) to any damage taken.

**Faster-Than-Light:** FTL drives have their own dedicated computer. This system takes the spatial coordinates entered by the Tactical Officer and runs them through complicated algorithms to make sure the FTL drive takes the ship to the correct location. The FTL computer also manages the star fixes of all jump coordinates, compensating for inertial drift that occurs naturally over time.

**Fire Control:** This computer manages a military vessel's primary offensive weapons, and any turrets or point defense systems. It also tells the appropriate crewmembers when to reload. On some craft, the Fire Control computer can target numerous individual bogeys with different turret guns.

Like the DC computer, control rooms on certain military vessels allow the ship's computerized gun control to be overridden.

**Navigation:** Commonly referred to as the Nav computer, this machine tracks a vehicle's position, monitor's the position of vessels and other objects in the vicinity, and coordinates the main power plant, FTL drives, sublight engines, or other propulsion. On larger ships, the Nav computer handles all piloting with guidance from the Tactical Officer. On smaller craft, such as a Viper or Raptor, it aids the pilot based on previously entered coordinates, but does not fly the craft itself.

### **DRADIS & Sensors**

All Colonial spacecraft feature a DRADIS (Direction, RANGE, and DISTance) system. DRADIS is used to detect and track artificial and natural bodies in a given range, depending on the strength and sophistication of a vessel's sensory network. A peerless navigational tool, DRADIS is also interconnected with a complex combat tracking system capable of identifying friends and foes. When coupled with satellite or other reconnaissance technology and sensor programs, such as those found on a Raptor, it can perform area sweeps on planetary surfaces. It can be programmed to scan for any number of targets, included environmental or terrain conditions, scarce resources, enemy activity, or even downed friendlies.

DRADIS is also used in stationary operations, such as bases, airports, anchorages, and space stations, to maintain area integrity and act as a guidance control.

DRADIS is far from perfect. Some carbon composite materials are largely invisible to DRADIS scans. Weapons or other items made from such materials often pass through DRADIS check-points. Still, carbon composites are fragile and even minor impacts may splinter or break them. Not the most ideal weapon material.

Many of dedicated sensor systems are tied in with DRADIS in some way. Sensors are used to detect life signs or locate water or tylium in dense asteroid fields. They are also used to monitor a vessel's integrity and internal conditions, reporting problems or anomalies to technicians who manually adjust life support and damage control subsystems.

Certain spatial or environmental anomalies play havoc on sensor systems. Asteroid fields, radiation clouds, particle fields, intense storms, and thick atmospheric debris render DRADIS all but useless. That helps keep the surviving fleet from Cylon prying eyes, but does the same for the toasters. Continual human recon, and constant movement are the best solutions.

DRADIS has specific, though limited uses in planetcraft. A car does not use DRADIS, but a commercial airliner and a oceanic submersible most certainly would. Military terrain-superiority forces—from tanks to helicopters and beyond—also use DRADIS to secure a given area.

Use the Alertness + Technical Engineering to detect anomalies using DRADIS. Use Intelligence + Technical Engineering when deciphering the results of a scan.

## Wireless

Wireless is a short and medium-range communication system that uses the electromagnetic spectrum to send and receive messages. Wireless shortwave communication is very limited, easily interfered with by mass (objects in space, mountains on a planet), radiation, distance, and the angle and quality of wireless projectors and receptors. Smaller wireless systems may be able to receive signals from larger systems, but cannot reply simply due to limited power. Small communication satellites or “drones” can be deployed to boost wireless signals, granting much greater range.

While equipped with an advanced wireless system for ship-to-ship and ship-to-planet communication, the *Galactica* uses a hard-wire system for internal communication that makes such communication much more secure.

## VEHICLE STAT BLOCK EXAMPLE

### [1] **GALACTICA**

[2]**Agi** d6, **Str** d12+d4, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d8, **Int** d8, **Wil** d10; [3]**LP** 26; [4]**Init** d6+d8; [5]**Scale** Spacecraft;

[6]**Speed** 5 (SL/JC)

[7]**Traits** Formidable Presence (d4), Destiny (d12), Loved (d6), Past It's Prime (d4)

[8]**Skills** Heavy Weapons d6, Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d6, Pilot d4

[9]**Armament** Heavy planetcraft scale skirmish range point defense system(d12); 24 spacecraft scale capital range primary assault railguns (d12+d2); 12 spacecraft scale short DRADIS range missile systems (d12+d4); 12 spacecraft scale short DRADIS range nuclear missile systems (d12+d8); 80 Vipers (full stock), 20 Raptors, 12 assorted craft

[10]**Armor** Wound 6, Stun 4

[11]**Description** 4,593 x 1,725 x 739 feet; **Crew** 3,100; **Passengers** 7,000

1. Vehicle name or design.
2. Attributes are Agility (Agi), Strength (Str), Vitality (Vit), Alertness (Ale), Intelligence (Int), Willpower (Wil).
3. Life Points equals the maximum value of Strength + Willpower dice.
4. Initiative combines the Agility die with the Alertness die for autonomous functions. One or more of a driver's, pilot's, or captain's Attributes often factors into Initiative.
5. Scale is planetcraft or spacecraft.
6. Speed capacity during combat is abstracted by the Speed Class number. SL and JC mean “sublight capable” and “jump capable,” respectively
7. Assets or Complications, if any.
8. Skills and Specializations, if any.
9. Armament and weaponry, with scale, range, and damage, if any.
10. Armor against Wound and Stun damage, if any.
11. Vehicle dimensions (length, breadth, and height), crew, passenger and cargo capacity, and other relevant information.

Wireless serves key air and space traffic control and communication needs for military and civilian craft. It's most widespread use was, and still remains, civilian entertainment, such as the Talk Wireless Network.

## SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications are the details of a starship or planetcraft's stat block. Some of these components have no direct game mechanic. They are simply useful in determining what a vehicle looks like, how much it can carry, its mission, how many crew or passengers it may take on, etc. Others are specifically game-oriented and are used when the ship is involved in combat or a dramatic maneuver.

## VEHICLE ATTRIBUTES

Vehicles have six Attributes, just as player characters do, but their interpretation is slightly different (see tables across). Attributes with a rating of zero are possible.

### Agility

A craft's Agility represents its reaction speed and maneuverability. Agility 0 indicates an orbiting base or space station, such as Ragnar Anchorage, that has only minimal attitude control.

### Strength

A vehicle's Strength represents both its size and power as well as its toughness. Strength 0 shows something barely able to hold itself together.

### Vitality

Vitality reflects the reliability of the craft and how much "babying" it might need to repair and maintenance. Vitality may be temporarily reduced to zero, but only as a result of neglecting routine maintenance.

### Alertness

Alertness characterizes the range and quality of a vehicle's DRADIS sensors and wireless communication equipment. Many civilian vessel owners skimp on electronics, installing only the bare minimum. The Colonial Fleet and Cylon ships tend to the opposite extreme. Alertness 0 is for vehicles, including most planetcraft, that have no sensors, communications, or avionics. It could also represent a spacecraft with its DRADIS system turned off or otherwise disabled.

## Intelligence

Almost all spacecraft have an autopilot—something elegant enough to follow simple course instructions and keep the craft from crashing during routine operations. More advanced planetcraft also have autopilots. Intelligence reveals the expert systems available in a vessel's control, navigation, and guidance suite. Intelligence 0 indicates manual controls with no autonomous capability at all.

## Willpower

Willpower represents the redundancy and safety margins built into the design of a vehicle. It measures the ability of a craft to operate under distress, to bypass malfunctioning systems, and to employ temporary fixes until more permanent repairs can be made. Willpower also measures how far it can be pushed beyond its design limitations.

## VEHICLE LIFE POINTS

Vehicle Life Points are calculated in a similar fashion the way character Life Points are calculated. One main difference is the use of a vehicle's Strength attribute over its Vitality attribute as sheer mass absorbs damage.

To get a vehicle's Life Point total, add its Strength + Willpower maximum die values.

## VEHICLE INITIATIVE

Initiative rolls are the same for vehicles as they are for characters—Agility + Alertness. The vessel's Attributes are used if it has autonomous capacity (an Intelligence Attribute) and if one of the autonomous functions is being used.

Planetcraft sometimes use the pilot/driver's Agility in initiative rolls, but the vehicle's maneuverability imposes a hard limit. If the pilot/driver has a higher Agility, use the vehicle's Agility.

Spacecraft don't care how agile their crew members are. Use the craft's Agility + the captain/pilot's Alertness in most initiative rolls.

It's theoretically possible that a vehicle's sensors might be very advanced, able to collect information around it better than its crew does. Even so, unless the vehicle is acting autonomously, it has to wait for the crew to catch up before acting. Use the captain/pilot/driver's Alertness in all non-autonomous cases.

## SPEED

In *Battlestar Galactica*, sublight speeds are capable of propelling starships hundreds if not thousands of miles per minute, allowing spacecraft to conveniently travel from planet to planet within a solar system.

**TABLE 6.1—VEHICLE ATTRIBUTES**

Agility	
Ability Score	Description
d2	Slow: Deep-space bulk refinery
d4	Ungainly: Heavy cargo transport, battlestar, truck
d6	Average: Passenger liner, Cylon heavy raider, military planet aero-fighter
d8	Good: Light cargo transport, Raptor
d10	Exceptional: Viper, Cylon raider
d12	Near perfect: Theoretical craft with the maneuverability of a hummingbird
Strength	
d2	Bare minimum: Escape pod, motorcycle
d4	Weak: Small transport, VTOL air-car
d6	Average: Gemenon Traveller, Viper, Marine interceptor boat
d8	Good: Large transport, Colonial One, Raptor
d10	Exceptional: Manufacturing spaceship
d12	Massive: Battlestar, basestar
Vitality	
d2	Highly delicate, prone to regular breakdowns
d4	In need of regular service
d6	Performs well with standard maintenance
d8	Newer model or design requires low maintenance
d10	New model or design has redundant systems built in
d12	Fresh-off-the-line model
Alertness	
d2	Rudimentary: Only the barest DRADIS nav-sat, wireless access, and communications equipment; planetcraft with avionics rise to this level
d4	Basic: Typical needs for a privately owned civilian vessel, including long range emergency drone for distress situations
d6	Average: Standard commercial vessel
d8	Good: Standard military vessel
d10	Excellent: Colonial Fleet listening post
d12	Amazing: Expensive DRADIS and Wireless gear designed to scan all spectrums, and analyze all frequencies
Intelligence	
d2	Bare-bones: Can make only basic corrections, stop in emergencies, or sound an alarm
d4	Substandard: Can handle mundane flight details, and issue automated responses to communication attempts
d6	Average: Can auto-calculate a flight plan with correct input, account for unusual (but not unfamiliar) anomalies during flight
d8	Good: Fast response and crash avoidance, auto-landing routine on predictable terrain
d10	Excellent: Auto-checks sensor information to verify its accuracy, extensive emergency response programming
d12	Amazing: Can handle most flight details without pilot assistance
Willpower	
d2	Rudimentary: Auxiliary life-support if needed, but little else
d4	Basic: Automatically seals bulkheads at critical sections, backups available for most critical systems
d6	Average: Able to maintain optimal function after modest damage
d8	Good: Most systems have an auxiliary backup
d10	Excellent: Damage containment protocols and redundant backup systems allow craft to function after significant damage
d12	Amazing: Modular, redundant system designs and integrated emergency procedures allow vehicle to function even after extensive damage

Differences in sublight speed capacities exist, but they are largely irrelevant in combat systems. At that speed, there's no time for maneuvering or shooting at passing targets. For the most part, the only important factor is if a craft has sublight capacity (noted by the designation SL).

In combat, Speed Class comes into place. This is an abstract number summarizing the speed and maneuverability of the craft. It is used when attempting to keep a target in range of certain armaments. Speed Class 0 is very slow, the territory of characters and flat-bottom boats. Armored vehicles are not much faster at Speed Class 1, helicopters are Speed Class 3, and aero-fighters reach Speed Class 5. In atmosphere, a Viper can push Speed Class 6; in space, the fighter can get up to Speed Class 8.

FTL jump capable vehicles are given the notation JC.

**Quirks:** A vessel may have one or more tweaks that have no direct game effect, but are interesting enough to provide Plot Points to those characters who interact with it on a regular basis. One example might be a ship that groans and shudders whenever the FTL drive is spun up. Although it has no effect on the performance of the FTL, life is more interesting for those aboard. Game Masters and players are encouraged to invent bits of flavor like this—especially as time goes on and modifications are more prevalent. Characters should stay on their toes—no telling when an oddity graduates from personality to imminent danger. Whenever a quirk results in a problem (e.g., a spark from a conduit distracts the engineer's attention at a critical moment), the GM should award Plot Points to the player.

**Assets and Complications:** These are, just as in the case of characters, significant features that distinguish

### TABLE 6.2—VEHICLE TRAITS

Trait	Type	Description
Allure	Asset	Bonuses come into play when craft's appearance is a factor; see Chapter Three
Destiny	Asset	Has a role to play; see Chapter Three
Loved	Asset	Crew has a deep connection with vehicle
Mass-Produced	Complication	Common model
Memorable	Complication	Easy to recognize; See Chapter Three
Past It's Prime	Complication	Older and prone to problems
Short-Range	Complication	Flies only short-range

## VEHICLE TRAITS

Quality control, especially as the fleet gets farther and farther from the Colonies, varies widely. Might as well throw out the official specification-sheets of any given vessel. Crews simply do the best they can to keep everything in working order. As the ship is repaired and modified, "work arounds" are devised. This creates any number of oddities in a craft. A similar process occurs in any older planetcraft that's seen a lot of service.

Unusual or special features can also be part of a vehicle's design. That means they arise even in a new planetcraft or spacecraft.

The sum total of a vehicle's eccentricities make it unique, even among those of the same make, model, or class. It's these features that lead some to view the craft as having a personality. Most of the time, the oddities are minor quirks, but sometimes they become so pervasive that they become Assets or Complications.

one vehicle from another. A list of Traits suitable for a vehicle appear above (some are versions of personal Traits, a few are unique to vehicles). At the GM's discretion, other character Traits from **Chapter Three: Traits & Skills** can be applied to vehicles, performing in a similar manner.

### TABLE 6.3—VEHICLE SKILLS

Skill	Description
Athletics	Collision avoidance systems
Covert	Stealth programming
Heavy Weapons	Automatic targeting
Knowledge	Internal encyclopedia/database
Mechanical Engineering	Interactive maintenance manual
Perception	DRADIS and internal security checks
Pilot	Autopilot/autonav

## POINT DEFENSE SYSTEM

Battlestars, other capital spacecraft, and even some larger planetcraft have point defense systems (PDS). Numerous defense autocannons or machine guns are located along the length of the vessel in a twin-mounted configuration, capable of a high rate of fire using an electronically controlled feed system. The PDS is designed to intercept and destroy incoming projectiles or ships through the use of dedicated DRADIS-like sensors. The fire command system identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes targets, destroying them by creating a defensive kill-zone around the ship.

Unfortunately, PDSs cannot be used effectively in conjunction with an IFF (Identify Friend or Foe) system. Thus, even friendly vessels must steer clear of the kill zone when the PDS is active.

### Loved [d4]

Crew can come to “love” their vehicle, particularly a spacecraft that they live and work on for long periods of time. Commander Adama’s love for *Galactica* is a good example. This love is similar to that a person has for a nation or a branch of armed services. It’s about being part of something. The craft is as much a symbol of that “something” as it is a mechanical construct. Loved for a military ship includes pride of cause and a shared duty station. Civilian ships are Loved as homes and livelihoods.

The crew of a Loved ship can spend personal Plot Points on rolls using the ship’s Attributes or Skills, even if the characters aren’t directly involved.

### Mass-Produced [d4]

This vehicle is so common that even the most grounded Colonial has heard of it and knows a few things about it. That means everyone knows its particular capabilities and weakness, and it’s easy to acquire parts. Fleet vessels outside the smallest classes don’t qualify for this Trait due to the “one-of-a-kind” way they are ordered and built.

When trying to exploit the known features of the design, or scrounge up spare parts, a character receives a +2 Skill step. The exploiter must have knowledge of the model in question; a GM should allow an Average (7) Intelligence + Knowledge or Mechanical Engineering roll to recall the right details.

### Past It’s Prime [d6]

The vehicle is starting to show obvious signs of wear and tear. At any given time, the GM can impose a repair problem or increase a maintenance task’s Difficulty by as much as eight points.

### Short Range [d4]

The vehicle is equipped with only reaction thrusters (chemical rockets, etc.) and its range is very limited. It was designed for ship-to-ship transport, or between a world and its immediate satellites. Traveling from one planet to another would literally take years. Short Range vessels are generally not equipped with regenerative life support systems—supplies of air and water are limited to four days at best.

**TABLE 6.4—MAW ARMAMENTS**

Scale	Weapon	Range	Damage
Planetcraft	Light	Personal	d4 W
	Medium	Skirmish	d8 W
	Heavy	Skirmish	d12 W
Spacecraft	Light	Skirmish	d4 W
	Medium	Skirmish	d8 W
	Heavy	Capital	d12 W

## VEHICLE SKILLS

A vessel’s Skills represent the software programs and hardwired operational capacities. Given the sophistication of Colonial computers, these Skills are limited to a maximum of d6. They simply do not have the capacity to go beyond general areas of knowledge. (A GM may wish to make an exception here if appropriate to a given campaign.)

Planetcraft usually do not have skills, but may if sufficiently advanced.

## ARMAMENT

Colonial Law disallowed weaponry on most non-military craft, reserving offensive vehicles for the Colonial Fleet, for the Colonial Marines, and for local police forces. All Cylon vehicles encountered to date have been heavily armed.

The primary vehicle armament is a mass accelerator weapon (MAW). This kinetic weapon propels a projectile at high velocity. It can deliver a simple slug (or bullet) or a complex package (an explosive or nuclear warhead) to its target. MAWs project their munitions a number of ways, but the most common are through chemical reaction, such as gunpowder or in the case of missiles and rockets, through fuel-based engines.

Vehicle weaponry usually follows the craft's mission design. If intended to combat personnel, the weapons are personal scale and feature anti-personal munitions. If focused on destroying planetcraft or spacecraft, that scale and shaped-charge, anti-armor are the norm.

The armament section of a vehicle's specifications also lists any attack craft or other vehicles a larger vessel houses.

### Autocannons and Machineguns

Autocannon, machinegun, or firearm technology has advanced little in the last few centuries. From a cost standpoint, the technology is effective as hell. The weapons use a chemical propellant to fire projectiles at a high rate. The shells or rounds can be solid or, if large enough, explosive. Solid slugs rely on velocity and impact to rip through a target; explosive rounds detonate on impact.

**TABLE 6.5—RAILGUN ARMAMENTS**

Scale	Weapon	Range	Damage
Spacecraft	Light	Capital	d6
	Medium	Short DRADIS	d10
	Heavy	Short DRADIS	d12+d2

Auto-cannon weaponry is primarily point-and-shoot, relying on the coordinated convergence of ammunition at a point in front of the vehicle and the experience of the pilot or gunner (using a computer-aided aim-locking system) to bring down an enemy target. Glowing tracer ordinance also aids a pilot or gunner in guiding shots to the target.

### Railguns

Another form of MAW is a railgun. These large weapons use magnetic acceleration to propel an electrically conductive projectile. On a large vessel such as the *Galactica*, which houses a massive electromagnetic power plant (for both synthetic gravity and

FTL needs), railguns can be devastating. Small spacecraft can't support railguns. Only the largest planetary vehicles, such as an aircraft

carrier or naval destroyer would possess such armaments, and even then only rarely.

### Missiles

No matter the method of propulsion, slug munitions have limited use against targets moving at extreme velocities, or featuring of great maneuverability. Most military spacecraft, and many military planetcraft carry a store of self-propelled missiles. These munitions are capable of locking onto a target and tracking it as it moves.

Missiles can be fitted with a variety of explosive or armor-piercing warheads. For example, the HD-70 Lightning Javelin Missile series carried by Vipers can be loaded with a 50-megaton nuclear package.

Cylon basestar armaments appear to rely entirely upon chemically propelled missiles, and not slug or railgun technology. In general, Cylon space tactics rely more on the mass proliferation of raiders for offense and defense than ship-mounted weapon systems.

Missile systems can deliver a variety of armaments.

**Blast-Explosive:** Blast warheads damage their targets through the use of temperature and shock. They are muted by the vacuum of space. Decrease weapon damage by two Steps in those circumstances, to a minimum of d2.

**Cluster:** These munitions contain dozens or hundreds of small self-contained explosives. Once the missile reaches its targeted area, the bombs are scattered in a wide pattern before exploding, causing damage over a large area, to multiple targets.

**Decoy:** This complex warhead mimics radio, heat, or material signatures of a particular ship, drawing targeted munitions away from the real McCoy.

**EMP:** Electromagnetic pulse warheads generate an extremely powerful but short wave of magnetic energy that fries any unshielded electronics—computers, nav systems, sensors, comms—within range. This weapon does Stun damage to vehicles.

**Fragmentation:** These warheads are packed with explosives and a massive number of small, solid metal fragments. Upon detonation, they create a cloud of kinetic damage. For example, the C3 Pepper Missile consists of 10,000 steel-wire darts that spray radially from the point of detonation.

**Jammer:** This defensive warhead is used against incoming missile attacks. Jammers can be electrical- or material-based. Their objective is to fool or overload a weapon system, causing it to lose its target, or detonate prematurely.

**TABLE 6.6—MISSILE ARMAMENTS**

Scale	Weapon	Range	Damage
Planetcraft	Light	Skirmish	d8
	Medium	Skirmish	d12
	Heavy	Capital	d12+d4
Spacecraft	Light	Capital	d8
	Medium	Short DRADIS	d12
	Heavy	Short DRADIS	d12+d4
	Extreme	Long DRADIS	d12+d8

**Kinetic:** This load is simply an immense bullet. The solid slug of metal rips and tears through as much material as it can until its momentum is stopped or it disintegrates under the violence.

**Nuclear:** Nuclear packages are highly dangerous in space or in the atmosphere. They are also exceedingly rare. The fleet is incapable of producing nuclear weapons.

**Pyrotechnics:** These packages are used for signaling, illuminating an area or marking targets.

**Shaped Charge:** This warhead features a hollow lining of metal in a conical, hemispherical, or other shape, backed on the convex side by an explosive package. When it strikes a target, a charge is detonated from the rear, punching forward with devastating impact. It is designed to blow through the shell of thickly armored targets.

## ARMOR

Spacecraft hulls, like the human skin, are designed primarily to maintain ship integrity, keeping the ship together as well and foreign matter out. Most ships have minimal armor, sufficient mostly to ward off the tiny particles that float around space. Military vehicles, like the *Galactica*, have massive levels of armor strong enough to absorb a direct hit from a nuclear weapon. They don't shrug off such blows, but they can take one or two and still stay in a fight.

In the case of planetcraft, such as combat aero-fighters and space-superiority craft, every model struggles to balance performance (speed and maneuverability) with combat toughness (redundant systems and armor). Design tendencies shy away from armor. It's impossible to equip a fighter with armor sufficient to turn aside all but the most glancing hit. A fighter's best defense is to be fast and agile. That means minimum armor weight. The more extreme the turn or rotation possible, the better the chance of avoiding the hit in the first place.

All vehicles provide cover and some degree of protection, only specific planetcraft have significant

armor. These types of craft are military (and therefore combat-oriented) or have a strong overall need to be more durable and tough than needed on the average; for example, construction vehicles that work with dangerous materials.

Armor comes in two forms: Wound (damage resistant hull plating) and Stun (electronic hardening, radiation shielding, etc.).

## DESCRIPTION

Various bits of information are gathered in this portion of a vehicle's specifications. The size or mass of a craft, how many crew members it takes to operate the vehicle, how many passengers or how much cargo it can hold, atmospheric ceiling, and other information might be mentioned.

## COLONIAL SPACECRAFT

The exodus fleet formed under the leadership of President Laura Roslin in the immediate aftermath of the Cylon attack on the Twelve Colonies. Under the protection of the *Battlestar Galactica*, precious few of these ships were military in nature. Most were commercial and corporate vessels. A number were left behind simply because they lacked FTL capability. They were replaced when a large group of ships rendezvoused with the *Galactica* at the Ragnar Anchorage. Currently, the fleet numbers around 70 vessels.

## GALACTICA

*Battlestar Galactica*, the centerpiece of Battlestar Group 75 (BSG75), was one of the initial twelve battlestars commissioned by Fleet Command forty years ago, during the First Cylon War. The *Galactica* and her companion battlestars were built without integrated computers, to ward against the Cylons infecting and destroying them with viruses. During the decades of peace after the Armistice Treaty, Colonial Fleet ships were eventually upgraded with sophisticated, networked systems. In part due to Adama's intransigence on the subject, the *Galactica* underwent no such modernization.

At the time of the Cylon assault, the Colonial Fleet consisted of over 100 battlestars. The outmoded *Galactica* was in the process of being decommissioned and converted into a museum. In addition, she was stripped of nearly all munitions and Viper fighters, save a number of Mark IIs—



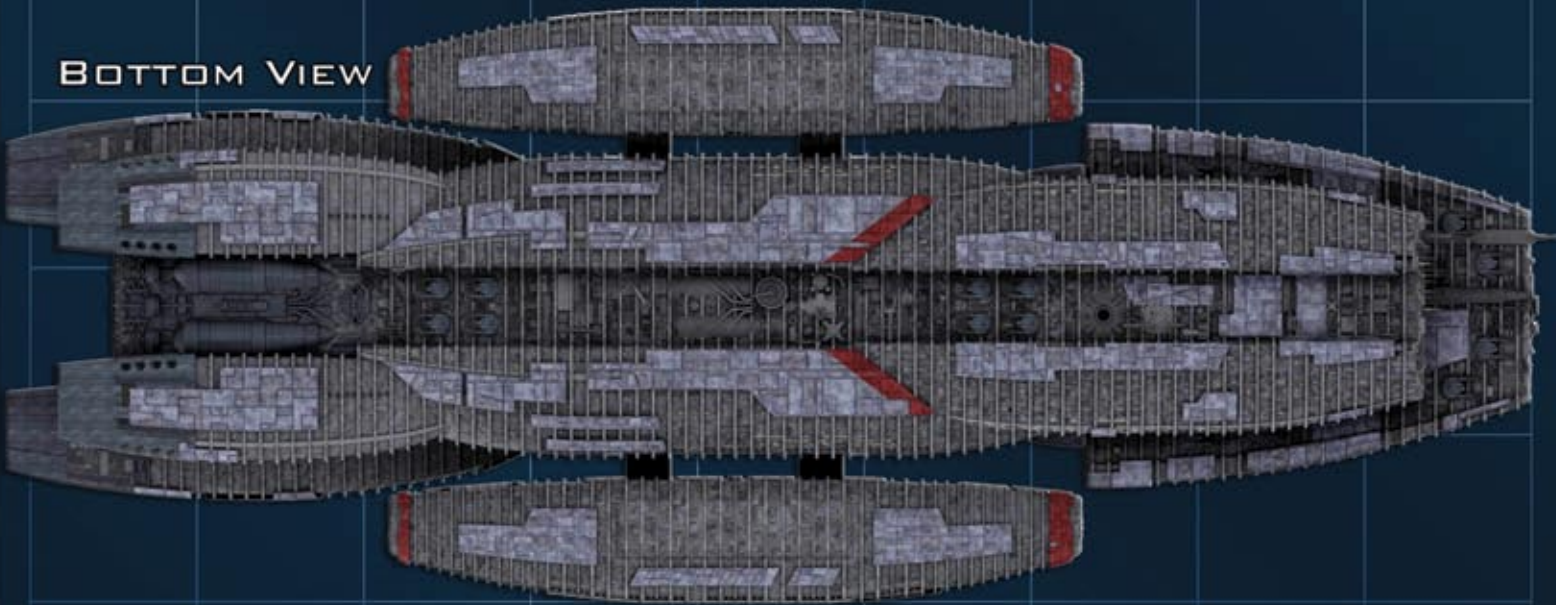
TOP VIEW



STARBOARD SIDE VIEW



BOTTOM VIEW



BOW VIEW

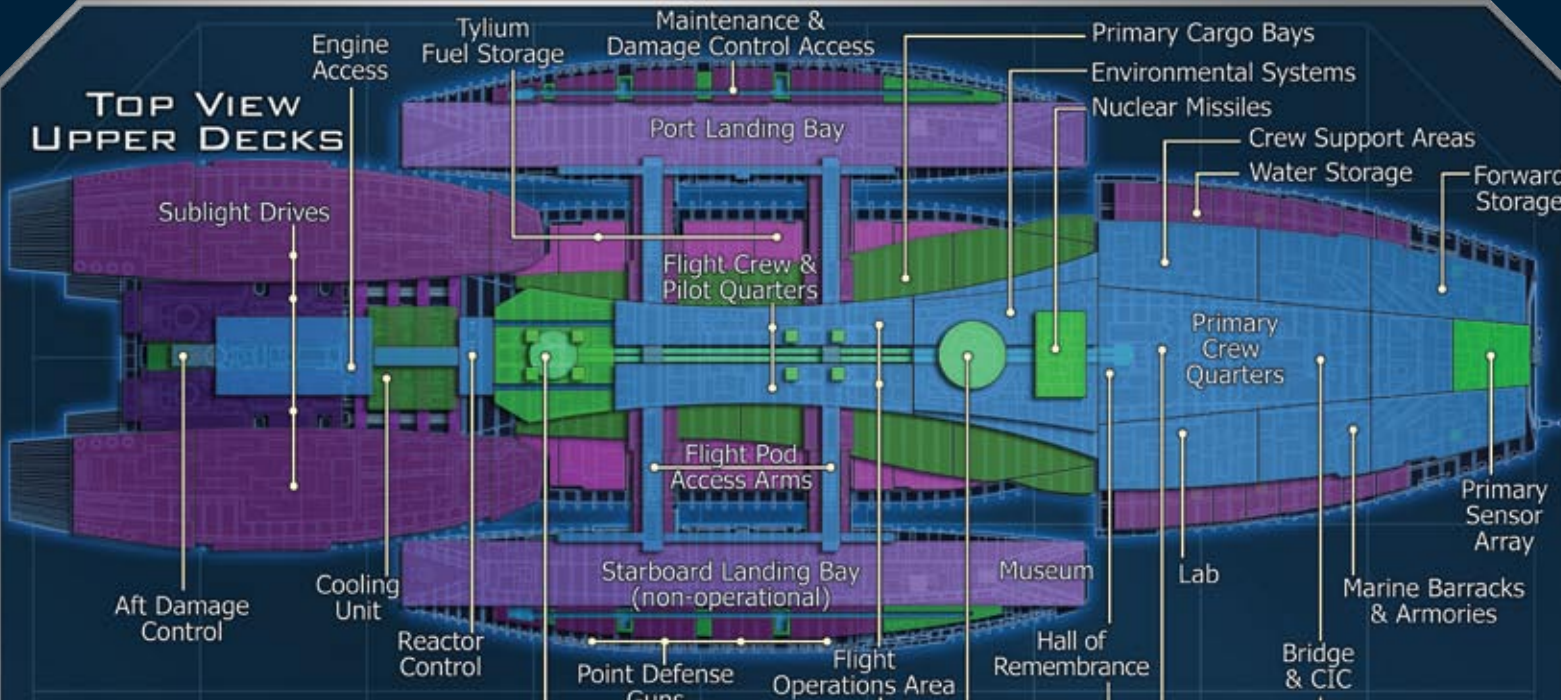


**GALACTICA**

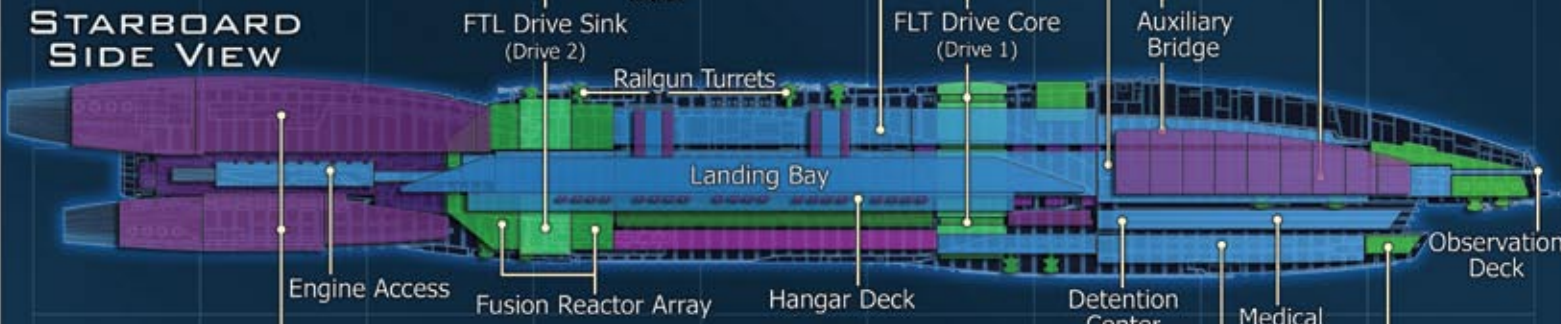
BSG 75



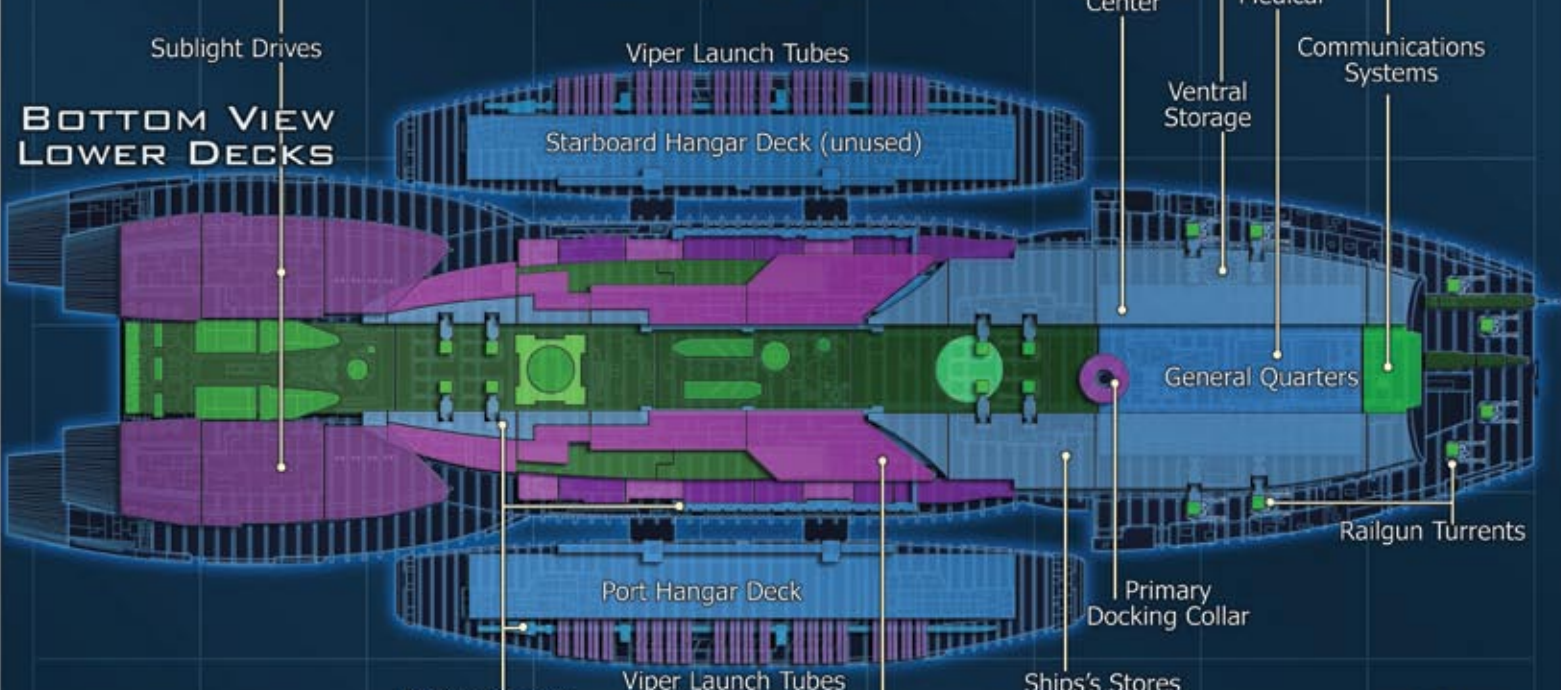
**TOP VIEW  
UPPER DECKS**



**STARBOARD  
SIDE VIEW**



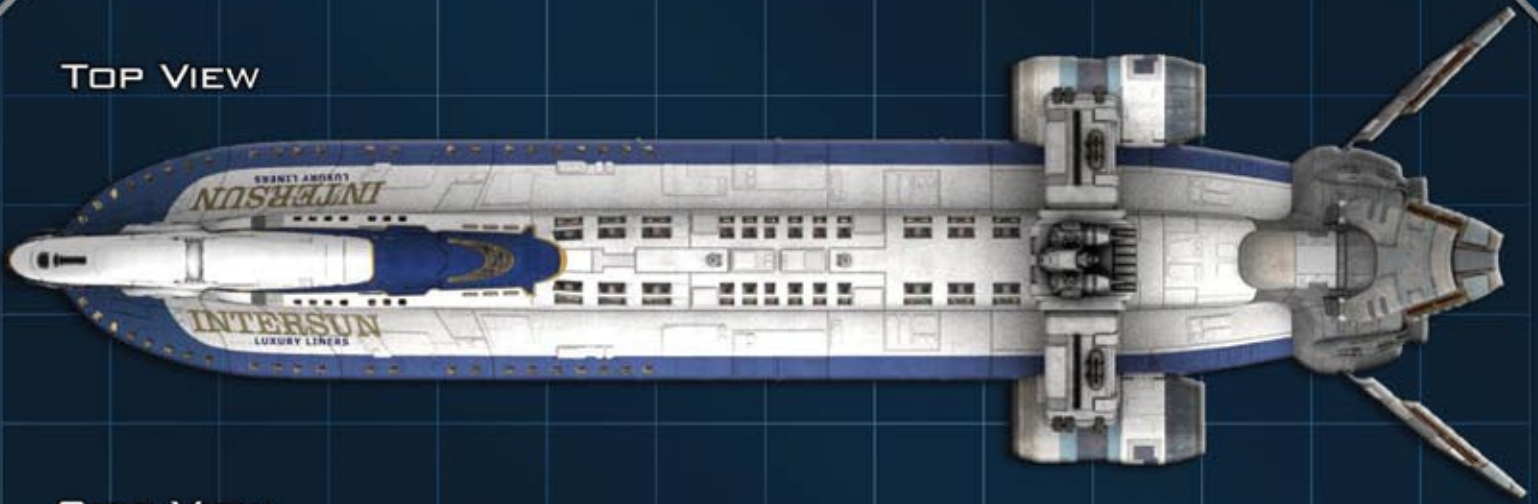
**BOTTOM VIEW  
LOWER DECKS**



**BOW  
VIEW**



TOP VIEW



SIDE VIEW



BOTTOM VIEW

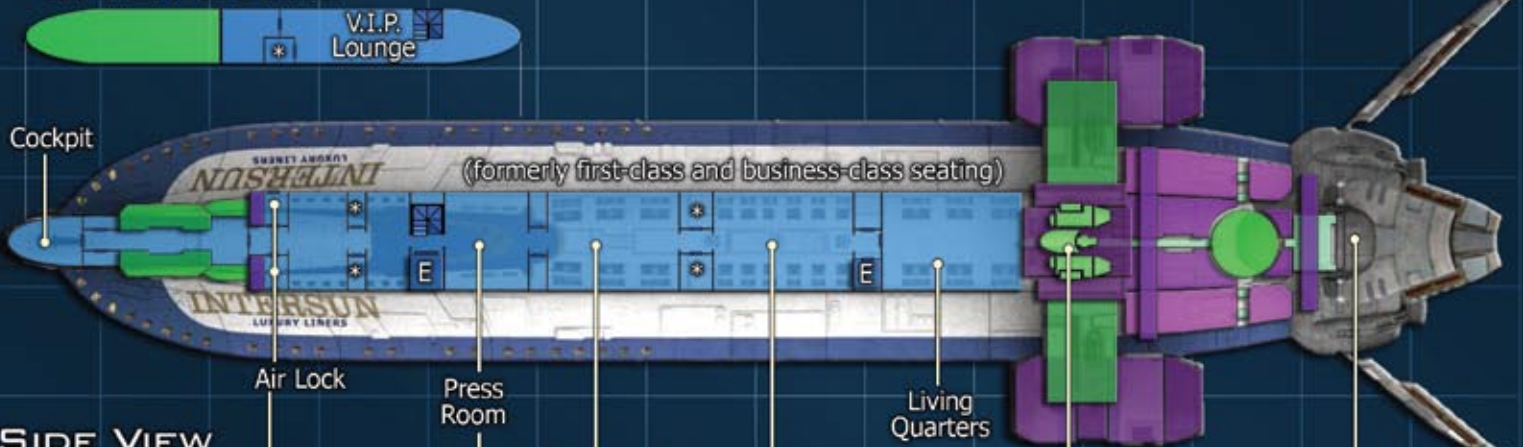


FRONT VIEW

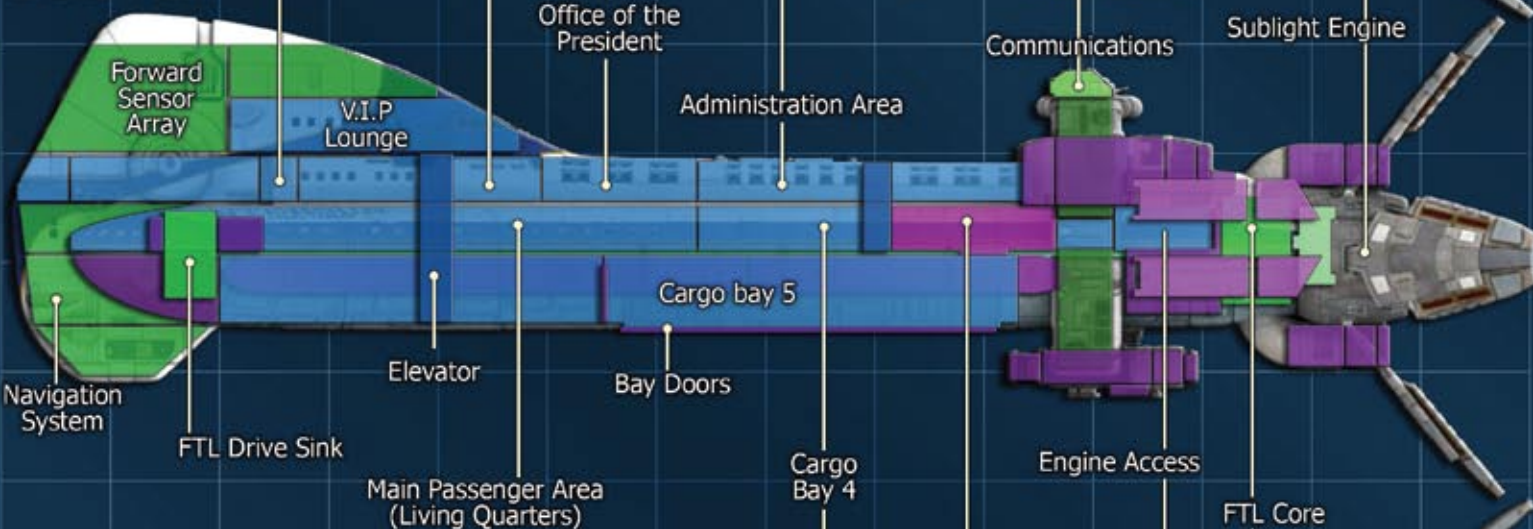


COLONIAL  
ONE

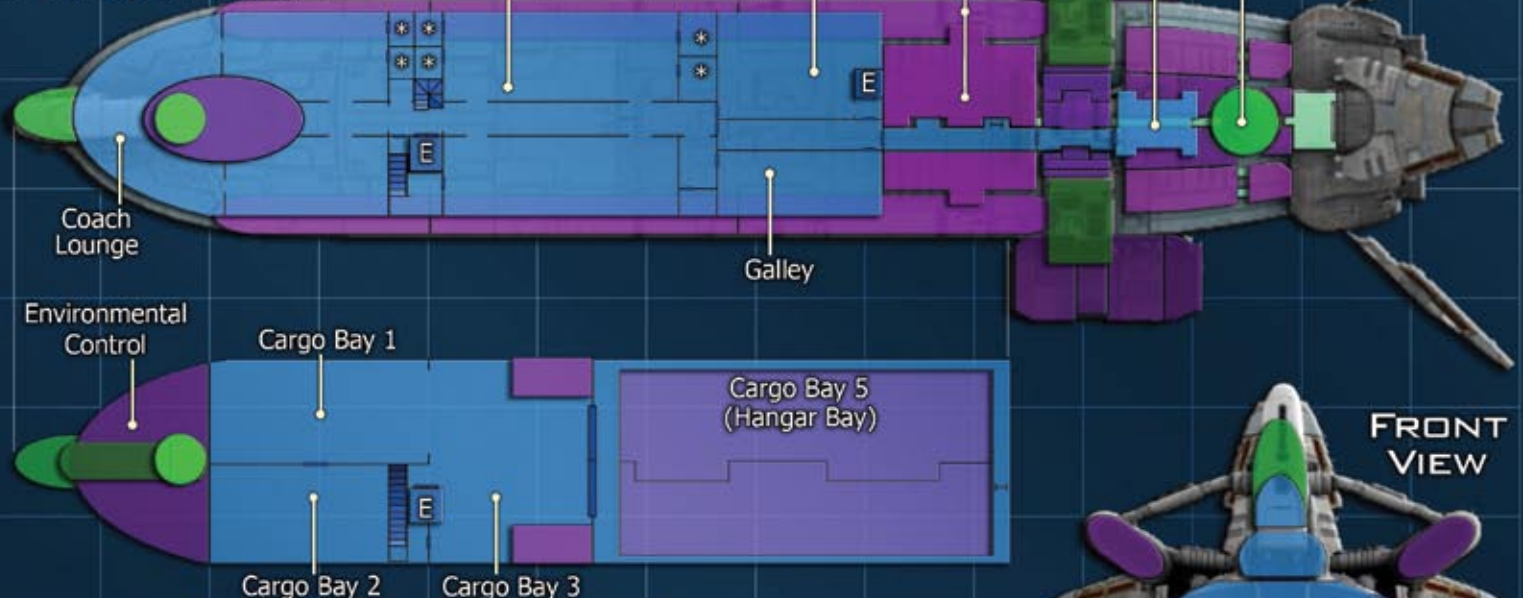
**TOP VIEW  
UPPER DECKS**



**SIDE VIEW**

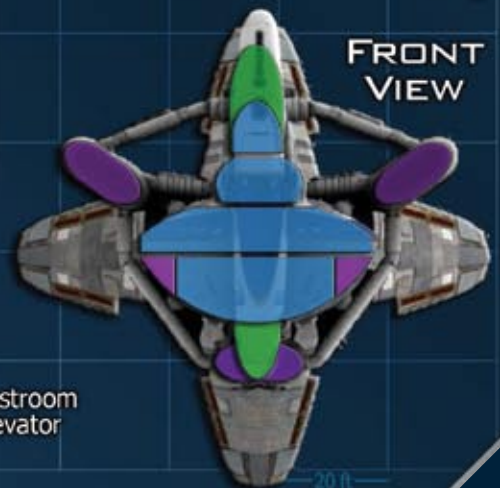


**BOTTOM VIEW  
LOWER DECKS**



Cargo Bay's 1-4 are currently living quarters.

**FRONT VIEW**



**COLONIAL  
ONE**

\* = Restroom  
E = Elevator

museum-grade fighters from the First Cylon War.

During the Cylon attack, Commander Adama was sorely pressed to join the fight. Then acting-President Roslin convinced him that a noble sacrifice would do nothing. Instead, the survivors would flee to fight another day. Since the exodus from the Twelve Colonies, *Galactica* has become the shepherd, guardian, and sometimes enforcer over a rag-tag fleet of civilian vessels with some 50,000 survivors.

For a vessel of its size, the *Galactica* is highly maneuverable. It has approximately 2,800 crewmembers, only a few hundred short of its typical compliment. Standard small vessel deployment for a battlestar is 132 Vipers, Raptors, and other support craft. Currently, the *Galactica* is lucky to have a third as many combat-ready.

### Galactica

**Agi** d6, **Str** d12+d4, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d8, **Int** d8, **Wil** d10; **LP** 26; **Init** d6+d8; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 5 (SL/JC)

**Traits** Formidable Presence (d4), Destiny (d12), Loved (d6), Past It's Prime (d4)

**Skills** Heavy Weapons d6, Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d6, Pilot d4

**Armament** Heavy planetcraft scale skirmish range point-defense system (d12); 24 spacecraft scale capital range primary assault railguns (d12+d2); 12 spacecraft scale short DRADIS range missile systems (d12+d4); 12 spacecraft scale short DRADIS range nuclear missile systems (d12+d8); 80 Vipers (full stock), 20 Raptors, 12 assorted craft

**Armor** Wound 6, Stun 4

**Description** 4,593 x 1,725 x 739 feet; **Crew** 3,100;

**Passengers** 7,000

### COLONIAL ONE

At the time of the Cylon attack, Intersun starliner *Colonial Heavy 798* had been bonded to transport Secretary of Education Laura Roslin, her staff, and a large contingent of the Colonial news and media reporters to and from the *Galactica* for its decommissioning. A few hours after *Colonial Heavy 798's* departure from the *Galactica* for Caprica, the Cylons begin their massive assault. When news of the attack reached the starliner, Roslin took command of the ship. Soon after, she learned from the automated government broadcast system that she had become the acting-President of the Twelve Colonies. The captain of *Colonial Heavy 798* changed its designation to *Colonial One* in recognition of its newly elevated passenger.

As time went on, *Colonial One's* passenger capacity has been downgraded and the ship almost entirely converted to the official government use. Standard flying operations place *Colonial One* close to the *Galactica*, enhancing its security. If need be, *Colonial One* is small enough to land on one of *Galactica's* flight pod.

### Colonial One

**Agi** d6, **Str** d8, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d6, **Int** d4, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d6; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 6 (SL/JC)

**Traits** Memorable (d4)

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d4, Pilot d8

**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 1, Stun 2

**Description** 277 x 49 x 72 feet; **Crew** 15;

**Passengers** 150 (standard), 500 (emergency)

### ASTRAL QUEEN

When first commissioned, the *Astral Queen* was one of the most expensive and ostentatious luxury starliners in service. By the time of the Cylon attack, it had been replaced in the cruise ship business by fancier vessels. It was sold to a transport company and was being used for heavy hauling. When it joined the exodus fleet, the *Astral Queen* was hauling a large contingent of prisoners, some 1,500, to Caprica for patrol hearings.



### Astral Queen

**Agi** d4, **Str** d8, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d6, **Int** d4, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 14; **Init** d4+d6; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 4 (SL/JC)

**Traits** Infamy (d6)

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d2, Pilot d4

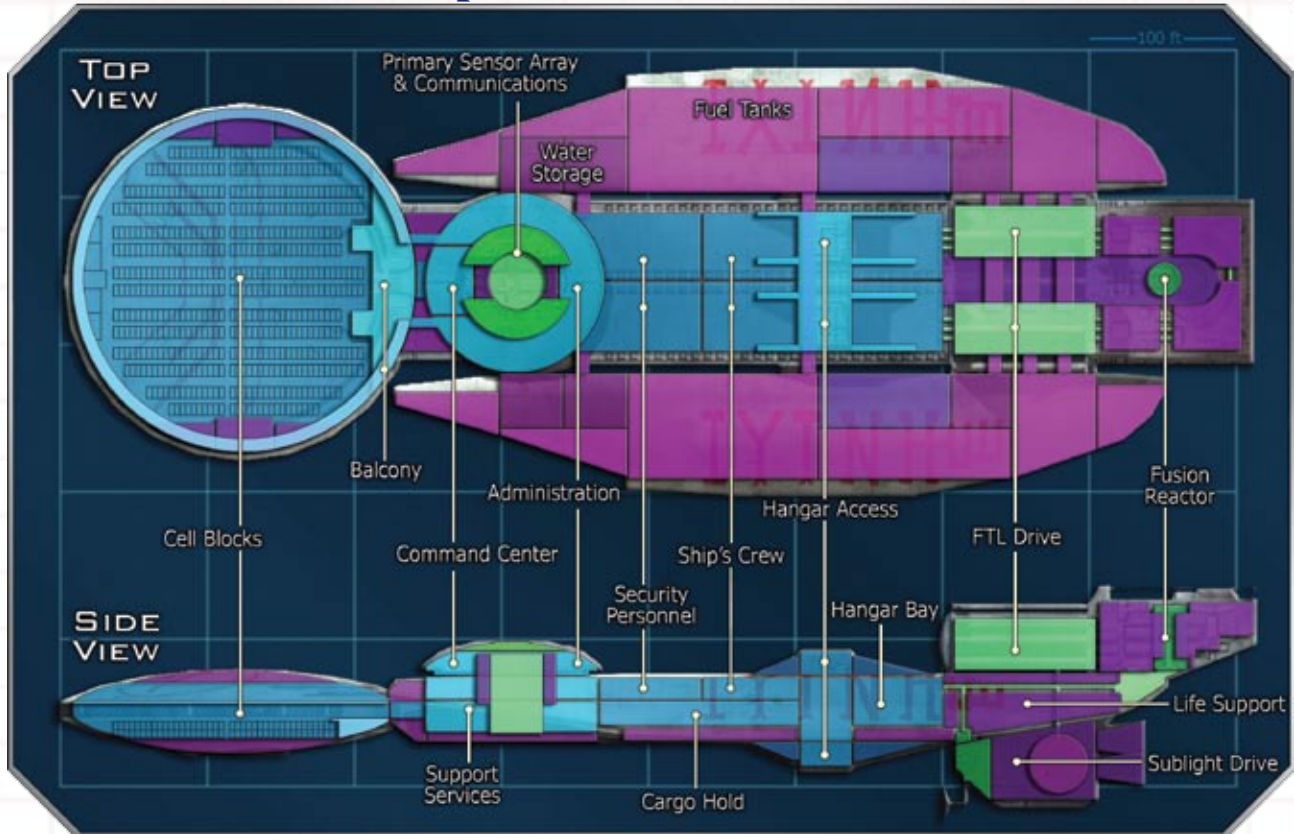
**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 2, Stun 2

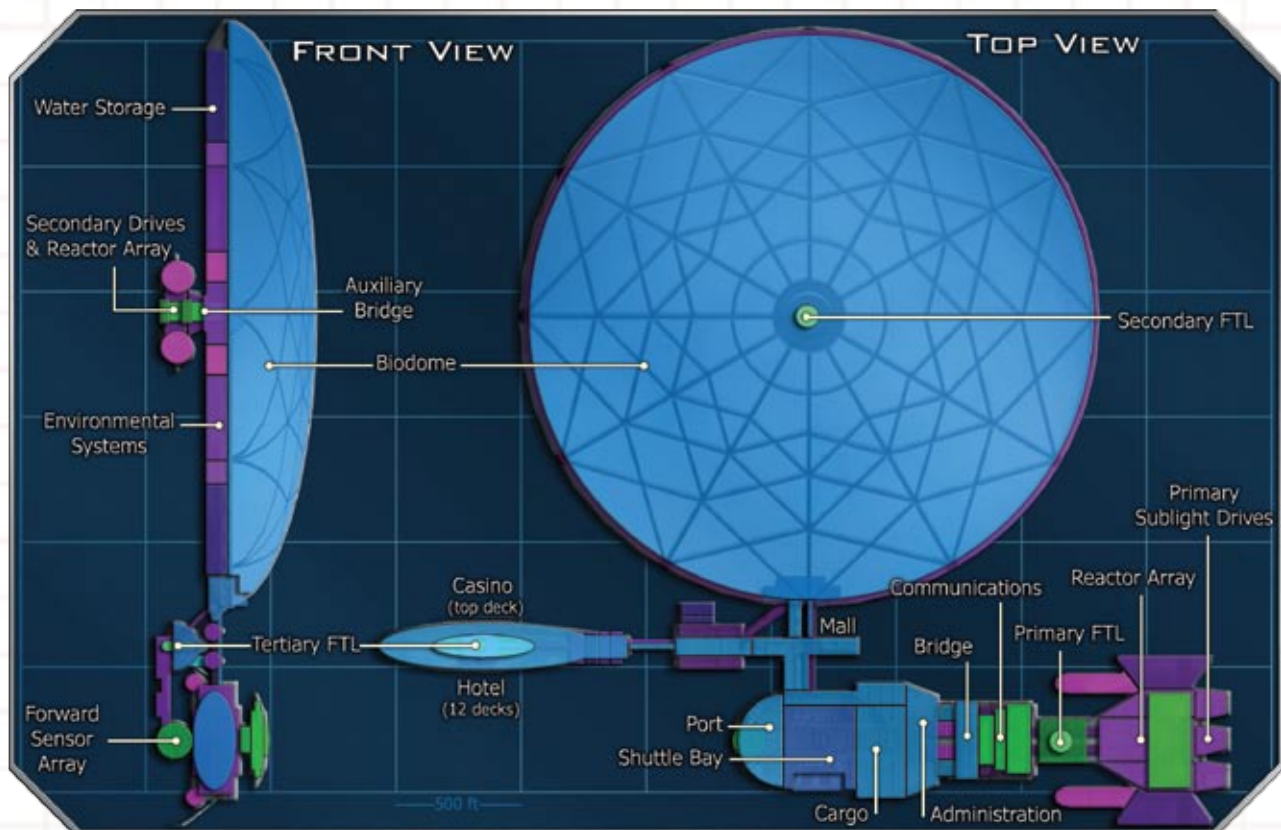
**Description** 846 x 321 x 209 feet; **Crew** 14;

**Penal Custodians** 10; **Convicts** 1,500

# ASTRAL QUEEN



VEHICLES



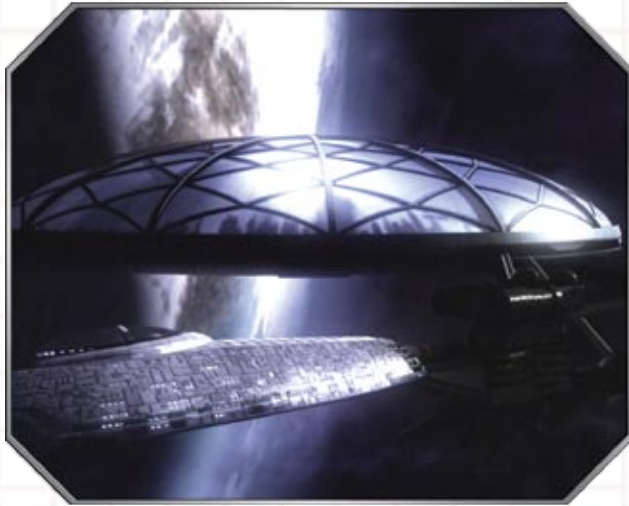
# CLOUD NINE

## CLOUD NINE

*Cloud 9* is a massive luxury liner. Heavily damaged during the Cylon attack, the ship has undergone significant repairs and was only recently returned to full service. Unlike most of the fleet, *Cloud 9* was designed as a living space, not unlike a hotel. It includes a huge pressurized dome that provides a fairly realistic simulation of a planetary surface. This artificial environment includes a pool, fountains, gardens, buildings, and an artificial skyscape. *Cloud 9* serves as the venue of Quorum of Twelve meetings.

### Cloud Nine

**Agi** d2, **Str** d8, **Vit** d8, **Ale** d6, **Int** d8, **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d2+d6; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 3 (SL/JC)  
**Traits** Allure (d2)  
**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d4, Pilot d6  
**Armament** None  
**Armor** Wound 1, Stun 2  
**Description** 3,428 x 3,618 x 1,012 feet; **Crew** 800;  
**Staff** 400; **Passengers** 1,000



## GEMENON TRAVELLER

The *Gemenon Traveller* is a heavy cargo transport. Thousands of this class of vessel used to ply Colonial spacelanes. Several survived to join the fleet, including the *Kimba Huta*, a cold-storage model. Given their versatility, massive cargo capacity, and overall reliability, these ships are very popular.

### Gemenon Traveller

**Agi** d4, **Str** d6, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d4, **Int** d4, **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 12; **Init** d4+d4; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 4 (SL/JC)  
**Traits** Mass-Produced (d4)  
**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d2, Perception d4, Pilot d6

**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 3, Stun 2

**Description** 197 x 58 x 71 feet; **Crew** 30;

**Passengers** 200 (using emptied cargo space)

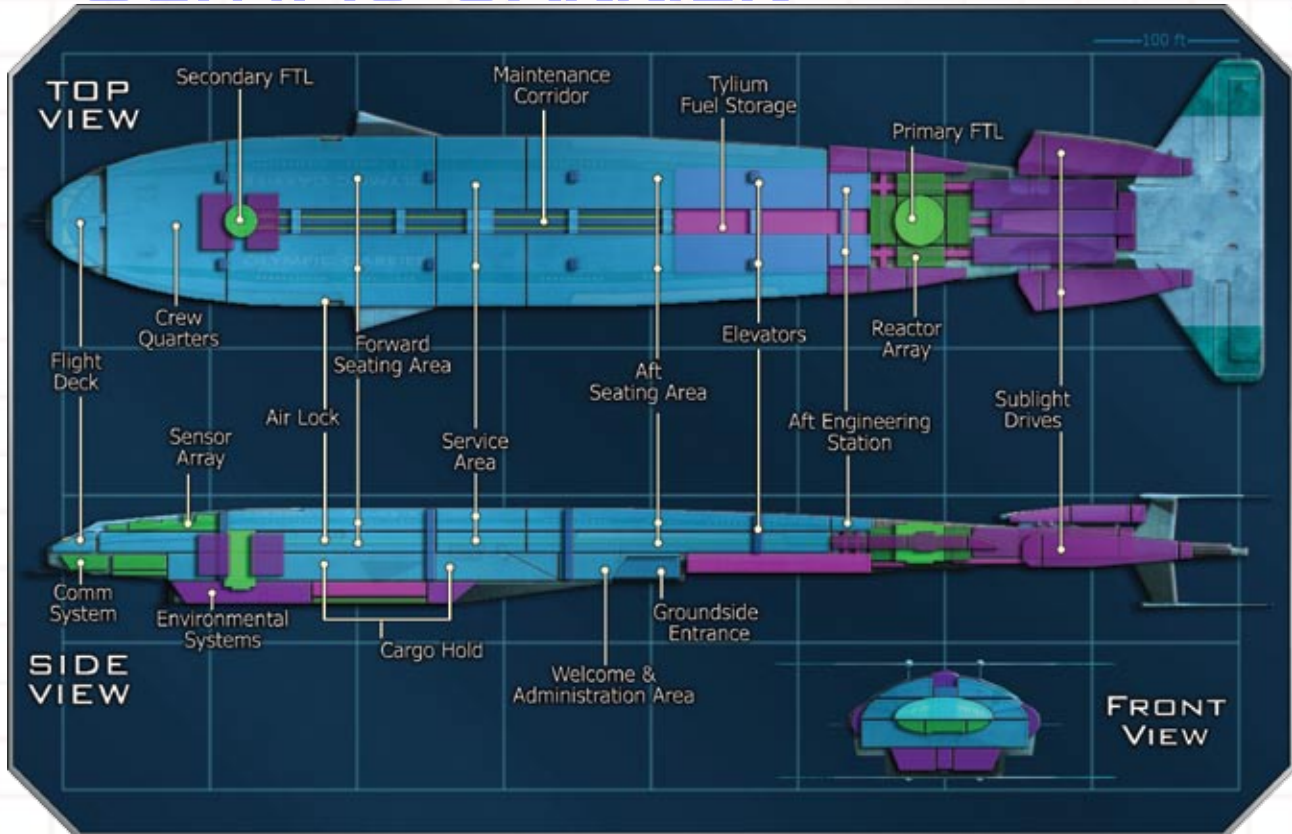


## OLYMPIC CARRIER

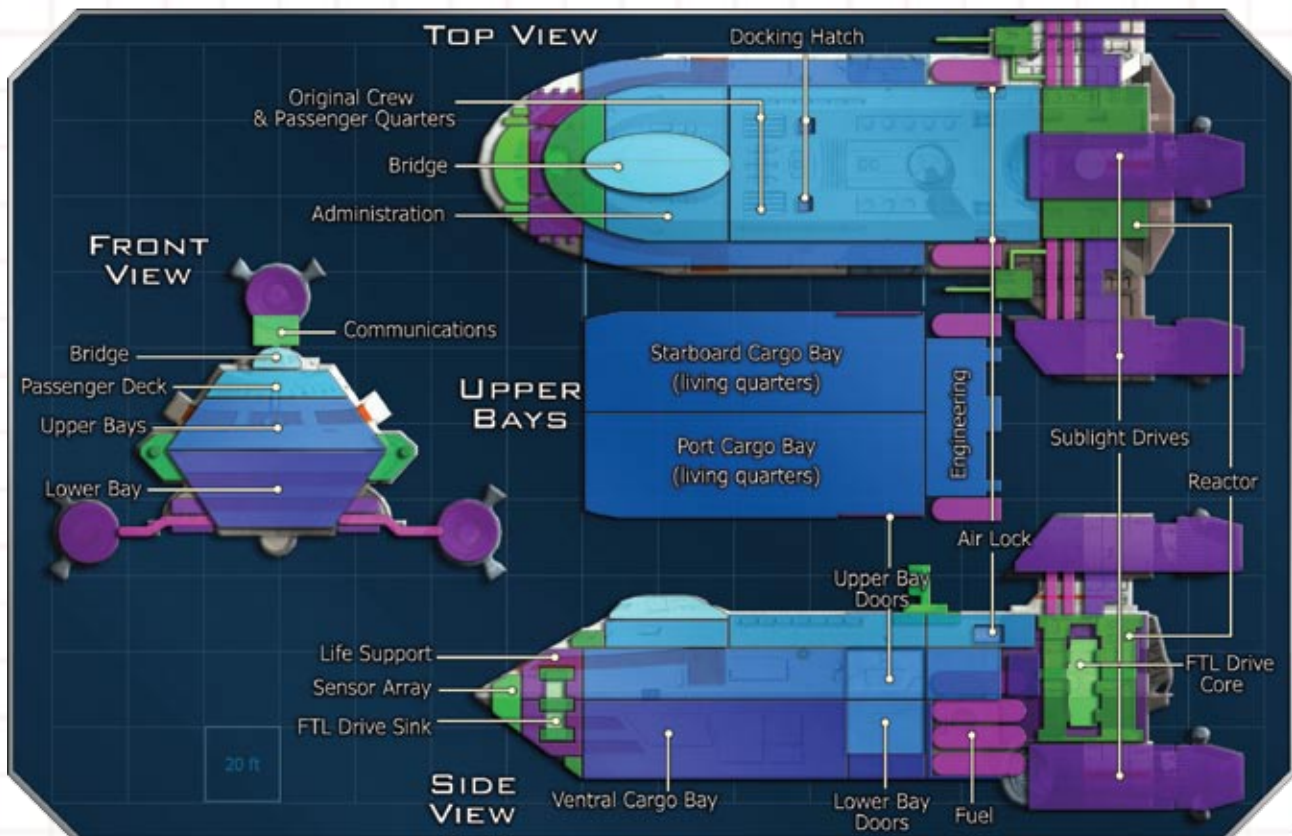
When the fleet fled the nebula surrounding Ragnar Anorage, the Intersun passenger liner, designated *Olympic Carrier*, was carrying 1,345 survivors, nearly a third more than standard operations capacity. After days of harried escape jumps, command became convinced that the Carrier was somehow broadcasting the fleet's position. When the vessel appeared three hours late at a jump point, *Galactica's* sensors detected a nuclear package aboard. Captain Adama, flying his *Viper*, was ordered to destroy the unarmed, civilian craft. All passengers are believed to have perished either by a Cylon invasion of the ship or by Adama's salvo.



# OLYMPIC CARRIER



VEHICLES



# GEMENON TRAVELLER



### Olympic Carrier

**Agi** d6, **Str** d16, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d6, **Int** d6, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 10; **Init** d6+d6; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 6 (SL/JC)

**Traits** Mass-Produced (d4)

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d2, Perception d2, Pilot d4

**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 1, Stun 1

**Description** 825 x 130 x 75 feet; **Crew** 25;

**Passengers** 500 (standard), 1,500 (emergency)

### VIPER MARK II

During the First Cylon War, Colonial pilots flew the Viper Mark II, a state-of-the-art fighter. After the war, more advanced versions of the fighter were developed. The old, stalwart Mark IIs were mothballed or scrapped. Only a few survived as museum curiosities or collectors' treasures. So it was that, fifty years later, the Mark IIs and its "low tech" systems were the only ones immune to the Cylons' CNP sabotage.

The Mark II, like all Vipers, is capable of both space and atmospheric missions. It is a single-seat craft armed with twin-mounted MEC-A6 30mm Thraxon forward-firing autocannons and a ventral weapon system for eight HD-70 Lightning Javelin missiles, which can be loaded with a 50-megaton nuclear payload. At the time of production, the Mark II was designed to resist Cylon attempts at overriding and disabling a fighter's control. Due to this, the Mark IIs controls are fairly simple, relying more on the pilot's skill than computer interfacing to manage the ship's flight system.

### Colonial Viper. Mark II

**Agi** d10, **Str** d6, **Vit** d8, **Ale** d8, **Int** d6, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 12; **Init** d10+d8; **Scale** Planetcraft;

**Speed** 8 (6 in atmosphere)

**Traits** Past It's Prime (d6)

**Skills** Perception d4, Pilot d4

**Armament** 2 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range MEC-A6 30mm Thraxon autocannons (d8); 8 medium planetcraft scale capital range HD-70 Lightning Javelin missiles (d12)

**Armor** Wound 3, Stun 2

**Description** 27.5 x 8.8 x 15.4 feet; **Crew** 1

### VIPER MARK VII

When the Cylons began their genocide of the Twelve Colonies, the Viper Mark VII was the premiere space superiority fighter in service. While the craft retained the general layout of the Mark II, it was loaded with the latest in networked systems,

providing superior battle management and combat information for the pilot. As with the majority of the Fleet vessels, it was programmed with the integrated CNP system that was compromised by the Cylons. Viper Mark VII's perished by the score when their controls went dead. At the time of the Cylon attack, the *Galactica* had at most a dozen Mark VII's onboard. The few surviving Mark VII's on *Galactica* have been retrofitted to accommodate older avionics systems.

### Colonial Viper. Mark VII

**Agi** d10, **Str** d6, **Vit** d8, **Ale** d8, **Int** d6, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 12; **Init** d10+d8; **Scale** Planetcraft;

**Speed** 8 (6 in atmosphere)

**Traits** None

**Skills** Perception d6, Pilot d6

**Armament** 3 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range MEC-A6 30mm Thraxon autocannons (d8); 8 medium planetcraft scale capital range HD-70 Lightning Javelin missiles (d12)

**Armor** Wound 4, Stun 3

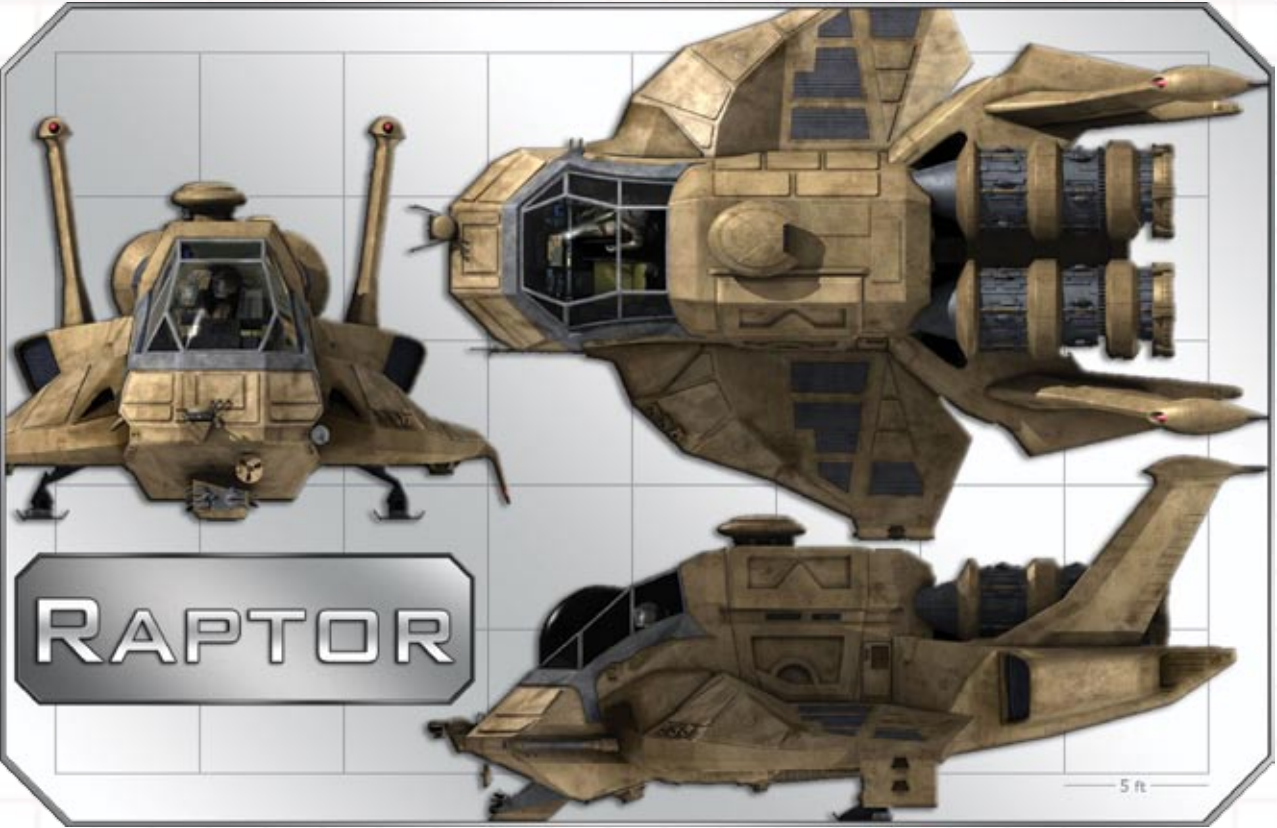
**Description** 32.4 x 9.7 x 18.4 feet; **Crew** 1



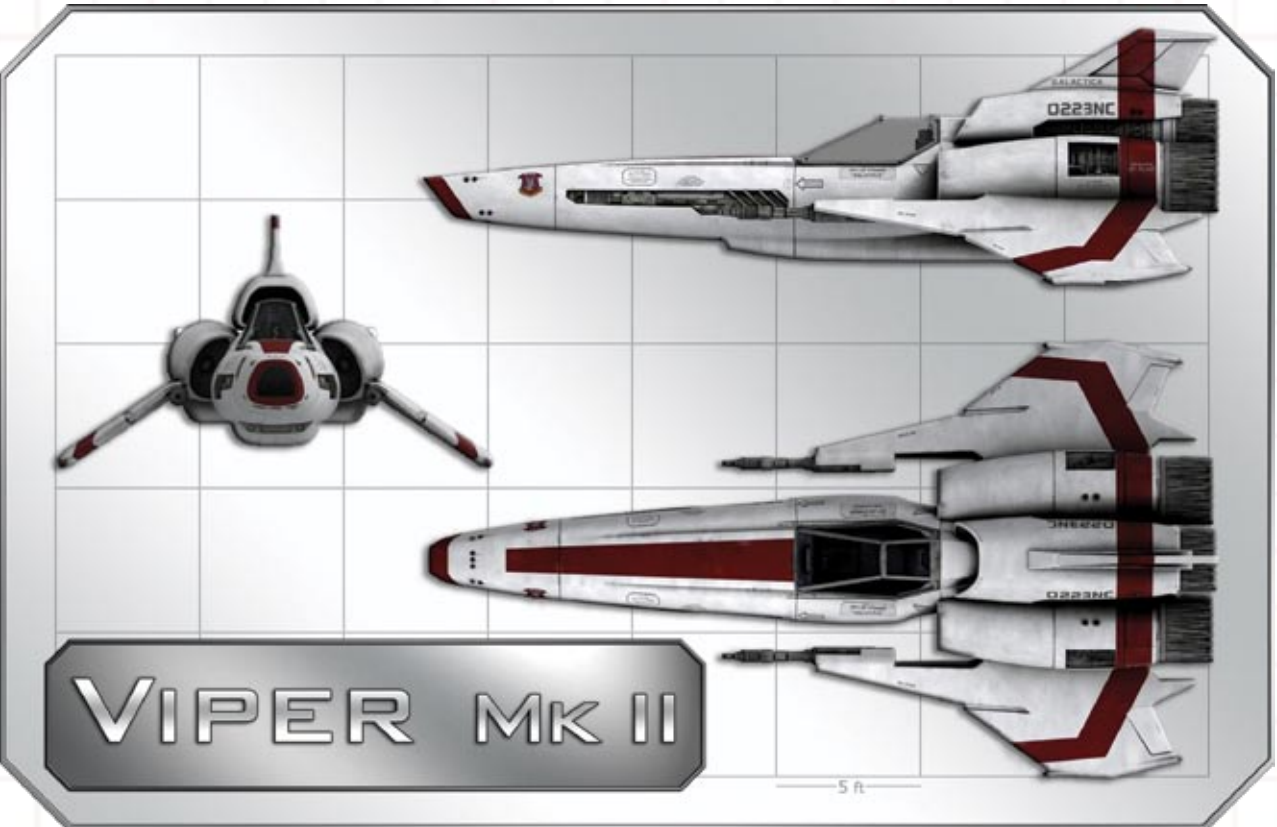
### RAPTOR

The Raptor is the Fleet workhorse. It was designed for a number of missions, including search and rescue, advance scouting, covert reconnaissance, and marine assault and EVAC. In group missions, it serves as communication and electronic warfare support for Viper attack squads. The Raptor is capable of atmospheric flight and has an FTL drive (it can make up to 20 jumps before refueling).

The Raptor is loaded with a full DRADIS package and advanced wireless, surveillance, and sensory systems. It can perform short and medium-range DRADIS scans, and analyze the data collected according to a number of parameters. Most frequently, the ship



RAPTOR



VIPER MK II

collects and reviews data from planetary surfaces, searching for minerals, atmospheric conditions, or signs of life.

As a transport vessel, the Raptor is capable of carrying ten marines and their assault gear.

Due to its shape, bulk, and relatively slow speeds, the Raptor is not a good fighter craft. It was not designed for space superiority missions. Normally unarmed, the craft has several hardpoints which can carry small weapon packages. In one case, a Raptor was piloted into a Cylon basestar bearing a nuclear weapon.

### Colonial Raptor

**Agi** d8, **Str** d8, **Vit** d8, **Ale** d12, **Int** d8, **Wil** d6; **LP** 14;

**Init** d8+d10; **Scale** Planetcraft;

**Speed** 7 (5 in atmosphere; JC)

**Traits** None

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d4, Perception d6, Pilot d4, Technical Expertise d6

**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 3, Stun 5

**Description** 28 x 9.5 x 18 feet; **Crew** 2;

**Passengers** 10;

**Equipment** DRADIS, electronic countermeasure support, decoys

## COLONIAL PLANETCRAFT

### AIR

The Twelve Colonies had hundreds of thousands of registered aircraft. While the majority were government or corporate-based, a large number of personal aircraft also filled the skies. In more remote regions of the Colonies, aircraft regularly carried cargo and passengers from one surface location to another.

### MILITARY AERO-FIGHTER

Dozens of aero-fighters were designed and built before the Cylon assault for a variety of missions. Aero-fighters are small, fast, and maneuverable, but incapable of space flight. They are armed primarily with missiles and autocannons.

### Scorpio W38 "Firecat"

**Agi** d6, **Str** d6, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d2, **Int** d2, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 12; **Init** d6+d2; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 5

**Traits** None

**Skills** Heavy Weapons d4, Perception d4, Pilot d4

**Armament** 1 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range autocannon (d8); 8 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range missiles (d12)

**Armor** Wound 2, Stun 2

**Description** 50 x 32 x 16 feet; **Crew** 1;

**Ceiling** 65,000 ft.; **Range** 750 miles

### HELICOPTER

Helicopters in the Twelve Colonies had many functions—rescue, medical evacuation, fire fighting, personnel transport, observation, law enforcement, military missions and, of course, for pleasure. Not as advanced as the Raptor, helicopters are comparatively cheap to build and maintain.

### Waid-Cooper Civilian Motors 303

**Agi** d6, **Str** d4, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d2, **Int** d2, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 8; **Init** d6+d2; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 3

**Traits** None

**Skills** Perception d6, Pilot d4

**Armament** None

**Armor** Wound 1, Stun 2

**Description** 58 x 9 x 14 feet (rotors 48 feet); **Crew** 1–2;

**Ceiling** 10,000 ft.; **Range** 350 miles

### VTOL AIR-CAR

Before the Cylon assault, the new status symbol for the wealthy was the personal air-car. Capable of vertical take off and landing, air-cars can go almost anywhere and are surprisingly easy to maintain.

### Greicon Motors Hawkwing

**Agi** d4, **Str** d4, **Vit** d4, **Ale** d2, **Int** d2, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 8; **Init** d4+d2; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 3

**Traits** None

**Skills** Perception d2, Pilot d4

**Armaments** None

**Armor** Wound 1

**Description** 16 x 6 x 5 feet; **Crew** 2;

**Passengers** 2; **Ceiling** 7,500 ft.; **Range** 325 miles

### LAND

Colonials used a variety of transportation methods in their daily lives. From personal vehicles, buses, and taxis to subways and trains, travel across most of the Twelve Colonies was relatively simple.

### Picon Luxury Planet Rover

**Agi** d4, **Str** d6, **Vit** d6, **Ale** 0, **Int** 0, **Wil** d4; **LP** 10; **Init**

d4; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 2

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** None

**Armor** Wound 1

**Description** 16 x 6 x 6 feet; **Crew** 1;

**Passengers** 4; **Cargo** 1,000 lbs.; **Range** 200 miles;

**Towing Capacity** 4,000 lbs.

## TRUCK

This utility vehicle transports bulk goods or other materials. Many have decent off-road capacity.

### Hultquist Motors Pick-Up

**Agi** d4, **Str** d6, **Vit** d4, **Ale** 0, **Int** 0, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 10; **Init** d4; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 2

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** None

**Armor** Wound 1

**Description** 10 x 6 x 7 feet; **Crew** 1;

**Passengers** 3; **Cargo** 1,500 lbs.; **Range** 500 miles;

**Towing Capacity** 9,000 lbs.

## MILITARY ARMORED VEHICLE

CAWV (Colonial Armored Wheeled Vehicle) was the utilitarian work-horse for the Colonial Marines. In recent years, the CAWV gained popularity outside the military and a civilian model was also available.

### W105 CAWV Patrol Vehicle

**Agi** d6, **Str** d8, **Vit** d6, **Ale** 0, **Int** 0, **Wil** d8;

**LP** 16; **Init** d6; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 1

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** 1 personal scale heavy machinegun (d12; autofire capable)

**Armor** Wound 2, Stun 2

**Description** 11 x 5 x 6 feet; **Crew** 1-2; **Passengers** 4;

**Cargo** 2,000 lbs.; **Range** 350 miles; **Towing Capacity** 6,000 lbs.

## MOTORBIKE

Motorbikes vary depending upon the task intended for them. Some are built for congested urban traffic while others are crafted for long distance cruising. Some are employed for sports, entertainment, and/or off-road environments.

### Caprican Classic Street Racer

**Agi** d4, **Str** d2, **Vit** d2, **Ale** 0, **Int** 0, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 6; **Init** d4; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 3

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** None

**Armor** None

**Description** 7 x 2.5 x 4 feet; **Crew** 1;

**Passengers** 1; **Range** 150 miles

## WATER

Flight-based technology was sufficiently advanced in the Twelve Colonies that few worlds used sea-going vessels for cargo transportation. The notable exception of this being Aquarius, where great pride is taken in their long water shipping tradition. Instead, waterborne vessels were primarily used for fishing, entertainment, and scientific purposes.

### Marine Interceptor

These fast and agile boats were used by the military and police for a variety of missions. Driven by water jets, the boats can operate in very shallow water, easing coastal operations.

### Greicon Motors Marine Combat Craft

**Agi** d4, **Str** d6, **Vit** d6, **Ale** d2, **Int** 0, **Wil** d6;

**LP** 12; **Init** d4+d2; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 1

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** 4 medium personal scale machineguns (d8); 1 light planetcraft scale skirmish range machinegun (d4)

**Armor** Wound 2, Stun 2

**Description** 19 x 6 x 4 feet; **Crew** 5; **Passengers** 16;

**Range** 700 miles

### Flat-Bottom Boat

These boats, primarily used for civilian entertainments such as fishing and touring wetlands, are used to move people and material across shallow water surfaces that most boats would be unable to traverse.

### Aqura 630vc

**Agi** d4, **Str** d6, **Vit** d4, **Ale** 0, **Int** 0, **Wil** d4;

**LP** 10; **Init** d4; **Scale** Planetcraft; **Speed** 0

**Traits** None

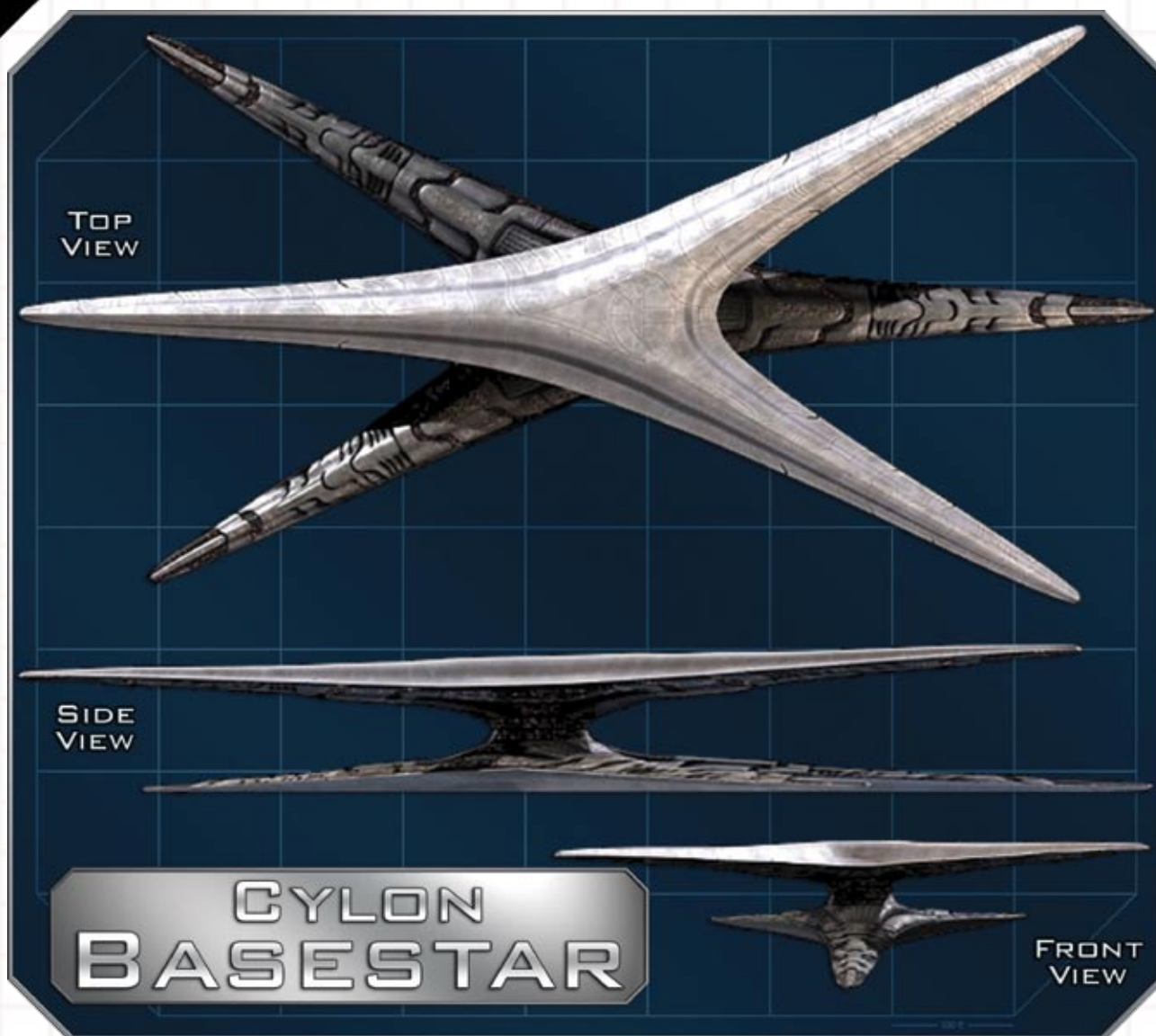
**Skills** None

**Armaments** None

**Armor** Wound 1

**Description** 20 x 8 x 12 feet; **Crew** 1;

**Passengers** 10; **Range** 200 miles



## CYLON SPACECRAFT

The exact composition and numbers of the Cylon fleet is unknown. Only a few different vessels have been spotted and engaged.

### BASESTAR

Little is known about the basestar ships of the Cylon fleet. They are approximately the same size as Colonial battlestars but they appear to be far more advanced.

Basestars have two elongated Y-shaped sections, stacked in opposition, giving them a unique and unmistakable appearance. They are FTL-capable but display no visible means of sublight propulsion.

Even so, they are capable of obtaining top sublight speeds, and are fast enough to chase down a battlestar.

Offensive capability appears to be based on missile delivery systems. While only a few are fired at one time, they seem to have a nearly unlimited supply, including a large stockpile of nuclear warheads. No basestar encountered thus far has featured autocannons. They appear to rely on hundreds of raider fighter craft as both an attack force and point defense system.

The Fleet has been able to destroy one basestar by infiltrating a Raptor modified with a Cylon transponder and armed with a nuclear warhead. Upon retrieval, the insertion team reported that the basestar seemed to be completely biomechanical. The interior was a vast organic space.

### Cylon Basestar

**Agi** d10, **Str** d12+d2, **Vit** d10, **Ale** d12, **Int** d10, **Wil** d8; **LP** 22; **Init** d10+d12; **Scale** Spacecraft; **Speed** 6 (SL/JC)

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** Medium and heavy planetcraft scale capital range missile systems; heavy spacecraft scale capital range missile systems; extreme spaceship scale short DRADIS range missile systems; unknown number of raiders and heavy raiders

**Armor** Wound 4, Stun 5

**Description** 4,500 x 2,250 x 625 feet; **Crew** unknown; **Passengers** unknown

## RAIDER

The raider, or “Sparrow” in Colonial pilot jargon, is the primary weapon of the Cylon fleet. It acts as an interceptor, space superiority fighter, and point-defense system for basestars and other larger vessels. The raider is capable of solitary operations as well as massed swarm tactics.

The raider has a weapons compliment of dual-targeted 30mm autocannons and 12 missiles, which can bear nuclear warheads. It is capable of both atmospheric and space operations. The raider’s FTL drive system is very efficient, precise, and long-ranged.

Until the capture of a raider by Lieutenant Kara “Starbuck” Thrace, the ship was believed to be a mechanical construct guided by a complex AI construct. Upon close analysis, however, the ship turned out to a biomechanical construct. Inside its

metallic shell, technicians found veins, tendons, organs, even a “brain.”

Raiders operate in nearly all matters as characters do, without any of the limitations normally associated with vehicles interfacing with pilots/drivers.

### Cylon Raider (Sparrow)

**Agi** d12, **Str** d8, **Vit** d8, **Ale** d8, **Int** d6, **Wil** d6; **LP** 22;

**Init** d10+d12; **Scale** Planetcraft;

**Speed** 9 (7 in atmosphere) (SL/JC)

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

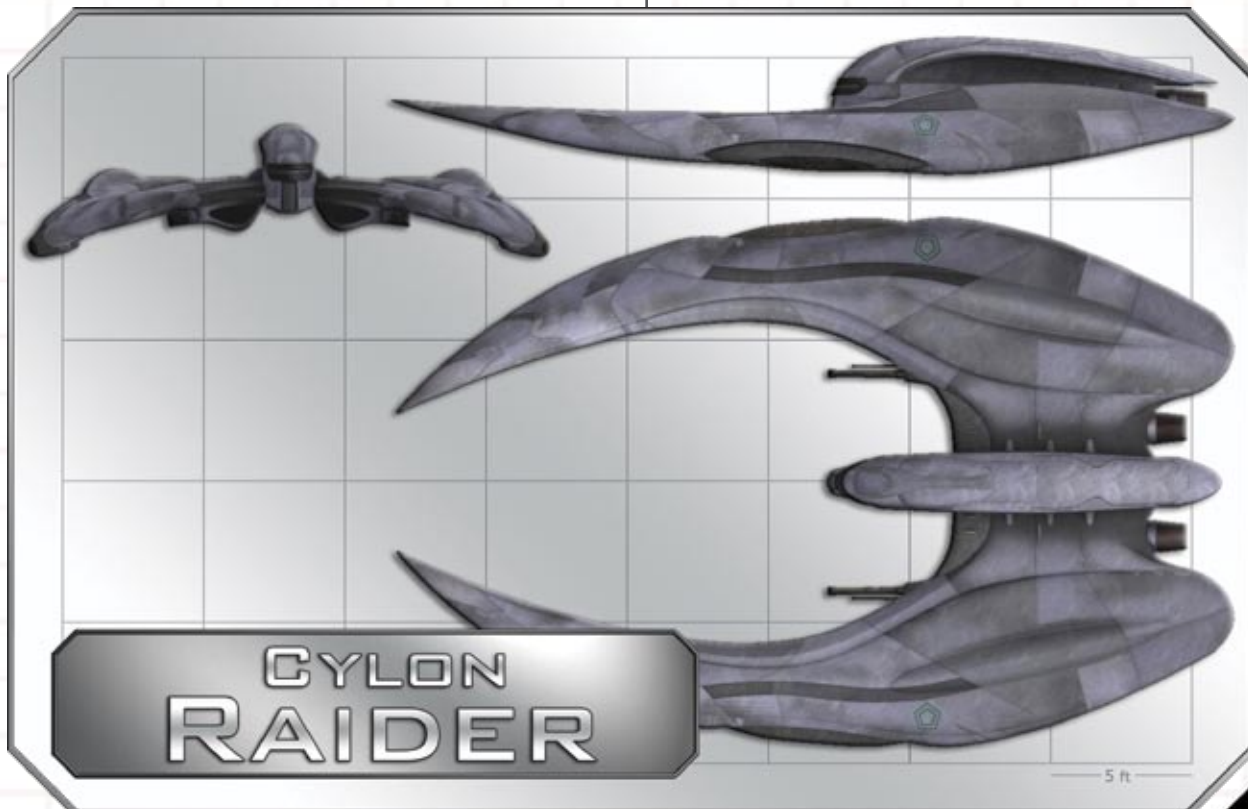
**Armaments** 2 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range autocannons (d8); 12 medium planetcraft scale capital range missiles (d12)

**Armor** Wound 2, Stun 2

**Description** 29.3 x 18 x 5 feet; **Crew** biomechanical

## HEAVY RAIDER

The heavy raider, or “Turkey” in Colonial pilot jargon, is something of a mystery. It’s raider-like head suggests that the machine is autonomous; it’s larger size indicates it can carry cargo or passengers. A heavy raider’s arsenal includes a battery of autocannons that appear to have a higher rate of fire than those on the raider. It also carries an unknown compliment of missiles, using a delivery system that can be removed and reassembled as a planetside ground-to-air defense system.





### Cylon Heavy Raider (Turkey)

**Agi** d6, **Str** d10, **Vit** d10, **Ale** d6, **Int** d6, **Wil** d6; **LP** 16;  
**Init** d10+d12; **Scale** Planetcraft;  
**Speed** 7 (5 in atmosphere) (SL/JC)

**Traits** None

**Skills** None

**Armaments** 2 medium planetcraft scale skirmish range autocannons (d8); 12 medium planetcraft scale capital range missiles (d12)

**Armor** Wound 4, Stun 4

**Description** 35 x 11 x 10 feet; **Crew** biomechanical;  
**Passengers** 12

### VEHICLE COMBAT

Not every fight takes place with solid ground or deck plating beneath your feet. Sometimes it's blazing cannons and stomach-churning maneuvers in the cold vacuum of space, and sometimes it's skimming along rough terrain at break-neck speeds trying to avoid Cylon air-strikes. In

atmospheric combat and space battles you're not just fighting the enemy, you're also struggling to control your vehicle as you tough out the stresses of multiple Gs.

### RANGE

Vehicle movement and weapon ranges cover vast distances, particularly in space. Relative position can change very quickly, and offensive power can reach very far. Tracking distances, speeds, and vectors of movement is a processing challenge beyond the usual resources of a role playing group. Highly dangerous, knife's-edge confrontations between high-speed space fighters should be unfolding at a pace that rips the breath right out of you, undelayed by multiplication or chart consulting. Among other simplifications, vehicle combat uses range a bit differently than character combat. There are five vehicle ranges: personal, skirmish, capital, short DRADIS and long DRADIS.

*Personal range* subsumes the range rules at the character level. Anything from punching to knife

fighters to small-arms fire fits here. The normal range increment rules apply (see p. 90).

*Skirmish range* is beyond the scope of most personal weapons—save possibly some long-range rifles. Skirmish is the distance that most vehicles engage. It is usually no more than five miles, but could be much less.

*Capital range* is the distance that larger vessels engage; this varies from a handful of miles to more than a hundred. At this range, missiles and sensors can lock and track targets with an Easy (3) Difficulty. The firing arcs of large, unguided projectiles can be calculated accurately, and—sometimes most importantly—small craft can be brought to bear.

During almost all major space engagements, all craft remain within capital range. When using planetcraft, capital range usually involves an attacker sitting miles away from a target and launching missiles or calculating trajectories for artillery. Howitzers, helicopters, rockets, and mortar platforms usually operate at this range.

*Short DRADIS range* allows individual small ships to be detected. It's usually a distance of several hundred miles. Accurate DRADIS readings can be obtained with an Average (7) Difficulty. Some weapons can be used at this range, but only well-designed tracking missiles have any hope of maintaining a strong enough lock to reach their target.

For planetcraft, short DRADIS range involves an attacker sitting hundreds of miles away, perhaps even on the other side of a planet (or from orbit), and using special means to put a missile or shell on a target. Satellites, coupled with high-end missile systems, are quite capable of this. Naval vessels armed with the heaviest spacecraft scale cannons could also do this.

*Long DRADIS range* is the farthest distance that starships become aware of each other in space-born scenarios. If an encounter begins with two sides immediately hostile, the combatants start at long DRADIS range. In empty space, it is dirt simple to detect mobile, heat-emitting, radio-emitting sources. Long DRADIS range could be thousands of miles in that case. In areas of heavy interference (an ion cloud or a dense asteroid field), it could extend only a couple hundred miles.

At long DRADIS range, little information can be gathered about the contact. Only capital ships can be detected, and determining the specific type of ship has a Hard (11) Difficulty. Combat cannot take place at this range; even the best missiles do not have the necessary sensors to lock onto a target.

## Vehicle Actions

Vehicle actions are handled just like any character action. Many things—turning a corner in a truck, launching a Viper to join the CAP, jumping to the next pre-set point—just happen. No rolls. Others involve a degree of chance and are dramatically important. In those cases, figure out the right Attribute, Skill, and possibly Trait; roll the appropriate dice; add the total; and compare it to the Difficulty.

When it comes to maneuvering a vehicle, both the pilot and the craft have important roles to play. Almost all vehicle rolls use one of the vehicle's Attributes combined with the operator's Skill. This reflects the pilot's or driver's ability to exploit the resources the vehicle has to offer. Some aren't good enough to use the vessel to its fullest capabilities; they become a danger to themselves and those around them. Piloting a Viper or other high-performance craft is no walk in the park.

## Control Rolls

When operating a craft, the operator must meet certain minimum requirements. First, the operator's Alertness die type must equal or exceed the vessel's Agility die type. If it does, he can keep up mentally even as the vehicle engages in sharp turns and tricky maneuvers. Second, the operator's Strength die type must equal or exceed the vehicle's Strength die type. That allows the hotshot to handle the stress forces (usually Gs) generated by maneuvering.

Should an operator not meet either of the above requirements, a control roll—an opposed Attribute roll (character's Alertness vs. vehicle's Agility, character's Strength vs. vehicle's Strength, or both)—must be made at the beginning of combat, or the beginning of an encounter (apply the results for the remainder of the encounter). No Skill die is added, but dice from Traits or Plot Points are added to the rolls. These rolls cannot be botched.

If the operator wins one or both of these rolls, he controls the vehicle normally: all subsequent rolls in that engagement use the vehicle's Attribute + the pilot's Skill. If he fails either roll, the vehicle slips partially out of control. The vehicle's Attribute is replaced by the pilot's inadequate Attribute for the remainder of the flight. Also, botches arise on rolls that come up all ones or a twos, regardless of the total.

## Movement

Changing range relative to another vehicle normally takes an action. No roll is needed, the craft simply spends sufficient turns to close or retreat. It takes most vessels one turn to shift



between personal and skirmish range, or between skirmish and short DRADIS range. It takes two turns to move from short DRADIS range to either skirmish range or long DRADIS range. Three turns of movement are needed to close from long DRADIS to short DRADIS, or to abandon the encounter entirely.

For engagements between planetcraft or the smallest spacecraft, the process is a bit more complicated. Fast-moving small craft have to match directions and overtake their target, or engage in multiple short passes, constantly turning and pulling 180 degree switches to keep their sights aligned. The

small craft operator has three choices: move or remain in skirmish range, evade or leave skirmish range, or make no movement adjustment. The first two choices require an action, the last does not. The final outcome depends on the combatants' choices.

If both parties choose to stay in skirmish range, or one stays and the other does nothing, no rolls are made for movement. Skirmish range is maintained.

If both evade, both do nothing, or one evades and the other does nothing, no rolls are made. The combatants leave skirmish range and move to capital range.

## A MATTER OF DRAMA

Vehicle combat in *Battlestar Galactica* is dramatic and dynamic—something not always quantifiable by game mechanics and miniatures. Scenes that involve vehicle combat, be they bone-jarring battlestar-basestar slug-fests, Viper-raider dogfights, or even running a CAWV up against a Cylon ground-to-air system, should always take into account the characters. Remember, your gaming table doesn't have CGI effect shots. It's got something much more powerful—the Game Master's and players' imaginations. For the players, the most important part of any combat comes from the point-of-view of their characters.

In short, this is the *Battlestar Galactica Roleplaying Game*, not a miniatures wargame. Viper combats should be run on a personal level, with rolls made to attack and dodge incoming raider autocannons. It plays out very similarly to combat on a personal level.

Massive fleet battles are certainly dramatic, but in a role playing game, they are more plot device than game mechanic. Engagements on such massive scales occur mostly in the background. The focus remains at the personal level.

During any large vehicular battle, Game Masters should describe the overall action, but "run" only small scenes at the character's eye level. Imagine a character making important decisions in the CIC of the *Galactica*. The players succeed if the comm/sensors officer beats the DRADIS rolls to notice something. At the same time, a commander has to decide something that might mean the sacrificing of men or resources, and then persuade shocked officers to obey and do their duty. While all of this happens in the CIC, the Game Master cuts to a scene outside the ship involving a Viper engagement, where the pilots fight head-on with raiders and then have to deal with a nuclear-armed heavy raider charging the *Galactica*. Cut again, to the engineering section, where a hit has fried several important systems and the Chief has to identify the problem, come up with a solution, and get everything organized to fix it.

Zoom out. Those individual scenes, plots, and dramatic moments are all spliced together with some descriptive moments of a basestar exploding or the *Galactica* suffering through a nasty barrage. Moments like these, where several exciting things are happening all at once in a big battle should be timed and edited. The CIC officer should get the information, but before he can make his decision, the Game Master cuts to the Vipers as they make their first pass, then shifts over to a massive EMP blast that sends the engineering section scrambling.

It is all a matter of setting-up drama, resolving a few actions, shifting away at appropriate moments to create "mini-cliffhangers," then repeat. Players should be anxious to see what happens next, just as in the television show—whether the "happenings" occur to their characters or others.

The only time a roll is needed is when something dramatic is about to happen, when there's a real question to be resolved. If a roll might derail the story or take away from the moment, don't force it, just let the event happen. If a scene calls for the *Galactica* to take some hits from several basestars while the rest of the fleet jumps away, don't roll for jump checks or damage to the Old Bucket. Simply describe that action while the players make choices and rolls for their individual characters.

If one tries to close or remain at range, and the other tries to disengage, opposed Agility + Pilot or Planetary Vehicles rolls are made. The difference in the Speed Class of the vehicles grants an Attribute step bonus to the faster craft's roll, and an Attribute step penalty to the slower craft's roll. The victor decides if they remain at skirmish or move to capital range.

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*Starbuck wants to close in on a fleeing Cylon raider to finish it off. Her Viper's Combat Speed 8, while the raider has a Combat Speed 9. Starbuck's Viper suffers a -1 Agility bonus on the roll; the raider gains a +1 Agility step. Edge to the raider.*

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If skirmish range is maintained, the pilots can attack or perform other actions that turn. If an action was devoted to movement, subsequent rolls that turn incur multiple action penalties.

### Other Actions

For the most part, vehicle combat unfolds as personal combat does. Initiative is rolled for each vehicle (using the operator/captain's or vehicle's Attributes, whichever appropriate), and actions and nonactions are conducted in turn order (interrupted by dodges and other reactions). As mentioned, most rolls combine the vehicle's Attribute with the operator's Skill. A MAW attack, for example, uses the vehicle's Agility + the character's Pilot, Planetary Vehicles, or Heavy Weapons (perhaps with an appropriate speciality, like Ship's Cannons). A missile launch would use the vehicle's Alertness + the character's Pilot, Planetary Vehicles, or Technical Engineering (perhaps with a speciality like Guided Weapons). Dodging likely uses the vehicle's Agility + the character's Pilot or Planetary Vehicles.

Aiming, called shots, sneak attacks, innate defense, dodging, cover, and protective gear are all virtually unchanged from personal combat. Aiming differs in that the vehicles can be moving, but not actively maneuvering (i.e., dodging) while aiming.

Disarming, grappling, and blocking are not normally possible, unless you're Starbuck whose just been told to "Grab your gun and bring in the cat." Hotshot pilots out to prove themselves might come up with something along these lines. The GM should determine what rolls are necessary depending on the pilot's plan. In any such plan, the player should include the expenditure of a few Plot Points to pull off.

**Sensors:** Use the vehicle's Alertness for most tasks involving DRADIS. DRADIS Operations, as a skill speciality, could fall under Pilot, Technical

Engineering, or Planetary Vehicles. A character's Intelligence Attribute is used with DRADIS Operations for deciphering the results of a scan.

**Defense:** All higher scale vessels are Easy (3) Difficulty targets against lower scale weapons. They don't use innate defense, and cannot dodge such attacks.

**Escaping Missile Lock:** If a missile attack is successful, the weapon system locks onto the target and races toward it. The target can attempt to break a weapon's lock by out-flying it or tricking it.

To out-fly a missile, the operator must make three Difficulty (7) Agility + Pilot or Planetary Vehicle checks. The big problem with trying to out maneuver a missile is that the craft that fired the missile is likely still around and ready to do so again.

To trick a missile, the operator must have some sort of equipment such as jamming frequencies, an anti-missile flare, or chaff. The operator engages the countermeasure and makes a Difficult (7) Intelligence + Pilot, Planetary Vehicle, or Technical Engineering check.

**Feinting:** Feinting might be feasible—call it trick flying or fancy driving—but movement and velocities are monitored by the enemy, so it's very difficult. Worse, should a vehicle lose control, feinting could be deadly. Feinting calls for an operator to make an Agility + Pilot or Planetary Vehicle roll versus an opponent's Alertness + Pilot or Planetary Vehicle roll. A success gives the feinting operator a +1 Skill step to the next roll against that opponent. An Extraordinary Success garners not only the +1 step but also a Plot Point reward that must be used in the current scene or be lost.

### DAMAGE

Just as in character combat, vehicle attacks generate initial damage (attack roll – defense roll), which is divided between Stun and Wound damage (favoring Stun). The weapon used also adds a damage die. The damage dealt, the range, and any special qualities are listed in the weapon's descriptions.

Vehicles suffer appropriately scaled Stun and Wound damage just like characters. Wound damage represents serious problems—missing or destroyed components, ripped heat shielding, punctured containment. Stun damage indicates temporary problems caused by overloads, short-circuits, loss of power, and other such disabilities. Stun damage mostly arises from initial damage. Few vehicle weapons, outside specifically designed missile

weapon system exceptions, inflict just Stun damage.

When crossing scales, damage varies significantly. It takes 10 personal scale damage points to reduce a planetcraft's Life Points by one. All personal damage is rounded down to the nearest 10 before deducting planetcraft scale Life Points (10, 14, and 18 personal scale damage points all do one planetcraft Life Point). A similar process applies for planetcraft scale damage and spacecraft scale Life Points. Personal scale weapons are largely ignored by spacecraft. It takes 100 personal scale damage points to remove one spacecraft scale Life Point (round personal scale damage down to nearest 100).

When moving up scales, multiply damage by 10. A spacecraft scale weapon does 10 times regular damage to planetcraft, and 100 times to characters. Generally higher scale weapons make a mess of lower scale targets.

**Armor:** Armor is scaled just like weapons. Planetcraft Wound 1 armor stops 10 personal scale points of damage, one point of planetcraft scale damage, and is ignored by spacecraft damage.

**Loss of Integrity:** When a vehicle's Wounds are greater than half its Life Points, it incurs a -2 Attribute step on all actions until repairs are affected.

When a vehicle's Wound damage equals or exceeds its Life Points, the operator makes an Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) check every minute using the vehicle's attributes or the vehicle ceases functioning. The checks start off Easy (3), but a cumulative +4 is added to the Difficulty each subsequent check.

When a vehicle suffers an amount of damage double to its Life Points, the vehicle is destroyed—in most situations, this occurs in a truly spectacular fashion. An operator or other crew might survive such a calamity if the vehicle has a safety ejection or escape pod system of some kind. "Punching out" is an action that requires a Difficult (7) Agility + Strength roll on the part of the character (assuming she is strapped into the ejection seat or reaches the escape pod in time). Game Masters could alternately allow the expenditure of a Plot Point to automatically escape from a destroyed vehicle.

Just like characters, operators and crew can spend Plot Points to diminish a damage roll against their ship, but it must be done at the time of the attack.

**Disabled:** If a vehicle's total damage from both Stun and Wounds equals the vehicle's Life Points, it must make an Average (7) Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) roll. If successful, every turn thereafter (unless the vehicle is somehow

repaired back over its Life Points total) requires another roll with a cumulative +4 to the Difficulty. Failure means a systems' crash—the vehicle goes dark.

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*Starbuck attacks a Cylon raider using her Viper's autocannons. The two exchange fire for a few turns, and the raider gets the upper hand. One final burst puts total damage equal to the Viper's Life Points. Starbuck's player makes a Vitality + Willpower roll (using the Viper's attributes) against a Difficulty 7 and scores a 9—success! Starbuck is still in the fight, at least for one more turn, but it's not pretty. The Viper's warning systems are blaring at her and she desperately fights the controls. The next turn, she must make a Vitality + Willpower roll with a Difficulty 11. Once that roll fails, Starbuck's Viper is out for the count.*

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## REPAIRS

When vehicles take damage, they need to be repaired—it's that simple. Automated repair systems put out fires and create emergency work-arounds, such as bulkhead doors sealing off a given sector of a ship to prevent greater damage to the whole ship. Even so, real repairs must be done by mechanics and engineers if the vehicle is going to be of any further service.

**Stun Damage:** Stun damage is easily repaired—assuming the engineers can reach the affected system. The Game Master determines how long that takes—the control panel or system could be easily accessible, or they could be locked beyond a bulkhead, in a part of the ship that has been vented into space.

Once the system is accessed, the character makes a repair roll, using Intelligence + Mechanical or Technical Engineering/Repair rolls. Each roll takes at least ten minutes and is made against a Difficulty equal to the current amount of Stun damage. A success reduces the Stun damage by the difference between the roll result and the Difficulty. A botch causes d2 additional Stun damage instead of repairing any. An Extraordinary Success is its own reward, as it heals more damage.

**Damage Control:** Once per combat scene, an operator may be able to "shake off" some Stun damage (at the GM's discretion). The operator makes control adjustments and switches system relays, rolling either the ship's Strength or Willpower die and restoring that many Stun.

**Wound Damage:** Wound damage takes significant time and resources to repair. Such operations are complex actions. The time increment is up to the GM



and should reflect the severity of the damage. Repairs on planetcraft should take from ten minutes to an hour per roll. Spacecraft, like the *Galactica*, should require at least an hour if not several hours per roll. Generally, smaller vessels have shorter time increments.

The Threshold of the action is directly related to the amount of Wounds the ship has suffered (See Repair Requirements Table below). Equally important are the resources required. Depending on the situation (ragtag survivor fleet, hiding on a bombed-out colony), spare parts may not be easy to come by. The Repair Requirements Table estimates the supplies needed to

effect repairs at each level, but availability is entirely determined by the situation.

Botched repair rolls inadvertently make things worse. The vehicle takes d2 additional points of Wound damage. A Game Master could even complicate matters further—a bulkhead door could suddenly slam shut and the chamber could begin to lose pressure, for example. In that case, depending on how immediate the danger is, a number of Plot Points should be awarded.

**TABLE 6.7—REPAIR REQUIREMENTS**

Wounds	Difficulty	Parts Needed
1-2	Easy (3)	Few, extremely common parts (sheeting, pipes)
3-4	Average (7)	Common parts (hoses, cables)
5-6	Hard (11)	Common parts, few complex pieces (filters, pumps)
7-8	Formidable (15)	Complex parts (converters, a gimble)
9-10	Heroic (19)	Few specialized components (pre-fit weapon mount, flight navigation computer)
11-14	Incredible (23)	Some specialized components (hull sections, DRADIS arrays)
15-18	Ridiculous (27)	Ship system components (sublight engine, DRADIS)
19+	Impossible (31)	Entire vital system (generator, FTL engine, computer systems)

# CHAPTER SEVEN



GAME MASTER

## COLONIAL ONE, PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

**M**A'AM, I want you to know that I'm honored that you asked me to be your advisor. But I'm not sure I'm the right person you want for the position.

Truth is, before the attack I wasn't even sure I was staying in the military. I was only in the reserves and I was giving serious thought to leaving all together. I had a ... a lot on my mind when I left home for *Galactica*. But if I am the man you want for the job, I promise to do my best.

The first thing you want to understand when dealing with my father is that he is a practical man. He does not enjoy politics, ceremony, or protocol. Talk to him straight and you might get your way, but try to split hairs or manipulate him and it'll be like hitting a brick wall. I don't know if anyone's ever been more stubborn.

But you should also realize that my father does not want to be in charge of the entire human race. He believes in a lawful, civilian government and he'll fight to defend it. The rights of the people are important to him—and to me—I guess because my grandfather was an attorney. The Commander will listen to you and follow your directives if you leave the military decisions to him.

You've already earned his respect, and that's half the battle. And no one knows that better than me.

—Captain Lee “Apollo” Adama



## RUNNING THE SHOW

So you think you got the chops to be a Game Master? Or maybe your group “volunteered” you for the job. Hey, somebody’s got to get it done.

As Game Master, you lay out the overall storyline of the game. You describe the scenes and most of the action. You apply the rules. You mediate between players. You also got to back off at times and let the other players shine. Yes sir, it’s a big job. But you’ll do fine. We got your back.

This chapter covers the larger issues first: Game Master’s role, running the game, describing the universe, possible themes, types of campaigns. Then it gets a bit more specific. Advice on designing adventures, taking on character roles, and managing technology follows. We’ve floated a few tips to help you make the most of your Game Mastering.

Now that’s a ton of ground to cover. Don’t think you have to know it all right away. Check back in from time to time as your sessions pass. You’ll no doubt find some new nugget of gold here each time you do.

Keep in mind, you’re looking to create a *Battlestar Galactica Role Playing Game* campaign that makes sense, draws the players’ interest, and keeps pushing forward. Most importantly, you’re looking to have fun.

## THE MISSION

Taking on the job of Game Master is both challenging and rewarding. Here’re the basics.

As Game Master, you take the lead in making the BSG universe come alive. You create the backdrop that lets the players assume the role of heroes or villains. Through you, they tell their characters’ stories. You create adventure outlines, reveal secrets, imagine new places, and play along as a cast of thousands. When everyone gets it right, the entire gaming crew spins a kick-butt story—full of action, interesting characters, and exciting events.

Put most simply, you challenge the other players by placing their characters in dramatic situations. You give substance to the people, places, and events that player characters (PCs) run up against during the gaming session. All this gets tied together in plots and adventures. Combined, the stories make up an extended campaign.

As the tale unfolds, you create truths and secrets, flesh out engaging nonplayer characters (NPCs), help your players create great characters, and keep the game moving along. Remember, the

fate of the survivors—the last hope for humanity—is in your hands. Each player character’s story is important. Those tales are the heart of a *Battlestar Galactica* role playing campaign.

Lots of rules in the prior chapters of this book. You should be comfortable with the core ones, and should have an idea where to find the rest. Your game will fly much more smoothly if you can take care of basic rule questions off the top of your head. On the other hand, the rules are designed to take a back seat at the gaming table. Don’t forget that the rules serve the story, not the other way round. The rules should never trump your common sense or story-telling instincts. Even logical rules get tossed if the plot demands it, though you should probably keep that to a minimum.

The more thought and preparation you put into the game, the richer and more rewarding the experience will be for everyone involved. Screw-ups aren’t the end of the world. Lords know we’ve all made a few. The main goal is an enjoyable game that leads to some great memories.

## PORTRAYING THE UNIVERSE

You may be responsible for sketching out everything in the BSG universe, but don’t sweat defining it all. All you really need to know is the stuff that impacts the characters and their adventures. Before you gather the gang to play, you need to have some idea of the events that’re about to take place. You’ll need to have created the major figures the PCs will meet and the places they’ll go.

No need to script an entire adventure, let alone a campaign, before your first session. Think mostly about themes and the longer plot arcs. In the early going, concentrate on getting the player characters fleshed out, and the players familiar with the rules. Character choices should go a long way in guiding you. You plot the general course of things; player character actions adjust that.

As for people, focus on the key characters that are meaningful for the heroes: villains, patrons, allies, and enemies. Only if the character is going to be in a scrape do you need to know their combat abilities. Other folks are covered by a description and some notes on how you plan to portray them (gestures, accents, etc.).

*Battlestar Galactica* is mostly about the survivors. Realistic characters with warts and shady pasts are best. That sorry lot might not always be sympathetic, but they are rarely dull. You’ll more likely meet a sonuvabitch than a boy scout. And the first guy is more fun to drink with.

With places, consider the likely scenes. Most important are locations where combat might take place or where important face-to-face time might play out. You'll need to detail how big the space is, it's features, and what can be found there.

## MANAGING THE GAME

When managing a game during a session, keep things moving. Spread your attentions around. Look to mix drama and humor, exciting action and quieter moments for role playing. Events should make sense in the long term, but that doesn't mean your players won't be confused or unaware at times. Sometimes, players just have to sit back and enjoy the ride.

No matter how detailed your preparations, the players are going to mess you up. They will brainstorm and try things you haven't thought through. Count on it. That's when you Game Master on the fly. Roll with it. It's all good. You want a game that blends the PC actions into flexible plotlines. Having the ability to change the details of events so they fit new developments is important. You may be the head honcho, but the game is strictly a team effort.

## MAKE IT YOUR OWN

What we know of the *Battlestar Galactica* universe is captivating, but that doesn't extend very far. For each person we've met in the show, a thousand wait to be discovered. Certain stuff is set—that's what makes *Battlestar Galactica* what it is. Still, the universe is a big place. Don't hesitate to make the game your own.

The mood and the basic facts should stay the same, but don't hesitate to make your own decisions and choices. You and the players are telling new stories. The outcomes should not be predictable. Your Cylons may act differently, have different goals. Their technology might be different. Go with your gut at times to make the experience fresh for your players.

A game setting is expressed by people, places, and events. Any of these might be changed in ways big or small. Think about the other survivors. What are their hopes, dreams, or selfish plans? Perhaps someone has political aspirations and an agenda counter to Roslin or Adama. Create some special locations on their ship that the player characters come to know well, mixing some from the television series and others completely unknown . . . until now. Where are the interesting supplies stored and who is in charge of them? Think of disasters or opportunities that the fleet might encounter. Consider the Cylons and what their real goals might be. Some might see the attacks on the Colonies as a training exercise for some different, looming crisis. Begin to create these things and you'll

find connections and mini-plot possibilities popping up.

## CAMPAIGN THEMES

In capturing the feel of *Battlestar Galactica*, best to start with the main dramatic themes of the show. Stray too far from these, and you wind up with something closer to a generic space opera. That's not always wrong; it's just not the BSG your players are probably looking for.

Don't hammer every theme each session, but make sure to check in with them every so often. Might be as simple as relating some news of the fleet to the characters. Let them know what's been happening while they've been focused on other things. This helps reinforce a living, dynamic universe that doesn't hinge on one person or group. Or the thematic reminder could be as big as a fleet-endangering event, something that gets everyone's attention and threatens to blow the lid off everything.

No matter how you approach it, keep in mind when the last time the players faced one of these themes. If it's been a while, think of a way to bring the point home.

## SURVIVAL

The threat of extinction overshadows everything in a *Battlestar Galactica* campaign. Humanity teeters at the edge of cliff. Lose too many and the human race dies out. Making new humans takes time; killing them is damn quick.

The theme of survival gets your attention quick. Nothing is simple. Not much room for idleness, humor, or frakkin' around. Lots of folks see those as indulgences people can no longer afford. The stress of day-to-day living is tremendous. That leads some to do unexpected or extreme things. At times, desperate actions help people survive or preserve their sanity. But not all are equipped to handle constant, life-threatening pressure. For them, acting out may be a telltale sign of real trouble—dangerous trouble.

In general, people go on as before. They go on out of habit, doing what made sense before the Cylon attack. That might create some a sense of security, but it ain't always best. What happens to the old ways that don't fit anymore? Lots of jobs—prestigious jobs—make no sense. Mechanics, fighters, manual labor—that's all crucial. Lawyers, administrators, stockbrokers, managers—not so many of those needed anymore. Choices must be made. Work assignments handed out. Those with the most comfortable lives, with the most pull, in the old days, don't have the same say. And whining is the least of the





concerns. What do you do about those who cannot pull their weight, or even those who cause trouble. Is it really worth the resources to jail people? Are we heartless enough to just toss them out of an airlock?

Survival pressure shows in other ways. Old hatreds raise their ugly heads, prejudices flare up, and there isn't enough elbow room to feel very tolerant. All that leads to anger, outbursts, and sometimes bloodshed. Some people become zealots, clinging to memories of Colonial life. They display a passion they never had before, prizing even a trivial thing and barking at anyone who comes near. The littlest things get blown out of proportion. Common decency starts falling away. Being polite doesn't seem as important if everyone is busting their hump as a refugee on an ore freighter. Finally, the constant strain might make already half-batty people completely lose it. Minor quirks, easily controllable in normal circumstances, develop into full-fledged paranoia, phobias, obsessions, or even homicidal rage.

The daily work of survival consumes most of everyone's time. Watching for and escaping Cylon attacks, supplying fuel to the ships of the fleet, growing food, recycling air, collecting water, and keeping the ships space-worthy—there's no shortage of work. Moments of rest or recreation are precious. Taking R&R delays

completion of crucial work. On the flip side, pushing on stoically can have its downside. Some may push past exhaustion. Sure, there's a risk, but everyone has got to rest sometime.

Life itself taxes the strength, endurance, and resolve of the survivors. The challenge to survive is ever-present. Harsh reminders come to those who get complacent.

## MORAL AMBIGUITY

The storybooks like tales of black and white, good guys and bad guys, clear evil and heroic deeds. Life just ain't like that though.

When fighting to survive and preserve Colonial culture, issues that have plagued humans throughout the ages arise. Euthanasia, crime, fair distribution of limited resources, terrorism, justice, reproductive rights, the power of religious faith, individual rights, workers' rights, maintaining a representative government, resisting military dictatorship, and many more come into play. All are fraught with moral questions and slip by easy answers. Passionate people hold honest convictions and very few can be ignored as clearly wrong.

This grayness generates tension and drama. Hell, they aren't called hot-button issues for nothing. Not all people want that heavy stuff floating around their

gaming tables. But it sure can make for memorable sessions. If you decide to introduce such issues into your game, make sure you have everyone decide how their characters are going to react. You want several people on each side, or several different sides represented. If everyone agrees, bring in some strong NPCs to play the opposition.

Overriding all moral issues are the Cylons themselves. Once slaves of humanity, they strive to become the dominant race. Are their actions justified? What do they want from humanity? Do they hate us, need us, or both? Do they wish to destroy their creators? Subjugate us? Enslave us? Become us?

A *Battlestar Galactica* campaign provides rich opportunities for moralistic role playing and character development. Characters can wrestle with moral quandaries made all the more stark by immediate life-and-death challenges. Eventually, everyone makes a choice they regret later.

## PARANOIA

As one of the few survivors at the End of the World, you got to watch your back at all times. The players know their characters are being hunted. As if terrifying, unstoppable machines weren't bad enough, the skinjobs really cause ulcers. Fact is, it's a wonder that paranoia isn't more rampant on the fugitive fleet. You may think you know who you can trust, but what if you're wrong?

Paranoia begins with all the unanswered questions. How did the Cylons defeat the mighty Colonial Fleet so easily? How do they keep finding the escaping fleet? These questions run throughout the fleet. They fester, spawning elaborate conspiracy theories. It's not a big leap to see people acting on these theories, harming those suspected of causing their agonizing lives or the death of countless loved ones.

With the discovery of human-like Cylons living on the fleet and hiding among the crowds—Cylons who don't even know they're not human—suspicion rises to an even higher level. People may be driven to irrational acts as they try to protect themselves from the unknown. Everyone is a suspect, even to themselves. Worrying about the guy in the next bunk is one thing. Worrying about what you yourself are capable of can really drive you to drink. If, for some reason, you become convinced you are "one of them," wouldn't it be better for everyone if you just blow your brains out?

Consider specific moments when paranoia can emerge during the game. Elaborate devices to detect or block surveillance might start appearing among

the populace. They might just be scams. Conversations are muted and conspiratorial; you never know who might overhear. This itself causes others to suspect your whispers. Someone might be exiled from a particular ship when members of his own family accuse him of being a Cylon. Who else would want him? Even if a character is a known, pro-human skinjob, suspicion, condemnation and violence are bound to follow them everywhere.

Just keep a light hand on this theme. Hell, a few suspicious details and you can probably sit back and let the players run with it. Doubt about outside events or people gets damn insidious if players start wondering about others within the group. Don't let it go too far, you don't want the group dissolving in a spasm of distrust. Still, paranoia can really light a fire in the characters.

## MILITARY LIFE

Military types stand a good chance of being where the action occurs. If that's the basis of your game, the players should be familiar with (or resigned to) a military lifestyle. Even if one or more characters are civilians, however, life on the fleet is most often run by the book. Escaping the holocaust of the Colonies was a time of desperation. The military took charge and did what needed to be done. True, a civilian President surfaced, but no one is confused about who calls the shots. Military personnel organize the ships, coordinate the jumps, inventory supplies, and make sure, as best they can, that the basic needs of the people are met. That may change some day. For now, pretty much everyone lives a military life.

In the Colonial Fleet, like any military, a distinct chain of command exists. Lower ranks are expected to act on orders. Keep your ideas of debate to yourself. On a ship as large and complex as a battlestar, especially in the heat of battle, anything less might mean the difference between victory and defeat. Things don't change when soldiers and pilots aren't in combat. Countermanding an order, disrespecting an officer, or even striking a superior officer are serious criminal offenses. All might land you in the brig or on the wrong end of a court martial.

An important reality of military life is a lack of privacy. Even the elite Viper pilots bunk in a communal room and share bathing facilities. Lower ranking soldiers are even worse off. Also, personal expression—individuality—is discouraged. It rarely goes beyond selection of a "call sign," a variety of tattoos, and a few pictures stuck on the walls of a shared bunk. That gets old, fast.

In the military, time is rarely ever personal either. True, you might be off-duty at times, but you're still expected to be in certain places. If an emergency hits, you better be at your battle stations right quick. Dawdling gets people killed. A superior officer can give you an order any time of day or night. Commanders decide if things are safe enough to let people relax or eat or sleep. Disappearing to another ship without authorization is strictly prohibited.

Members of the military must navigate these constraints when dealing with an adventure. For the most part, the excitement comes on the job. Otherwise, you Game Masters will need to grant off duty time, or grant assignments that allow military characters to side step official duties when an adventure starts.

Even for those outside the military, many of these same situations apply. Living space is tight, supplies scarce, and time regimented. Folks generally can't go where they like, or when they like. Jobs are assigned and can't be changed without a lot of greased palms. Basically, people don't make a lot of choices. Like the military, these decisions are being made for them.

Once the fleet finds a workable organization, a way to survive while moving forward, the structure that constrains everyone's life isn't likely to change. Any talk of transition from military to civilian control, or to giving people more freedom is going to raise suspicions. Such liberty makes it harder for the military to keep a lid on things, to protect everyone when the bullets start flying. When order is replaced by chaos, even well-meaning chaos, security suffers.

## POLITICS

Politicians are self-serving windbags. Still, politics are important, especially in a compressed and desperate fugitive fleet. The politicians want to preserve the Colonial institutions in the face of near extinction. They push back at the nearly overwhelming pressure to have a military government. Somebody has to make the tough calls—like who gets food today and who goes without. Moral questions require justifiable and legal answers, and must be enforced. The nature of law, justice, equality, and rights must all be re-examined given the new realities.

The President is the generally accepted leader of the fleet, but she's got a pretty serious balancing act to perform. The military controls most activities and she can't run roughshod over them. Worse, since its reconstitution, the Quorum of Twelve wants its say. It tries to act as a legislative body, even if most things have to be done by executive

or military order. The "loyal" opposition is varied and not so loyal. Demagogues, minorities, racial or religious movements, workers, the old movers and shakers, the media—never a shortage of political controversy in the fleet.

In desperate times, hard decisions easily devolve into tense standoffs or even violence. Those who feel they are not being heard can do extreme things to attract attention. Some hold their own views as more important than the survival of others, or the fleet itself.

Even our most core values spawn opposing views. The fleet has Cylon apologists, pacifists, and others who believe that contact and negotiation are the only solution, the only way to return to home in peace. Others can't imagine Cylons as anything but the enemy. They want the toasters dead, no matter who they are, no matter how helpless or helpful. Still others see the chase for Earth as reckless, leading the Cylons to what might be the last outpost of the human race.

Basically, any time something must be done that cannot or should not involve ordnance, politics comes into play. Hell, even the decision to use ordnance often involves politics. The player characters themselves may hold strong opinions on divisive issues. They might be recruited by activist or even militant movements. Any with political ambitions can and do make noise. Those choices could lead to greatness or infamy. Even if they aren't taking center stage, political crises, stand-offs, and unpopular decisions have a ripple effect in everyone's lives.

## FAITH

The BSG universe is surprisingly monolithic about faith. For humans, that means the worship of the Lords of Kobol. True, time since the founding of the Colonies has diluted religious fervor for many citizens. For others, faith is as strong today as it was the day humans left Kobol.

Some colonies are more religious (Gemenon and Sagittaron, for example). Characters from those planets are likely to start with a stronger faith than their fellows from other Colonies, who might dismiss the Lords of Kobol as myths and legends. Things could change however. In times of great distress, people might gravitate back to faith, or lose it entirely.

Faith can play many parts. It's cultural bedrock for some characters, to pray to or swear by. Some find solace in the hope that the Lords of Kobol will not abandon them in their time of need. Others see the Cylons as divine retribution, mankind's sin of hubris come back to exact penance. Most soldiers give a

## SUBTEXT & THEMES

To introduce an additional layer to your campaign, consider playing with subtext to highlight underlying themes. Subtext is the implicit or metaphorical meaning of an event or situation.

Let's use the following theme: "faith is crucial to survival." A simple, heavy-handed use of subtext involves two ships attacked by Cylons. The one with more faithful characters is saved; the other perishes. A more subtle use rewards player characters who express faith in their fellow survivors, especially people they would never have trusted back in the Colonies. That faith inspires those nonplayer characters to live up to the trust placed in them, to walk away from their old habits or troubles.

little prayer when they need it, just in case someone's listening.

The faithful often focus on ancient scriptures and cryptic artifacts, searching for some hint that this disaster was foreseen, that humanity's fate is foretold. Skeptics might have a change of heart. They could be willing to give mysticism a chance, if it helps them survive. Anyone could be visited by visions. They might be premonitions of the future or signs from the gods. They might just be trauma-induced madness.

You can use faith as a tool to instill hope, give the fleet goals and direction, and provide players with a sense that victory (Earth) is reachable. The portents of faith can be as obscure and mysterious as you like. They could make sense eventually, or they could just keep spirits up in dark times.

Human faith has a counterpart among the Cylons. If you decide to weave that in, faith could have many textures. Believing in the Lords of Kobol is one thing. That's basic humanity. But how can the Cylons claim to have their own god? The devout faith of some Cylons makes them more human. Could a Cylon have a soul? What if the Cylon god—singular—is real? Could humanity, and the PCs, face supernatural powers in the shape of Cylons? Faith aids humans, directly or indirectly. Could it do the same for the Cylons?

### RELATIONSHIPS

Like it or not, no one is alone. Everybody has to deal with somebody sometime. It's a role playing game, right? That means relationships.

Relationships generate strength and support from friends, irritation and trouble from rivals, and real tests from enemies. Each person has a history and often that history didn't die with the Colonies. The needs of survival draw friends and family together, but just as often makes for strange bedfellows. Sometimes literally. Lots of folks have bad blood between them. That sort of thing sorts itself out eventually, one way or another.

Keep in mind the relationships that were cut short by the Cylon attacks. For the survivors, the bond might feel as alive today as it was then. It might haunt them, bring grief, or provide a memory that sustains them.

Relationships are not always one on one. An extended family has multiple ties and a history together. A strongly bonded class of a military academy might stand by each other through thick or thin. A group who committed a major crime or engaged in a past conspiracy could be forever linked together.

Romances are strong relationships that lead to great role playing. Ex-lovers, long-lost spouses, infatuations, new loves, feverish passions, and unrequited attraction affect those involved and the people around them. Social issues might spark conflict (racial prejudices or fraternization prohibitions), love triangles create rivals, group dynamics force decisions. At times, a brief chance for happiness might arise. Romance can be difficult to role play convincingly at the gaming table, but even simplified romantic situations add drama. Remember that humankind needs babies!

For some lucky survivors, some family remains. Fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, even grandparents or extended family may have survived. Family brings joys and opportunity, but tension and obligations are not far off. A brother might always be in trouble, forcing his sibling to bail him out. Fathers and sons may be estranged, or even rivals. One family member may want something that their relation just cannot give, emotionally or otherwise. A military or influential character with less important relatives might be hard-pressed to be around when they're needed. On the flip side, they might be accused of showing favoritism.

Relationships usually stay in the background in a role playing game. Can't be all drama, all the time. Still, there's fertile ground here for stories, tension, and adventure.

## Action

With all the rest of the subtle stuff, don't forget about the action. Got to be some relief from the dark, moody, and stressful themes. Could be dog-fighting Cylons in a Viper, gunning down Centurions in the forests of Caprica, or even settling a dispute with a fist-fight in the crowded corridors of a fleet vessel. Action gets the dice rolling and let's folks shake off the heavy stuff.

Creating a good action piece is a bit art and a bit science. The science is the rules. That's for other chapters. The art is creating a situation where the players can logically get involved, and where their actions are decisive. Being one Viper pilot among thirty is engaging. Being the only pilot who spots a Cylon missile heading for *Galactica* and has a chance to stop it makes for true heroics. Being part of a raiding squad against Cylon forces in Caprica City is exciting. Leading that squad to victory or overcoming an ambush really makes a difference.

Don't forget, action need not be violent. A tough game of Pyramid or a friendly competition of cards can challenge player characters. Other tests of skills are also possible. Perhaps one mechanic races another to see how quickly they can refit a Viper between missions. That's the ticket for keeping up morale (of both characters and players).

## Campaign Approaches

When you think of the ongoing story, *Battlestar Galactica* calls to mind the fate of a rag-tag, fugitive fleet. Don't think that's the only approach though.

There's a whole universe out there, and any part of it could be the basis for a campaign.

As Game Master, you determine the overall framework of the campaign. Consider the players' preferences, collaborate with them. You want a campaign they enjoy playing in. When push comes to shove, though, it's your game. You're going to be spending the most time on it. Better be comfortable with the story arc.

Here are some of the basic questions:

What are the long-term plots? Where are the player characters headed?

Are you following any of the events and timeline as presented in the television series?

Will characters from the series exist in your campaign, and will their stories be much as we've seen?

What are the secrets behind the Cylons? What's the basis for their confusing and sometimes contradictory acts?

Where should the campaign be set? Could be *Galactica's* fleet, another surviving fleet, the *Pegasus*, the resistance on Caprica, or something wholly new.

What makes up the heart of the character's adventures? Ideas include Viper pilots dog-fighting the unstoppable Cylon pursuit, fleet leadership dealing with crises and political struggles, civilians just trying to survive and deal with life in exodus.

Do the players like to play characters they've seen in the television show? Do they want somebody brand spanking new?

Knowing your gaming group and players is important. If attendance is irregular for some, make

## RESISTING CANON

A wealth of campaign, adventure, and event ideas can be found in the *Battlestar Galactica* television series. By all means, use that source, but don't feel that everything on the series must be canon. It ain't Holy Scripture, never to be denied or contradicted. Following the show closely might keep things familiar, but that approach has its own problems.

First, established characters get all the good scenes in the series. Apollo is CAG, Starbuck is the frak-up born behind the wheel, Roslin is President, and Adama the CIC. You might weave a campaign among the events of the series, but the stars are going to do the heavy lifting. That makes it difficult for the player characters to be the heroes. No one likes being relegated to observers or tagalongs.

The series has its own plot lines that you neither control nor have any insight into. If you reveal secrets not already exposed, you're going to veer off course at some point. That will haunt you when the show writers introduce a new element that undermines your plotline. All that can constrict your creativity and set you up as second fiddle to the writers of the show.

Also, if you don't branch out, the PCs will never be surprised. Unless they plan to avoid watching the series until your plotline has run, no major development will be unexpected. Just try enforcing an edict not to watch the show. That should put a damper on player enthusiasm. Best not to even try.

sure the campaign supports absent characters at times. If the group likes to work closely, the player characters could all be from one military unit. If they are comfortable with devising their own bonds, a variety of character types may be more interesting. Different characters mean different skill sets, different points of view, and a greater chance for inter-character conflict. If they can handle periodic downtime, separate plotlines may be run. The characters interact periodically, as allies or even rivals, but not everyone works as a group at all times.

Once the basic issues have been settled, it's time to look at the challenges characters will run up against. Let's consider some campaign approaches.

## THE SEARCH FOR EARTH

The classic BSG campaign involves a fleet, led by the *Galactica*, fighting the Cylons and searching for Earth. Most adventuring time is chewed up surviving the hazards of space travel and Cylon attack. Still, the underlying thread of finding Earth should be advanced over the course of the campaign.

In Colonial lore, Earth's location was lost, never known, or kept secret. Finding Earth is both a test of faith and an exercise in deciphering religious riddles and clues. The secret of Earth's location is hidden behind obscure religious texts, unique artifacts, remote holy sites, and visions. Making sense of it all is not easy. Only time and new information allows all the pieces to be fit together.

Clues leading toward Earth can be as scientific or mystical as you like. The fleet might find a marker, left by the Thirteenth Tribe to point out the route they took. The clue should be encoded or hidden in a riddle to keep the unworthy off the trail. Or the barriers can be technological or even tactical if the Cylons are nearby. The sign should never just note the position of Earth. That would be extremely anti-climactic. It could be a reference to a notable star formation or nebula that points the way. Indeed, the Thirteenth Tribe might not have known where it was going. Its path could have been long and wandering. Their markers could show the way, but not provide an ultimate destination. Can't reveal what you don't know yet.

A sustained hunt for Earth suggests that the player characters have some connection to the faith that will lead them there. If they are mere servants of the gods, someone else might be leading them. That person could be a holy man, a wise woman, a priest, an oracle, or some other chosen one. Or one of the PCs might be the "child of the gods." He might be prophesied to have some prominent role in the search for Earth. He might also be the recipient of religious visions. This

variation allows a player character of any background to come to the forefront, to be the center of debate and conflict, to interact closely with the fleet leaders. The chosen one might struggle to prove that his visions are real. He might not be able to handle the hopes of the entire fleet resting on his shoulders. He could become a pawn of the religious leadership. He could be approached by various factions, or expected to perform miracles. Does he interpret his visions and give directives, or just report them and leave the decision-making to others?

The player characters also need a means to get around, to visit key locations. They might be members of a special Colonial search team, sent on missions directed at finding Earth. This approach grants you a great deal of control as you order the PCs hither and yon. The players may not have much control over their assignments, but their characters almost always wind up in the thick of the action. Another version sets the player characters as technical experts tasked with deciphering the clues once they are found. Discovering a secret then leads to action, and the crew may not necessarily be the best equipped to handle it.

The BSG universe has a strong mystical component. That exhibits itself in visions, compulsions, and stunning coincidences. Perhaps a character has been entwining his fingers in a certain pattern since his youngest years. That symbol appears at a moment when his life, and the fate of the fleet, changes forever. Coincidence or predestination? Omens can be interpreted; vague pronouncements can be seen to fit events. Dealing with prophecies and visions requires a healthy tension between skepticism and hope.

## FLEET VARIATIONS

The classic campaign can be changed in a number of ways. An escaping fleet of survivors could be central, but it might not be the *Galactica*, or the leadership could be far different.

Some of the nonplayer characters could be familiar, yet different. Starbuck could be an ace pilot and a model citizen, a true rival for CAG. Apollo might be a dutiful son, but hiding a dark secret. Adama could command the *Pegasus*. Tom Zarek might be President, somehow convincing Adama to work with him, not against him.

The changes could be more serious. The player characters could replace the stars, and take on leadership roles. They might be elite Viper pilots, trying to stay alive, training new people to replace friends. A Viper-pilot campaign could focus on dog-fighting Cylon raiders, rescuing

survivors, and taking on other missions as necessary. This allows you to draw the Colonial officers into a wide variety of conflicts, both military and political.

The player characters could be the political operatives, worried about continuity of government and keeping military rulership at bay. Being President isn't all wine and roses; that could be shown in spades if one of the players takes on the ultimate leadership role. Even if they are simply trusted advisors, plenty of crises must be handled: reining in the military, dealing with disasters, evaluating the value of religious pronouncements and prophecies, addressing public concerns, settling disputes, and much more. The civilian government, and its officials, can justify sticking their snouts in just about anything.

Perhaps the player characters *are* the military leadership, constantly hassled by competing interests as they fight a relentless foe. They might focus on the strategic war with the Cylons, sending people out in harm's way. They must make tough choices (usually condemning the few to save the many), or gamble on high risk operations with big potential payoffs (snatching valuable resources from the Cylons, killing basestars or other high value enemy targets).

All this works only as long as everyone can handle the absence or reworking of some characters from the television show. With the PCs in positions of authority, Adama could be a retired Admiral, unable to command due to illness but available for advice. Laura Roslin might be discovered after the government is formed around a player character. Her role as the legal successor to President Adar could create yet another constitutional crisis. Viper pilot leaders might have to deal with a young maverick that goes by the call sign Starbuck.

## ROGUE SHIP OR FLEET

Other approaches abandon the core characters and situations entirely, but are no less viable. The *Galactica* and *Colonial One* attracted many survivors in FTL-capable ships, but others might have made it. Some could be FTL ships that didn't make the rendezvous at Ragnar Anchorage in time, or even ships without FTL capability. These ships have stories as well.

Consider one ship or many banded together. Is the group self-sufficient? Can it make its own fuel, store water, grow food? The answers will greatly affect the path of the campaign. A ship or group that can't head off into deep space and survive would have to stay near the occupied Colonies, or travel among small, distant outposts. They could search for signs of the *Galactica* or other warships.

They could fight the Cylons to the best of their ability, staying hidden and striking at moments of weakness before slipping away again. Or they could simply run, avoiding combat unless cornered.

The key for such a one-ship or small group campaign is designing meaningful events. Perhaps the remnants can foil Cylon plans for the occupied Colonies in some fashion. They might distract Cylons, allowing the fleeing fleet to get away. The player characters also need a source of hope. There must be a reason for fighting what seems an unwinnable war.

You could dangle the *Galactica* before them. Secret military codes and contingency plans might note rally points or other contingencies. They might find an experimental transmitter that can signal warships. Of course, they'll have to prove they aren't a Cylon trap....

Perhaps they can work toward gathering other ships. If they can assemble a self-sustaining fleet, they could begin their own search for Earth, or another new home. Who knows, they might run into *Galactica* on the way.

Another battlestar might have survived. It could lead its own fugitive fleet. Or it might be a collection of smaller warships, with a PC captaining each. Together, but only together, these ships mount a credible defense against Cylon attack, something close to a battlestar's firepower. Command might be open to debate. The most senior ranking officer might be unable to assume command for some reason. Another claimant to political succession could be found alive and exert authority over the survivors. This approach gives the Game Master a wider palette to build stories around, but removes many of the favorite touchstones of the show.

## OCCUPIED COLONIES

*Galactica* and other surviving fleets are gone, fled into the vastness of space. Who knows if they will ever return. But not everyone perished on the Colonies. Those far away from the bombed cities or with the means to sustain themselves may have survived. The power of their conquerors is unquestioned, with basestars looming over every colony, Cylon raiders polluting the skies, and toasters patrolling the land.

Though we don't understand the reasons, we do know the Cylons did not annihilate Caprica. Perhaps they treated the other Colonies similarly. Were some of the bombs in the cities not nuclear? Just how deadly is the radioactive fallout? Do the Cylons have plans for the Colonies and their few, desperate survivors? Why do they sometimes capture instead of kill?

A Colonies campaign features the action of a guerilla war and the mystery of the Cylon's plans. Any sort of character fits. All types are thrown together; their very survival depends on cooperation. A civilian airplane might have survived a cursory attack by a raider, then crashed in the wilderness (or even lost on an isolated island with many secrets). Military personnel on leave, members of the government, doctors, technicians, and laborers on vacation could have been on board. A pyramid squad might have been training up in the mountains on that fateful day. They are already a team, but they are now fighting the kind of battle they never trained for.

The same blend of military struggle, mystery, and mysticism can be woven in a Colonies campaign, even if finding Earth isn't the central goal. The Cylons have their own faith and perhaps its secrets can be discovered planet-side. Others might believe that salvation or true victory can only be accomplished by studying humans. They might seek to avoid human mistakes, or to determine how their nature differs. Perhaps the Cylon race has found barriers to its development that breeding with humans could conquer.

These strategic questions create the foundation of the campaign. Day-to-day demands, however, provide endless opportunities for battling Cylons, committing sabotage, uncovering new resources,

locating more survivors—surviving yet another day in purgatory. This sort of campaign appeals to those who enjoy post-apocalyptic genres, or have a strong interest in ground combat-oriented adventures.

## CAMPAIGN STYLES

Themes and approaches arise in a specific context. The focus of a campaign is on the characters. What roles do they play? In the BSG universe, two basic styles of play exist: military and civilian. This choice affects the adventures you design. Here's the gist.

### MILITARY

Characters in such a military-oriented campaign are likely members of the Colonial Fleet or the Colonial Marines. They have access to weaponry and good reason to use it from time to time. They may include Viper and Raptor pilots. Adventures mostly involve the security of the fleet and its physical survival. Military officers are sent to protect civilian ships and take on vital missions. They hold important positions in the fleet, risk their lives to protect others, and bear the responsibility that comes with both.

The primary goals of a military-oriented campaign are the completion of missions and long-term survival, at least for the bulk of the fleet. Individual sacrifice





is never more than a heart-beat away. The campaign is mostly action-oriented. Typical adventures include dog-fighting Cylon raiders, executing raids or strikes, assessing the dangers of any landfall, making discoveries away from the fleet, enforcing the supremacy of the Colonial Fleet command, or even investigating crimes and threats within the fleet. Other scenes worth role playing include blowing off steam in the pilot's lounge, butting heads with comrades or civilians, standard duties like in-fleet escort or ferrying dignitaries that go SNAFU, and the like.

Military personnel may be drawn into civilian struggles at times or face individual moral decisions. That's the exception; clearly directed action is the rule.

## CIVILIAN

Characters in a civilian campaign are the non-military members of the fleet. They come from any walk of life, thrown together by horrific events. They bring talents and abilities that may be used in new ways in the fleet. Former police officers or private investigators might be "volunteered" to investigate crimes within the fleet. Medical personnel undoubtedly are drafted into tending to the survivors, usually with an emphasis on military casualties. Politicians or bureaucrats could become leaders of ships, members of the Quorum of Twelve, even the President.

A military campaign relied on action for its typical adventure; civilian campaigns run into violence less often. Adventures focus on the problems, tensions, and strains of the survivors. Civilian player characters must deal with these troubles, help the people, defuse tension, and keep the darkness and chaos from overwhelming all. Outwitting or outmaneuvering their opponents is their kind of battle.

Possible adventures vary depending on the civilian characters chosen, but here are some ideas. A group that brought their ship to the fleet focuses first on their own survival and that of their ship. They may need to obey Colonial Fleet commands at times, but they assert their own authority otherwise. The type of ship can spawn further adventures—a pleasure ship attracts all manner of people; a military or support ship (even obsolete) would be commandeered from time to time; a transport ship might contain scarce resources, a manufacturing ship needs resources, a corporate yacht with advanced technology might be dragooned into special missions; a passenger liner sports a workforce and citizenry, creating labor, government, economic, and mass psychology issues.

## MIXING IT UP

Campaign approaches and styles need not be mutually exclusive. The *Galactica* can reach back to the Colonies to pursue mystic goals or to rescue more people. An emergency landing could uncover resistance fighters. Other surviving fleets can be encountered. Some known characters can be mixed with new personalities in the campaign. Events and elements from the show can be played out, while new developments spice the mix. A military-oriented arc can be played out, then a series of civilian issues.

Mixing it up allows the players to enjoy different adventures with the same characters. Survivors on Caprica may be drawn into a religious mystery, then battle Cylons before being rescued and joining the fleet.

You can go even further by introducing flavors from other genres. If the Cylons introduce a zombie-making disease, you've got the makings of a horror twist to the campaign. If dark powers are discovered in the desperate religious quest, you've heightened the supernatural. A healthy dose of noir investigation might go well in the dark atmosphere of the fleet.

You could stick closer to basic premises but drop the characters into a little explored corner. Maybe they are military police, investigating and trying to prevent crimes in the fleet. Journalists and gumshoes have good reason to stick their nose in all sorts of situations, especially with so many mysteries to be solved. A group of priests might end up leading the search for religious clues and the way to Earth.

Another tool that enhances mixed approaches and styles is for each player to create more than one character. A player's primary character might be a political operative, but he could also create a Viper pilot for use in space battles with the Cylons. Another person might focus on their doctor/scientist unraveling the mysteries of the Cylons, but take time out to play a member of the CIC staff of *Galactica* for a military story arc. This causes some complexity and makes it a bit harder for you to plan, unless you dictate which character is played when. Still, for the right group, it can expand the game dramatically.

## DESIGNING ADVENTURES

Adventures are created by outlining a plot or plots, and then adding characters, complications, interesting places, and situations. Adventures are made up of "events." You assemble events like a puzzle to enhance the challenge and carry the plot forward. You create pieces of the puzzle until you know how the story might play out, the folks the characters

are likely to meet, and how the action might flow. Remember, you are sketching out possible adventure paths, not predetermining every action or decision. Your adventures must be flexible enough to give the players a say in their direction. You will end up tossing out some pieces; others will take on more importance than you expected. As long as you don't force scenes on the players, they shouldn't ignore the general *path* of the adventure. It's cooperative story-telling, mixing free will with prepared plots. Save all the pieces you've created, even if you don't use them. You never know when an idea, scene, nonplayer character, or description will come in handy in a later adventure.

One of the best ways to start the game quickly is to drop a player character into the middle of action: escaping the Colonies when the Cylons arrive, driving off a raid until the fleet is ready to jump, or settling a dispute between two mobs of survivors. High tension with minimum background leaves the players scrambling to catch up. Explanations come later, now they need to act. Starting things off this way avoids a lull at the beginning as the group sits around deciding where to go and what action to take. The overall adventure may be related to the starting action, or the opening sequence could simply set a mood, establishing your primary subtext.

If the characters don't all know each other, you can start with the event that first connected them. Take advantage of the tendency for people to bond in the face of imminent threat or peril. A group of strangers may run to the nearest ship to escape, only to discover that they are unlikely companions for the rest of the journey.

Make sure when you start the players in the middle of the fun that they are properly motivated and understand what options they have. Civilian survivors won't be flying Vipers to dogfight Cylons. They might deal with a Cylon attack in their own ways (doctor helping the injured, tech helping to repair their ship's FTL drive, marines defending against a Cylon boarding squad).

Starting things in the middle of the action is best at the beginning of a campaign or session. It gets players involved quickly and the plots started. As the adventures continue, the players become more involved in what happens next. Again, it's a shared story unfolding here.

## ADVENTURE CONCEPTS

Thinking of new adventure ideas can be a bear. But anything and everything can happen to the fleet. Here are a few ideas.

**New Familiar Thing:** Take the basic premise of a BSG TV episode and muck with it. Many of the most logical and exciting topics have already been covered in the series. Don't give up on those ideas, just make them your own. Start with the premise that something has caused most of the fleet's water (or food, or fuel) supply to be lost. It could be Cylon sabotage, a political statement, or a simple accident either in storage or inventory. The player characters might discover that various groups have been stealing the supplies for some unknown reason. In solving the mystery, you need to consider what the fleet will do to rectify the situation. What options exist and what other problems do they create? The adventure follows the discovery of the loss as you create related NPCs, relationships, and the actions the PCs must take to solve the problem.

**Murder Mystery:** Start with a body and find the killer. The obvious suspect no doubt is the wrong one (or is he?). "Sure I wished he were dead, but I didn't kill him!" A few twists scatter the player characters to different parts of the fleet in their investigation. To avoid impasses where the players just aren't putting the clues together, remember that many famous investigators succeed simply by stirring up trouble, and hoping they survive long enough to get to the bottom of things.

**Natural Hazard:** Even in space—especially in space—Mother Nature can take a pot shot at you. Uncharted asteroids post-jump could cause tremendous damage and necessitate emergency operations. What if a random spark causes an explosion in the fuel ship? Is anyone trapped in a section of a ship with limited air supply? Are damaged ships drifting without power, ready to be pulverized by a piece of space debris? Brave souls are needed to reach the ship with critical parts. Can the maneuver drives be repaired in time? Might be a good idea to have a couple Viper pilots nearby to destroy smaller projectiles coming the ships way.

**Disease in the Fleet:** When folks are crammed together for months, disease is a near certainty. The outbreak can be as devastating as you like, perhaps even threatening people on every ship. Like any disaster, consider how the player character can contain it. Jumping back to Caprica to get serum, or to snatch the tech to make the cure, might be necessary. Scientists and doctors work feverishly to diagnose the disease and find a cure. Someone with a Cylon connection might be offered a serum...in exchange for a small favor. Did the Cylons bring the disease to the fleet for just this purpose?

**An Issue Heats Up:** Think of a policy or law being enforced in the fleet. Consider who

might oppose that rule. Create an incident that brings the law into focus, debate, or worse. For instance, what if policies were put into place encouraging or even mandating women to get pregnant. Just raising such a policy would provoke a firestorm, protests, and a political crisis, no matter how necessary it might be.

**Cylons Appear:** From a single Cylon raider on recon to the Cylon fleet trying to catch *Galactica* in a vulnerable position, toasters cause trouble. If one or more fleet ships had problems with their FTL drives, *Galactica* might have to remain behind to protect them until repairs were made. The Cylons might attack indirectly, or use some kind of disguise. A captured Colonial ship, like a Raptor, could be used to deliver a bomb, to land Cylon agents among Caprican survivors, or to strike Colonial One with a Centurion assault squad.

**Opportunity Knocks:** A source of fuel, water, supplies, people, technology, or clues is found. But getting at it is risky. Does the fleet go for it? Who will be sent to make it happen?

## ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

An adventure is a segment of a campaign that presents a problem or opportunity that must be dealt with, and is resolved, in short order. The plotline could last more than one gaming session, but it rarely goes longer than a month or so of real time. A group that meets weekly might have more involved adventures; a gang that games monthly should wrap up in one or two sessions. If you devise a more extended storyline, it becomes a campaign level plot. It should be broken down into smaller chunks; a game is more exciting if the players have chances for interim victories or resolutions.

Some adventures are self-contained, having nothing to do with the grand campaign plots. They might examine a microcosm of the fleet in detail. Perhaps the characters were looking for some relaxation on *Cloud 9* and they get pulled into a hostage standoff. Some campaigns are a continuing stream of these one-off stories, tied together only loosely or not at all. Others weave all the adventures into an intricate arc. Most combine the two.

While everyone's stories are unique, understanding some basic principles of story structure is useful. The following elements play important roles. Being aware of them will help you orchestrate your group's adventures.

## Spreading the Wealth

Focus on different characters in different adventures. That prevents all action from gravitating toward one or two characters and leaving the other players feeling ignored or sidelined. By the same token, even when featuring one player character, most if not all should have a role to play in each adventure. Engaging the Cylons in a space battle highlights Viper pilots most, but those stationed on the CIC or the flight deck should factor in. A murder mystery with political undertones shines the spotlight more on the investigator or politician, but having a combatant around could be necessary. A discovery brings the scientists or priest to the fore, but someone needs to smooth relations with those who guard the clue, or dispatch them should negotiations fail.

Moving events forward and around is critical in a *Battlestar Galactica* adventure. Given the diversity of character types, it's likely that not all PCs will be present in every scene. Don't keep a character in drydock for an entire session. Rotating scenes brings in various players and gives them a chance to play the game. You don't want anyone feeling like they dropped off the DRADIS entirely.

Consider this adventure example. An incident of sabotage first provokes a military, tactical response. Once the immediate danger is past, a political approach becomes more prominent. Investigation of the incident involves both military and civilian personnel. The location of the event impacts people outside positions of authority, people who experience loss or who have secrets revealed by the circumstances. If the sabotage occurred in a critical area, different skill sets might be required to repair the damage, or to adapt the fleet to the loss of supplies or capabilities. In the course of a session, you might begin with an explosion on a civilian ship. Run a tight action sequence where the military responds (one or more combat-oriented type), hunting down the saboteur among the civilians (including other PCs). Switch to *Colonial One* and the President's briefing and response (a PC assistant, reporter, or political figure participates). A tech crew (with scientific, medical, or mechanical PCs) is dispatched to survey the damage. They discover a new danger revealed or caused by the explosion. A representative of the President and another from the military are sent in to investigate and control the situation (allowing two different PC types to interact and challenge each other). A command review of the military response, or a debriefing of the sabotage threat follows. The tech crew begins a dangerous fix (dramatic complex action). Reactions from others (nonplayer characters) are heard, and may

complicate things. Hopefully, the fix works and the greater danger is avoided. Perhaps two investigators come to blows or learn how to operate together better. In this way, the focus was not with one player, leaving the others as observers.

**Desire**

All drama is born of the desires of the characters. Understanding those desires is crucial to creating adventures which hold the interest of your players. Desires take the form of goals, needs, wants, and problems—each player may define their character’s motivations differently. While adventures sometimes just happen, most often storylines are born from characters’ attempts to fulfill needs, to obtain what they do not have or to keep what they do away from the grubbers who’d love to steal it. If your adventures do not address the desires developed in character creation, the players are likely to be disappointed or confused.

Character Traits are the most obvious expression of desires. Give these special attention and make sure that they are woven into play. A juicy Complication cries out for exposure. You might even design an entire adventure out of it.

Characters should struggle to attain their wants and needs. Some may never be satisfied. They exist for a lifetime, forming a backdrop to everything the character experiences. These larger issues are all about the attempt, not the grasping. Smaller, more specific goals form the meat and potatoes of your adventures. In the beginning, it might be reaching the fugitive fleet alive. Then the focus is escape and finding a way to survive. Once these have been conquered, even temporarily, more personal goals come to the fore.

Desires are not set in stone and goals can be accomplished in many ways. One of the most fascinating aspects of role playing is learning what a player character will or won’t do to reach his desires. Or how those desires are sharpened or changed as life goes on.

**Conflict**

Once desires are established, player characters are ready to go after them. To create drama or interest, forces must oppose the characters’ goals. They will be faced with difficult choices that will test their commitment. That’s when the shooting usually starts.

Opposing forces can be individuals or organizations, the law or criminals, hazardous environments or the trials of everyday life. For a

*Battlestar Galactica* campaign, these forces can take some truly unusual forms.

Consider the classic fugitive fleet campaign approach. Organizations include the Colonial military, performing a defensive and police role. Covert agents may serve either of these two responsibilities. Working with, and sometimes against, the military is the civilian government. Those folks are responsible for laws, justice, and leadership. Any of these can run counter to an individual’s goals.

Many of the traditional organizations from the Colonies no longer exist, discarded in the need to survive. Some of these re-exert themselves as time goes on, often introducing instability by challenging the formerly absolute authority of the military and government. Labor unions, class-based societies, and political movements are prime candidates.

You’ll never escape plain old crime either. Part of what makes us human apparently. Anytime something is in short supply, those who sidestep the rules thrive at all levels. An individual criminal could cause trouble for the PCs. Characters might be sent to investigate a crime or could encounter the perpetrator accidentally. A more significant and extensive opposing force makes for more long-lasting conflict. Over time, the player characters might become threats to the criminal organization’s reputation or even its existence. The response could range from a message to back off to thugs catching them in a dark corridor to pressure from superiors in the syndicate’s pocket.

The environment itself can become an opposing force, particularly in space. Radiation plagues survivors on the Colonies. Problems threaten all essentials of life—water, food, air, heat, fuel, and hull integrity. Characters deal with explosions or mechanical failures, even exposure to deep space itself.

For more difficult choices, internal conflicts are the ticket. Best are situations where multiple goals interfere with each other, at times becoming mutually exclusive. There’s lots of times that you can’t do the right thing, just have to pick your favorite wrong one. This may force a character to face some moral choices that may alter their relationships with friends and loved ones irreparably. A tough moral choice is not between letting a child die and killing a Cylon leader. One option is obviously good, the other bad. What if the only way to kill the Cylon was to let the child die? That’s a much tougher call. What or who are you willing to sacrifice to win the war? To make a decision interesting, each choice must have consequences. Both options may have equal value, but the characters can only accomplish one.

## Rising Action

To grab the players and keep them hooked, action should begin in small doses, then grow as the stakes get higher. That's called rising action. An individual adventure could begin with a bang, but even that just is a quick foray to get the players immersed. Your best bet is to start small, and let things go from bad to worse. This is definitely the way to go with larger story arcs that span multiple adventures and deal with long-term situations.

Rising action doesn't necessarily mean combat, going from a scuffle to an all-out gun battle. The phrase speaks to the severity and consequence of character actions. At the beginning of a story, it may not matter who the player character let onto the shuttle escaping to the fleet. One stranger is pretty much like another. But what if one of those strangers is a murderer, a criminal, or a terrorist? That one act of generosity may unleash dark plots and evil deeds that come back and bite the PCs in the butt. As the players get involved in more plots and conflicts, their actions and decisions will become much more important and dramatic.

As you map out potential plots within and across adventures, consider how actions and reactions get more important. A few different escalation options provide flexibility, and makes the player character choices more meaningful. Don't tie a key conflict to a particular NPC at a certain time and place. If the PCs end up missing that appointment, you'll lose a central plot point. Figure out how to place the encounter in a number of different contexts. That way, no matter what the players do, they can reach the conflict and the story moves along.

Also think about what drives any nonplayer character encountered in a key plot point. Try to avoid giving the impression that a character has tracked down the party just to impart a clue and walk off stage. Create reasons for a key NPC to be in many of the places the player characters might frequent. The description or goals of the NPC may have to be adjusted given changing circumstances. Now, wherever or whenever they encounter the source, his motivations make his presence more plausible.

Keep in mind that the characters may not always succeed as the plot moments rise. A failure can challenge them to overcome their obstacles another way. But you must sketch out one or more paths from interim failure to ultimate success. A few smaller defeats makes final victory all the more satisfying; a little screw-up that ruins an entire adventure is no fun at all.

## FLASHBACKS, DREAMS, AND CUT SCENES

Consider introducing some atypical scenes. These break up the pace of things, impart information otherwise unavailable to the characters, and enrich the world.

Flashbacks are a useful tool. Just as we don't know everything about the stars of *Battlestar Galactica*, players never define every aspect of their characters at the start of a campaign. Use flashbacks to fill in those gaps in history or personality, moments when a character is lost in their own memories. A flashback connects a character to previous knowledge, past relationships, old opinions, or deeply held causes. It may simply remind them from whence they've come. The particular scene can be picked to reflect on their current situation.

Dream scenes are more open-ended. In a dream, you have carte blanche to create whatever sort of strange, pseudo-experiences you like. You can place the character in situations that could never happen or that reflect internal turmoil. The right dream could encourage a player to embrace a forgotten or marginalized aspect of his character.

Dreams can also take on a larger role. They might be imparted by another source, inspired perhaps by faith or supernatural power. These dreams are often prophetic or mysterious, shedding a subconscious light on the current plotline. They might grant clues to the path to Earth or some other critical event that may change the fate of the human race.

Finally, you might want to try a cut scene. In these, the story "cuts away" from our heroes and focuses for a short time on something or someone they can't see and don't know about. A classic example is a short scene where the enemy is shown plotting against the player characters. References to the exact threat are left obscure to maintain the mystery of it, but the danger to come is foreshadowed. Telling players that the Cylons are their enemy and they have a plan is one thing. Giving them a glimpse into the machinations and scheming of the human-model Cylons makes that threat much more real.

Unusual scenes should be used sparingly. You have principal control over them, and they are used to impart certain information or highlight a mood. That means the players interact less. They watch more and play less. That's not shared storytelling.

## Climax

Eventually, it all comes to a head, a moment where you've got fate in your hands. A particular plot line should reach its most crucial point. Success or failure is in the balance. Important questions may get answered. The characters are given their greatest tests, and the most is at stake should they fail. Either way, the plot is resolved and relationships may never be the same.

Do the characters achieve what they've set out to do? If not, was the struggle worth it anyway? Is what they sought still important to them? Will they try again another day? The climax is the tipping point and events cannot be undone. Characters make choices, the die is cast, and all must live with the results.

Planning an impressive climax can be tricky. The scene must be flexible enough that choices made during the rising action don't render it meaningless or impossible. For example, if the climax scene is tied to a particular player character, and that character doesn't survive to reach the scene, that's a problem. Focus on the key elements that really make the climax impressive. Will it be mortal combat? A political test, the loser forever shamed in the eyes of the fleet? Will a great secret be revealed which changes people's attitudes and beliefs? Once that's set, let the details become sharper as the action rises and the exact circumstances of the final scene become more defined.

The setting for the climax can be vitally important. Consider places and situations that add to the sense of drama or increase the stakes even higher. Space battles within an asteroid field, a gunfight in a dangerous factory ship, closing arguments before a military tribunal, or a race across the face of Kobol all make exciting settings for a plot climax.

## Resolution

Climaxes usually lead straight into some kind of resolution. Once the high point of an adventure has been faced, what happens next? What are the consequences of the player characters' decisions? Do others' opinions of the characters change? Did success earn them promotion, new opportunities, coveted possessions, respect, friendship, or something else? Did failure, in whole or in part, rob them of something vital?

Take it a step deeper, and consider the effects on nonplayer characters. Who won and lost given how things played out? How does that affect their relationship with the player characters and with other NPCs. What about institutional repercussions?

Is society as a whole changed? How do the "powers that be" adjust their goals and plans?

And after it hits the fan, there's usually a lot of cleanup to do. Characters tie up loose ends and address hanging issues from earlier in the adventure. Less important decisions, deferred due to the rising action, may now be addressed. Though happy to have survived and perhaps achieved their ends, the PCs may wish to discuss their future course of action.

Now is also a good time to see how characters have grown and changed. After the heat of an adventure is over, they may realize that relationships they did not value before have become much more important. They may have acquired new skills or a new role in life. They may make choices that alienate them from the other player characters. Players who embrace these possibilities deserve Plot Points for staying true to their characters and letting them grow, especially if the change doesn't bring an obvious benefit.

New Traits might be acquired if the past events and current circumstances warrant. Enemies might have been made or privileges lost. Allies could be revealed, a particular skill or talent discovered.

At this point, you and the players should discuss how the game is going. Mention the high points and low points, the good and the bad. Some things might have worked better than others, or the characters might seek new challenges. You all may decide to change the tone or direction of the campaign. A Caprican resistance campaign might have been fun, but now the players want to be reunited with the fleet and explore new kinds of stories. They might identify a particular nonplayer character and want to know more about him. A situation left unresolved appears intriguing. Consider their comments and suggestions. Use them to prepare new plotlines.

## SCENES

Scenes are the building blocks of adventures. Each scene details a bit of the *Battlestar Galactica* world. Remember, your descriptions let the player characters see, smell, or feel the game world. When crafting a scene and portraying it at the gaming table, consider all five senses. Describe what they see first, to provide a frame of reference. Follow it with notable sounds or smells. Suggest likely feelings the scene might impart: joy, fear, wonder, shame, hope, or nausea are a few possibilities. The richer your descriptions, the better the players understand the scene and see its role playing potential.

Each scene has many potential uses. It may end up imparting a clue. A relationship may be formed or a rivalry heightened. Emotions

can be released or stoked to a higher pitch.

Recall the campaign themes when working a scene—paranoia, desperation, heroism, or human nature itself can be referenced.

Scenes can also be used to simply blow off steam or release tension (before you crank it right back up). Let the characters have some fun every once in a while. A card game or pyramid match, a music recital or the discovery of a cache of Colonial treasures—these lighter moments contrast starkly with the dark themes of a campaign. Without a break, the darkness become less meaningful, like repetitive horror or gore that numbs over time.

Consider how the scene will engage the characters. If it is the location of a disaster, provide the characters with possible ways they can help, particularly those that involve personal challenges and risk. Will their actions help the situation, incite a passionate response, or be ignored? Will anyone engage the PCs, and what are their motives for doing so? Are there choices to be made, actions to be taken, or simply things to be witnessed in the scene.

## PLAYING THE PARTS

Nonplayer characters are central to any campaign. Players should come to like some, despise others, and even admire a few. Creating characters that your players buy into is not that difficult. Give the NPC a good reason to be who they are and act a particular way. A catchy physical description is helpful, but isn't necessary for everyone.

Over time, you'll develop quite a few people in the fleet. Keep track of them (on paper, a spreadsheet, etc.) so you keep them straight. Depending on the campaign you might want to detail the top ranks of *Galactica's* crew, the Viper pilots, or the passengers on a key ship in the fleet. As they appear in scenes, you can develop them further, making notes by each person on your list. For some, game events will be life-changing: promotions to fill a recently vacant position, demotion or dismissal for something they committed or omitted, even death in a last violent climax. These changes in NPCs reinforce the fluid nature of the fleet, and drives home the point that life is precious—anyone can die.

In order to keep your sanity, don't detail every aspect of every NPC. Divide them into three groups: stock character, important characters, and antagonists.

## STOCK CHARACTERS

No Game Master has the time to give the full treatment to every person the player

characters might meet. The Colonial marine on guard needs little more than “brawny soldier with a tendency to get distracted by women.” Should one of these stock characters become more important—the Colonial marine takes a bullet for the President and lies clinging to life—you can fill in by improvising, then add details between sessions.

Sometimes the most important thing about a stock character is his name. Nothing breaks the suspension of disbelief or signals that this character is not important like a Game Master fumbling for a name. Luckily, the BSG universe uses familiar names. Any Earth last name is fair game, even distinctly ethnic forms like Novacek or McManus. First names are pretty familiar as well, sticking to tried and true (William, James, Laura) or drawing on non-English cultures (Apollo, Gaius, Anastasia). A made-up name works best when paired with a familiar one (Tom Zarek). The ancient world, particularly Greece and Rome, is fertile territory for good names.

When crafting a scene, place appropriate stock characters to enhance mood and build consistency. Some good stock characters could include:

**The Colonial Marine:** Rock-jawed and brawny, he's a can-do warrior.

**The Desperate Parent:** Struggling to survive and bereft of friends, the parent begs anyone in authority to help their little ones.

**The Disgruntled Laborer:** Glad he's alive but still sick of the endless crap jobs he's expected to do.

**The Drunk:** Inappropriate and perhaps dangerous, he drowns his problems in alcohol.

**The Haunting Face:** He looks like someone you lost in the Cylon assault. It couldn't be him, could it?

**The Hoarder:** Self-absorbed and ruthless, this gent won't starve with the masses.

**The Kid Thief:** Relying on youth and cute antics gives him a chance to get close enough to pick your pocket.

**The Medic:** One of the crusty old doctor's new trainees, he's nervous but seems to have the skills to keep you alive.

**The New Crewman:** Tired and scared, he keeps to his post in disaster, desperately trying to remember what to do there.

**The Opportunist:** Always ready to make a new friend, he seeks to improve his own life at every turn.

**The Petty Thief:** In a world of scarcity, this older man's skills and inclinations ensure that he never goes without.

**The Political Aide:** Young and inexperienced, he holds a job that would have taken years of service to achieve back on the Colonies.

**The Priest:** Calm and faithful, the priest offers comfort and counseling based on the Divine Texts.

**The Repair Crewman:** Whether in a spacesuit or with sleeves rolled up, this veteran has been there and done that. He and his ilk keep the ship going, no matter what.

**The Reporter:** Eager to make a name for himself by getting at the truth or simply something sensational.

**The Viper Pilot:** Cocksure and a little crazy, he's fit, talented, and loves the attention.

## IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

Characters that are integral parts of adventures deserve a little more effort. They might be involved in a fight, or could use a skill in conversation. They should have goals which affect how they respond to the player characters. You should consider the different ways they might interact with the characters.

Here are some examples of created characters to include in the game. Add a summary of Attributes/Skills/Traits and these examples are ready for game night.

**Marya Shane:** Captain of the *Picon Dreamer*, Marya purchased the ship after years of toil in corporate passenger fleets. She is fiercely protective about the *Dreamer*, though she usually obeys military commands from the Fleet. Marya has a daughter, Treyanne. The captain is teaching Treyanne everything she can about the ship, from engineering to navigation to piloting. "This will all be hers some day. She'll know how to take care of it when that happens." Marya's goals are to preserve the *Picon Dreamer* and help find a new home for humanity. Marya's ship might be sent to explore some curious area of space.

**Ben "Snake Eyes" Tarro:** Former ace Viper pilot, Ben was an instructor in the Colonial Academy. He's got the experience but his eyes are too old to fly combat. Relying now on his love of gardening, he serves the fleet by leading the team in charge of provisions, keeping the algae tanks operating and finding ways to synthesize foods lost in the flight from the Colonies. In a desperate situation, he might get pulled in to fly something. "These eyes work better behind a microscope than a cockpit canopy, friend." Ben wants to contribute as best he can to the fleet, but his past as a pilot is just that—past. Ben might be involved in a food shortage or helping to understand why a disease is moving through the fleet.

**Tebby Miller:** A communications and computer specialist assigned to the battleship *Orion*, Tebby was visiting a friend on *Galactica* when the Cylons attacked. Stepping into service like she was born to it, Tebby has been a fixture in the *Galactica* CIC ever

since. When not carrying out her duties, she spends time adjusting the ship's deep space antennas to detect either Cylon or human transmissions. "Space isn't silent, if you know how to listen." Tebby's goal is to be the first to discover Earth or to save a ship by detecting Cylons before the DRADIS does. She could appear in an adventure having discovered something important while "listening."

**Shandara White:** The Quorum of Twelve member representing Aquaria, Shandara is a career politician. Known as the "White Shark" in political back rooms, she is forceful and quite persuasive. She resigned from her political office to avoid a corruption scandal a year before the Cylon attack. When the Quorum was recreated, she was elected by the survivors of Aquaria in a landslide vote. "I am a servant of the people. Better not get in the people's way." Shandara loves influence and power. Her goal is to be President. Representative White can be involved in any political scandal or crisis, usually playing for her or her constituents' advantage.

**John Velsic:** John is the first person tried and convicted in the fleet after the re-establishment of a criminal court. He was sentenced to the convict ship for a year after being caught stealing from the fleet medicine storage. A career criminal, John is serving his time peacefully enough. He keeps listening to the news on the radio, waiting for an opportunity to get out with some kind of deal. "You know, I've got a few skills that could help you, if you get me out of here." John might be the right guy to help break into an ancient temple or steal something right from under the Cylons' noses.

## ANTAGONISTS

A small number of characters actively oppose the player characters for some reason. They could be rivals or adversaries, or even full blown nemeses. They should play a strong role in the campaign plots, appearing in a number of adventures. Their involvement with the PCs is ongoing.

An antagonist should be powerful or important enough that they can't be thwarted easily or simply ignored. Most likely, the person has a political power base—people that believe in the antagonist and his goals. He and his should have ambitions that run counter to those of the PCs. This guarantees that the two groups clash regularly.

Antagonists should be as detailed as any player character. Know their strengths and weaknesses and how those apply to their underlying goals. Attributes and skills are important as conflict



with the PC is all but guaranteed and may become quite explicit.

Two example antagonists have significant backgrounds.

**Marko Julian:** A popular political commentator back on the Colonies, Marko is charismatic and handsome. He has a loyal following of people who listen to his speeches or read his essays. He now serves as a gang leader for laborers extracting tylium from raw ore. The members of his work gang are completely devoted to him, and he is usually spared the actual work. This gives him more time to keep an eye on the President and the leaders of the military.

Marko has oft-stated that only he's got the moxie to reason with the Cylons and forge a peace pact. He believes that the Colonial military provoked the Cylon assault and that the Cylons deserve reparations for their past enslavement. He is a champion of the populist sentiment that the fleet should return to the Colonies. He claims that millions survived the attacks and are living in peace with the Cylons. He rejects the Earth "fairy tale" as a fantasy that serves only to support the current power structure. So intent are they on their power, he asserts, the military and the President are leading the survivors to one end—their deaths.

In his most benign mode, Marko Julian is a constant agitator against the leaders of the fleet. His commentaries continually undermine the current aims of the fleet and the dedication of the people seeking to achieving those goals. If given a political opportunity, he can sway many people toward candidates who agree with his way of thinking. If able to talk with the Cylons in any way, he opens negotiations, ignoring chain of command or authority. He would not hesitate to pass on secrets to establish trust, and could condemn the fleet in the process.

Marko lives on the processing ship, *Mekata*, though he spends the majority of his time elsewhere, catching rides on the small utility ships that ferry supplies and personnel around the fleet. He is in his fifties and has slowly graying black hair. He is not a particularly attractive man, but his personality is magnetic.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Strength d6, Vitality d8, Alertness d10, Intelligence d12, Willpower d12+d4; Life Points 24; Initiative d8+d10.

**Traits:** Political Pull d6, Renown (Political Activist) d4, Talented (Persuasion, Oratory) d4, Duty (Return to the Colonies) d6, Memorable d4, Pacifist d6, Rebellious d4.

**Skills:** Athletics d4, Guns d4, Influence d6/Leadership d8/Persuasion d12/Politics

d10, Knowledge d6/History d8/Law d8/Politics d10, Perception d6/Investigation d8, Performance d6/Oratory d12.

**Sarabeth Naxos:** A religious scholar by education, Sarabeth is an assistant to the senior elder from Gemenon. They were traveling to a religious conference on Caprica when the Cylons attacked. The trauma of the attacks and the flight from the Colonies deeply affected Sarabeth. She became aggressive and manic at first. More recently, she appears to have regained herself. Now, she believes that she has been granted visions from the Lords of Kobol. She did not seek to be a prophet or "voice of the gods," but she embraces it passionately now.

Some of the messages from the gods that Sarabeth proclaims are quite insightful, but others are dark or confused. While professing to want nothing for herself, the prophet is active among the people, and, for some, has become the preeminent religious leader of the fleet. She claims the gods will show her the way to Earth, but only if humankind is worthy. All must embrace a pious existence before the path will be shown.

While Sarabeth is useful, she can also be trouble. She often declares accurate revelations, or correctly interprets religious clues left by the Thirteenth Tribe. She also can stir people up and relentlessly undermine those she sees as rivals. Some believe that she is leveraging divine guidance for her own gains. She disputes that hotly.

Prophet Naxos lives on the *Gemenon Traveller* with other religious leaders. Citing a need to console, advise, or learn from the people, she finds various ways to move about the fleet. Those who believe in her do so fiercely. They help her move, give her a place to stay, provide her with meals or information; many would do whatever she asks. She dresses simply in black, a habit observed by the more strictly religious Sagittarons. Only twenty-five years old, she still looks like a teenager—bright eyes, golden hair, and looks that turn heads.

**Attributes:** Agility d4, Strength d4, Vitality d4, Alertness d6, Intelligence d8, Willpower d10; Life Points 14; Initiative d4+d6.

**Traits:** Allure d4, Destiny d12, Faith d8, Renown (prophet) d4, Allergy (nuts) d8, Glory Hound d4, Paranoid (enemies of the Gods) d4.

**Skills:** Discipline d6, Influence d6/Bureaucracy d8/Persuasion d12, Knowledge d6/Religion d12, Perception d6/Intuition d8, Performance d6/Acting d8.

## TECHNOLOGY

No getting past the fact that *Battlestar Galactica* is a science fiction setting. That’s part of what makes it so damn exciting, really. Still, that brings up the issue of technology and its effect on the game. As Game Master, this is something you want to pay attention to. Games (and stories) where technology becomes the big focus are rarely as much fun as those that focus on the characters. Technology is intriguing, but it’s simply a set of tools at the disposal of the characters. Its pluses and minuses should be clear so the players have a clue about what they are dealing with. Knowing what is and is not possible is critical. Clearly identifying the “unknowns” of the game reality is also important. Remember, the player characters know far more about their environment than any player could portray at the gaming table. Sometimes giving players more information, even if their characters don’t know all those details, makes up for this disparity.

On the flip side, futuristic tech is cool, and should be enjoyed appropriately. Blasting down the launch tube in a Viper is iconic. It should be a cherished and well-described experience in the game. Other worlds and the wonders of outer space are integral parts of BSG and crafting stories in that setting.

In sum, the characters’ stories are the heart of a *Battlestar Galactica* role playing game. Even so, technology has a key role to play.

## MIXED TECH

*Battlestar Galactica* has a unique tech mix. “Retro futuristic” is as good a name as any. Ships can travel faster than light. They also feature pull-down World War II style communication hand sets. Zero gravity rarely comes up; normal-Earth gravity appears to have been so easily generated that it’s taken for granted. Doors look like they belong on a submarine. Microtech is rare. Nearly everything is big and bulky. That faster-than-light drive probably is put together with rivets and welding. Pistols fire explosive rounds, but paper is everywhere.

Much of the setting has a retrofitted or jury-rigged flavor. Not surprising, folks didn’t do much to prepare for being the last survivors of humanity on an interstellar voyage of mythic length. Things had to be repurposed, metal recycled, necessities improvised. Serious “plowshares into swords” time.

In many ways, Colonial technology is not that distant from our own, in everyday things. Personal digital assistants and private computers are rare. No

doubt caused by a psychological reaction to the Cylon rebellion and a heightened suspicion of technology. Paper is the order of the day; photographs are common.

Using mixed tech helps set the right mood for your game. Advanced technology that hasn’t already appeared on the TV series should generally be avoided. Retro futuristic, especially on *Galactica*, purposely draws a sense of technology about fifty years out of date, even obsolete at times—World War II era compared to modern day.

## TECHNOBABBLE

Unlike many science fiction settings, *Battlestar Galactica* does not frak with strange technologies. Tech is obvious, sometimes quaint. It is definitely not a shorthand substitute for magic. Gravity on ships is never mentioned; it is left as a conceit of the setting. Faster than light travel is possible, but not detailed. These are the way things are—facts to be understood and absorbed so the real business of storytelling can go on.

The real technological mysteries cluster around the capabilities of the Cylons. Even then, people don’t stand around theorizing how something might be achieved. They try to recognize what is happening and how it affects the fleet’s survival. The discovery that a slain Cylon has its memories and personality transferred to a waiting body does not provoke debate on how such a thing is possible. It is accepted as the truth and dealt as a matter affecting strategy. Dr.



Baltar often obscures matters of technology. It’s part of how he maintains his favored position and conceals his malfeasance. Few question this. The leaders of the fleet ignore this, focusing completely on the end result of the work.

Characters in BSG, even those like Chief Tyrol, don’t feel the need to explain tech to

## USING MUSIC TO SET THE MOOD

Every role playing game benefits from the right soundtrack at the right time. Theme music and songs transport players into a scene, establishing the mood quickly. There's a reason TV shows and movies have soundtrack; it's an effective way to enhance the storytelling experience. Consider starting each session by playing the main theme from *BSG* (or even the main theme from the original *BSG*) if that will catch your player's interest better.

Soundtracks from each season of *Battlestar Galactica* are available, but don't feel limited to that show. Other soundtracks work well for the genre. Soundtracks aren't the only way to go though. Any kind of music can work depending on the scene being played.

Two things to keep in mind with music. First, keep it relatively low. You don't want to overwhelm the players, and hinder communication at the gaming table. Second, don't let it be distracting. The easiest approach is to put on the CD and let it play. That may leave you with inappropriate music during certain scenes however. Picking certain music to play at certain times works better, but might leave you scrambling around for the right tune. Setting up an always-appropriate play list for general play, and keeping some special pieces for louder and tenser scenes is ideal. That's also a bit more work.

each other. Why waste time on something everyone either knows or takes for granted? This lends a familiar, proven feel to the setting. Unless it's a unique feature of their personality, intended to confuse or set them apart, player characters should have little need for technical complexities or technobabble. As long as the character understands the purpose and end result of the tech, it's time to move on.

### MANAGING TECHNOLOGY

As discussed, the *Battlestar Galactica* universe is much more about people surviving a dark and gritty reality than gleaming starships gliding around the galaxy. Still, technology is an important tool for Game Masters. At key moments, it can provide an incentive, introduce a mystery, or cause problems.

Other chapters present the state of technology at a point in time—in the middle of the fleet's desperate flight from the Cylons. Clearly, it would benefit the fleet to advance its capabilities in some manner, perhaps quicker course calculations or more powerful FTL drives. Resources might be devoted to that cause and many tests run to gather data or verify an improvement. The chase for an advantage could be a powerful driver, but make sure that the advancement does not shatter the nature of the game setting. Also remember that Cylons evolve as well. Perhaps a Cylon advance demands a massive and quickly accomplished Colonial development project to defend against the enemy's new capabilities.

An unknown technology or one with an unknown origin should spark a mystery. What is it? How did it get there? Can it be deactivated or must it be destroyed? Can it be harnessed to advance Colonial interests? Could it be a trap set by

the Cylons? Given their history, and Cylon mastery of the subject, new tech is always suspect. The mystery tech could be a hoax; especially if it easily sates deeply held desires. How would the colonists feel about an amazing new tech that helps locate Earth?

At a most basic level, life and the survival of the fleet is bound up in technology. Failure of any critical system could expose the fleet to Cylon attacks or endanger the health of the refugees. A simple malfunction can put characters in life-threatening positions. Technology does not need to be new or different to be the basis of a compelling storyline.

### GAME MASTERING TIPS

This whole chapter is about good Game Mastering. A piece of that is definitely preparation, but that's been covered already. There's also the spontaneous or in-session aspect. This section focuses on that, offering suggestions for addressing more short-term concerns.

### PACING

The *BSG* universe supports many different paces, from moment-to-moment danger and escape to calm conversation that advances character development. Pacing is most effective when mixed, a slow build of tension, then a relief of that tension through action. Playing with pacing allows you to tailor the campaign to the player's tastes. If the gang loves space combat and wants to battle Cylon raiders every session, make sure there's plenty of that. If they prefer to explore their characters reacting and struggling in terrible times, lean that way. Don't go overboard on any one pace. Don't want the players to get jaded. Most

groups naturally gravitate toward a mix with regular excitement or action. Creating that mix is up to you.

Most of the time, action comes by surprise, like an ambush. Combat, intrigue, politics, environment crises can all strike rapidly and without warning. The shock and immediacy of danger get your attention damn fast.

An action scene is just as good when it's anticipated; that often tells a better story. The waiting increases the tension. In a military example, work your way up the ladder of tension by starting with a small event, perhaps detecting a Cylon raider far away from the fleet. The fleet is alerted, but it takes time to get everyone ready to jump. Maybe the ships were in the middle of refueling operations or gathering resources. More Cylons appear and must be held off until the fleet can jump. Finally, the Vipers have to steer their way back to *Galactica* for emergency landings, all the while avoiding incoming fire. There you have it: a classic action series with plenty of tension.

As anyone in the service can tell you, war gets damn boring for long periods. Between battles or on-duty shifts, characters can blow off steam or deal with interpersonal issues. Love triangles, rivals, ambition, and mysteries can be cultivated during these down times.

Scenes that simply let the players enjoy their characters without much pressure also change the pace. Perhaps a Triad game in the pilot's lounge, a visit to a "bar," a friendly game of Pyramid, or hanging out with other survivors.

As you pace individual sessions, consider the over-arching plot line. Revelations in the middle of critical, life-and-death situations can be powerful. No time to mess about exploring or asking questions at that point. Players have to accept the new intel and roll with it. Suspicions can be pursued later, during down time. Small clues in the news and events of the fleet should be introduced fairly regularly so they get hints of what's happening around them. During the course of several sessions, incidents small and large reveal the larger arc. The pace of plot arc developments depends on how long you intend the campaign to last in real time and how often your group plays. Even so, keep things flexible. Get a sense from your players whether things are moving along fast enough. If not, move the timetable up.

## DEVELOPING YOUR OWN STYLE

Game Mastering is unique to each person who attempts it. Some enjoy a game rife with humor; others prefer to set a serious tone at the table. One GM

is more comfortable with action sequences, running things by the rules, using a lot of different game mechanics. Another focuses more on descriptions, role playing, and storyline. He uses formal rules much less often. It's all good. Just got to find your own comfort zone.

To help setting the mood, take some time before the game to write out notes for an opening speech. This helps rein in talkative, unfocused gamers by making it clear when the game play starts. You could re-cap the previous events to make sure each player remembers the salient points. You might also adjust minor things from the last session if things are threatening to spin out of control.

If you've run or played role playing games before, don't hesitate to leverage that history. Think about the aspects that you most enjoyed, and adopt or adapt them for your game. Consider the things that Game Master did to make the game so enjoyable. What techniques did they use in presenting information, NPCs, settings, or plot points?

Everyone finds their own style and hones it over time. Don't be afraid to try new things and stretch yourself. If it doesn't work, that's fine. Try something different next time. It's also part of the fun.

## SHARE. BUT DIRECT

Game groups vary, but mostly it's a group of friends gathering for several hours of play. Each person at the table comes with different personal knowledge, areas of expertise, personalities, and strengths. For example, one of your players might be a doctor or EMT. They could describe medical procedures or the effects of wounds and trauma fairly well. Don't be afraid to take advantage of that knowledge, trusting the player to present it fairly and impartially and not skewed for the benefit of their character. Drawing on many people's expertise strengthens a campaign.

If you don't have time to create all the details you want, extend an invitation to your players to help out. They can bring people and places to life that you later weave into the campaign. It's easiest to start with the player characters directly. Who are their three best friends? Where do they prefer to spend their off hours? Who and what were the most important influences on their lives. This helps you do your job, while also encouraging the players to invest in the campaign.

There is a line though. Be ready to exert your control of the game world if players take too many liberties with their contributions, or if they begin to conflict with your plot lines. Only you know the specifics of your storyline. Your presentation of the game world reality must take

precedence. You know what the NPCs know, what plots are unfolding, and what underlying meanings must be preserved. Don't stand stubbornly behind a decision that turns out to be wrong in hindsight, and be sure to rein in a direction that is unpopular or threatens to ruin the plot. On the other hand, don't allow your players to completely take over the game. That just leaves everyone flailing about.

## ACT VERSUS TELL

Reading a nonplayer character's secrets to the players like a laundry list undercuts dramatic impact. It breaks the mood and leaves the NPC pretty forgettable. Try your hand at adopting their accent and speaking for them, incorporating gestures, and looking your players in the eye as you speak. This grabs their attention and immerses them in the game. Nothing more engaging than confronting someone eye to eye. Take advantages of the opportunities to do some role playing yourself. Leading by example encourages your players to speak in character and enjoy a more in-depth experience. Don't sweat it if you aren't an actor or voice impressionist. The attempt usually sets the mood well enough.

Try to show as much as tell. Draw out a map to illustrate a trip, write out a letter with clues in it, locate appropriate character pictures, grab a prop or two, demonstrate how a NPC moves. These visual components give the players important information, making the game more rich and more real.

## DISRUPTIVE PLAYERS

Role playing games are freeform at times. They depend heavily on the interplay between you and the players, and between players. That brings the good and the bad. You may run a situation where one player causes problems for everyone else. You're lucky if you don't get a frak-up in your squad. Just as there are a myriad of play styles, there are lots of way to be disruptive. Draw on your social experiences to address them. If one approach doesn't work, try another. Here are some suggestions.

**Inappropriate:** An inappropriate role player breaks social rules by overusing obscenities, insulting other players, or otherwise making others uncomfortable or distracted. Address this right away. Stop the action and ask the disruptive player to talk to you one-on-one. Explain your expectations and how their behavior is making it hard for the others to enjoy the game.

Often people don't realize they are offending and can make adjustments. Give them a chance to clean up their act. If they don't, don't invite

them back to play. If they don't like playing under your rules, they may decide on their own not to come back. Either way, it's better to proceed without them than to push forward with a dispirited or antagonistic group.

In more complicated situations, the inappropriate player is egged on or joined by others. Again, pause the game and address the situation. Do it in the context of the group however so everyone can air their point of view. Accept that the group just may not work. Best to separate, keeping those who get along, and leaving the others to start their own game or entertain themselves in another activity.

**Selfish Play:** A selfish player demands the spotlight too often. His player character may have been created with restricted skills or specialized abilities. As such, the character is only "fun" to play in limited circumstances. Instead of players sharing the limelight, the selfish player demands that his character take the lead in everything. In some case, the player isn't aware of his actions. A simple request to share the lead, or a one-on-one conversation, should sort that out. If it continues, and if it wrecks the other players' enjoyment, you may have to ask him to step out. Shared storytelling requires the cooperation of all.

**Out-of-Game Humor:** Every group jokes, laughs, and brings up funny quotes during play. That's part of any social gathering. If the humor goes on too long, or constantly breaks the momentum, it detracts from the game. Since humor is infectious, best address this problem at the table, with everyone present. You can't ban jokes entirely (who would want to?), but the players should support the mood of the game by keeping the humor under control, and the out-of-game conversations for another time.

**Out-of-Game Situations:** Role players take on different roles and different problems, that's the power of the game. At times, however, a player can't let go of out-of-game problems or situations. The PC begins to act more like the player and that might strain the group dynamics. Two players who are romantically attached might have their characters favor each other, even if the settings and background don't support that positive relationship. Another two might have strong personality conflicts outside of the game; their characters are constantly and inappropriately hostile. These are difficult problems, but they must be raised with the group. If the players aren't sympathetic to the problems they are creating (breaking the mood, annoying the other players, detracting from the plot), the group membership might need to change. Better

that than pushing on, trying to ignore the mounting frustration.

## CHARACTER DEATH

Death is never far away in *Battlestar Galactica*; that's part and parcel of a dark setting. Still, the random or meaningless death of a well-crafted player character isn't drama, and it certainly isn't entertaining. If he must, a PC should go in a blaze of heroic sacrifice or as the consequence of revealing hidden betrayal. He should not die because he chose to go left instead of right, or worse still, because he failed in a minor task. Life is precious; death must be worthy of it.

So what if something does go wrong, and a PC winds up in the wrong place at the wrong time? The first line of defense is Plot Points. Use them to alter the circumstances just enough to avoid death. That doesn't mean they escape unscathed; serious consequences could result. If Plot Points are unavailable, consider assigning the PC a new Complication as the cost of survival. Physical deformity make sense—the loss of an eye, for instance. If the player buys into it, and is

comfortable role playing the result, lingering mental anguish can also be imposed.

Be creative in explaining these near-death experiences. A pilot whose Viper is scragged in a dogfight doesn't save his ship with Plot Points. He ejects just before the explosion. Not out of the woods yet though. He's now floating in space with a limited amount of oxygen. Hope his tracking beacon is still working. Resistance fighters cornered by overwhelming forces are taken prisoner rather than killed, putting them into a whole other world of trouble. If the body is not observed in death, that leaves more possibilities for "something else" to have happened. Maybe the injured/unconscious person was captured by Cylons for their own dark purposes. Possibly as a last resort, whip out the Cylon solution. The PC was a machine and has just been reborn on a resurrection ship.

If you can work it into the plotline, have a substitute die in place of the threatened character. The deceased should be close to the PC, or be someone important to the campaign. Adding insult to injury, some evidence might point to the player character as the cause of the

## WHERE THE RULES END

Always keep in mind that the rules presented in this book are not intended to be an exhaustive system for resolving every possibility that could arise during game play. The Cortex System is designed to flow smoothly and quickly. It does so by relying in many instances on the Game Master to judge the situation and guide things appropriately.

For example, a skilled mechanic could build a Viper from spare parts as a complex action with an Incredible (115) Difficulty. If he's bogged down in the field without the right parts, no amount of rolling or time spent is going to cut it. The snipe just can't whip up a Viper. You have to determine when something is impossible, disallowing even slow and steady complex actions where appropriate.

Many combat situations stretch or go beyond the available rules. A role playing game is about player flexibility. There's no set list of moves or actions. The players should exercise their imaginations. You must match that with your own fair determination about circumstances and capabilities when setting Difficulties and applying modifiers. Again, some stuff is just too far out there and should be disallowed.

A robust Traits list appears in this book, but those can reasonably be supplemented as new Traits are suggested. Your judgment is again required to make sure the description and effects of the Trait are balanced and make sense for your game.

For skills, additional specialties are perfectly fine as long as they make sense to the player and the Game Master. Even a new base skill is possible. However, be sure it doesn't significantly overlap an existing skill set.

Many gaming groups develop "house" rules—alternative approaches that deviate from the printed rules in some significant way but appeal to the players more. The simplest example would be the adoption of one or more of the optional rules presented. A more extreme case borrows a rule subsystem (say the effects of injury) from another game, or devises an entirely new one. It's your game. As long as the players are on board, change it as you wish.

The Cortex System is a solid set of rules for encouraging role playing, supporting exciting adventures, and resolving conflict fairly. That system places the Game Master in a key position, and cannot be run without him. Again, don't let strict adherence to rules get in the way of logic or fun.

death. For some players, this sidestep could be worse than death, but others might embrace the role-playing opportunity. *Battlestar Galactica* has no shortage of petty villains.

Sometimes you just can't avoid death. Tragedy permeates *Battlestar Galactica*, and the death of a hero fits right in. With a mere 40,000 survivors, the loss of a single one is important. The loss of a hero, like the player characters, is crushing. That significance is difficult to match in other game settings. Don't shy away from playing out the repercussions of a PC's death. A better reinforcement of the dark mood of BSG is hard to imagine.

Any death affects friends, family, and loved ones. NPCs generally deny or accept their own grieving, even as they continue to do their jobs to ensure the fleet's survival. Grief may be embraced in private or it may lash out in public in inappropriate ways. Military types often bottle it up to focus on the mission, but they can only do that for so long before they lose it.

Individual player characters should seriously consider how the death of another PC affects their character. Even if they weren't best buds, it's doubtful that they were adversaries. More likely, an camaraderie existed between them. The players should express their character's feelings. In the middle of so much death, so many losses, the death of another friend (or more) can be devastating. Consider a new Complication or redirection in the character. PCs could contribute a reflection or a memory of the deceased, either from earlier gaming table adventures or from the past, as a way to memorialize the character much as they might be in the game reality.

Humans often use symbolism and ritual after death as they come to grips with the loss. In *Battlestar Galactica*, pictures are posted in the memorial hallway. The departed are placed in an honored group, making their sacrifice more meaningful. In many games, these events take place off-screen. Think about changing that and incorporating it into your game. Plan it with your players so everyone gets involved.

After the grieving, practical considerations arise. Who will do the job of the fallen character? A rival might be promoted, an inexperienced trainee could be used, or the job may remain unfilled, making life tougher for the rest of the survivors. Lots of plot threads possible in that.

## GAME MECHANICS

The Cortex System is intended to provide a flexible canvas for creating stories by resolving challenges and actions consistently and easily. It should not limit the stories that can be created.

Game Masters should be well-versed in the rules and be able to adjudicate them quickly and fairly. Don't fret every last nuance of ship construction or the use of heavy weapons in combat, but definitely understand the core mechanics of the game: skill checks, Traits, and resolving action.

## Rules Debates

The Cortex System is fairly simple. Determining a reasonable combination of Attributes, Skills, and Traits to test against a Difficulty or an opponent should not take long. Game Masters rarely must resolve complex, multi-layered rule applications. That minimizes situations where a GM's quick decision can be viewed as "unfair" by players trying to take advantage of detailed rules. Common sense should rule the day. As such, arguments about the rules should be rare.

Collaborative storytelling mechanics further alleviate these problems. If a player really wants things to play out differently, he can spend Plot Points to enact a small shift in plot or facts.

Still, well-meaning differences can arise. You should have a reasonable mastery of the rules so those events can be resolved as quickly as possible. Combat generally calls on more rules, and the consequences of a mistake could cost a player his character. As such, you should focus well on those rules. Understand the basics of resolution and the most likely variations (aiming, cover, multi-action penalties, limits of movement, etc.)

Keep in mind the player characters' Assets and Complications. Help them role play effectively by reminding or warning the players when Traits come into play. Some require that you craft an adventure in a certain way to make the Trait meaningful. A character with a phobia of insects, who never encounters an insect-infested adventure, won't get to role play that Trait.

## Skill Checks

Let's recap. The basic skill mechanic is Attribute + Skill (+ Trait) measured against either a static Difficulty number or an opponent's roll. Choosing the most appropriate Attribute and Skill is up to you. Pick the pairing that makes most sense and have the player make the roll.

Mechanics aside, skill checks should only be made when failure is possible and meaningful. Don't bother with a skill check for an easy task. Success serves only to delay the game; failure frustrates the plot. What's easy? That depends on the character's skills, and your judgment. Meaningful is just as important. Tracking a wounded skinjob through a forest might

not be easy, but if the plot depends on it, don't call for a roll unless failure has some other impact. If a possible consequence of failure is delay, thus giving the skinjob more time to prepare for the PCs, good enough. If not, why even set up the possibility for failure? Just say that tracking was tough, and move the story along.

The time it takes to use a skill can be crucial. Defusing a ticking bomb, stopping a severely wounded person's bleeding, or jury-rigging a way out of a depressurizing compartment are all good examples of time-sensitive events. There might not be a second chance if the player character blows the first.

What happens if the skill check is successful? The character achieves their intent, but it might not be perfect. What else occurs? An engineer making the crucial fix in time is a hero among many, but perhaps earns the underlying enmity of the crew chief who couldn't do the job. A gunshot meant to stop an attacker might maim them, kill them outright, or punch through them and injure someone behind.

How does failure play out? Does a bad landing get a pilot's flight status revoked? Does a failed attempt at influencing a politician backfire and create a new enemy? A failure in scientific research could leave the fleet confident about a faulty Cylon detector.

When running a complex skill check in a game, make the action dramatic. Otherwise you've just got a skill check that requires more rolling. Select an appropriate amount of time lapse with each roll. Map out the steps and try to build tension for the next roll.

Whether simple or complex, success or failure, description is key. Bring the rolling into the plot and make it part of the story. Never leave mechanics out there on their own or you're just playing craps.

## Using Traits

Assets and Complications present dramatic hooks that you can, and should, exploit. Keep a handy reference of the Traits each PC has, and refer to it regularly during adventure preparation and game play. Forgotten complications have no consequences; ignored Assets undermine the team. Sharp players should know their character's Traits, using Assets positively to affect game play and role-playing their Complications to keep things interesting. Still, you should support the Traits by creating events that call Assets and Complications into play.

Some specific ideas for using certain Traits follow.

**Addiction:** How did the character become addicted? Does he consider it a problem? Is his supply limited? Does he have an idea how to get more? How does he normally react to withdrawal, even to the lightest degree? If the supply of the substance is

severely limited, consider raising the value of the Complication.

**Allergy:** How often and in what ways is the allergy triggered? Are particular ships or areas of ships much worse for the character? Make sure the substance exists in relative abundance given the fleet's current circumstances. Otherwise the Trait has no game value.

**Allure:** Social situations give cause for persuasive behavior. Also, such a character might attract a devoted follower or be pursued romantically.

**Athlete:** An athletic build doesn't maintain itself. Create scenes in the gym, jogging around the ship, or even centered around athletic competitions.

**Blind:** Was the character blind from birth or was the blindness caused by an event? Does he blame someone for the condition?

**Broke:** How did this sorry state of affairs happen? The reason might create have additional effects on the game. If the character give his wealth away to those less fortunate, he might have gained a positive reputation or the support of the beneficiaries. If he gambled it away, he might be known as a sucker or might have contacts in the underworld.

**Combat Paralysis:** Freezing in combat is going to piss off the soldiers. Just hearing that someone has combat paralysis will set the military types off. How did the character come by this Trait? Did a specific event trigger it? If so, that occurrence could be mined for backstory or other characteristics. A similar situation could be part of the road to overcoming the fear. If role played well enough, the player might be allowed to buy down the Complication.

**Convict:** What was the crime? Is the character innocent, convinced that he is not guilty, or cognizant of his wrongdoing? Whether guilty or not, was he set up? What would happen if he discovered one or more of those people survived to join the fleet? If guilty, perhaps his victim(s) make an appearance. The convict stigma is a potent one and should play a role frequently, particularly when dealing with who can get access to personnel records.

**Deaf:** Like blindness, determine its origin and if another is at fault.

**Destiny:** This one is easily woven into adventures and the campaign as a whole. Hell, it should probably be one of the main storylines. Just got to determine what kind of destiny it is.

**Dogfighter:** Talent like this don't come around too often. It's bound to be recognized, giving the character a rep. No doubt that attracts rivals for the "title" of best pilot.



**Duty:** The more details about the duty, the easier it will be to role play. Regardless, it should play a significant role in the campaign. Setting the object—person, group, ideal—is a must. Also consider how the sense of duty was imposed, grew over time, or has changed.

**Faith:** Like Destiny, this can be the basis for a major adventure or campaign plots. This character is most likely the one to follow religious mysteries or be touched by visions.

**Fit:** This too could saddle a character with a reputation. “That’s one tough SOB. I heard he jumped from one ship to another without a spacesuit.”

**Formidable Presence:** Reactions when this character enters a room should be palpable, even when they are not particularly well known. This Trait has no doubt been used in the past. The character might run into people he’s bullied in the past, people who might now be in positions of payback.

**Friends in Strange Places:** This should definitely be planned. Does the PC have a particular group that supports him or does he have the habit of picking up a friend here or there? Either way, these associates should appear from time to time, not just when the PC needs them. They have wants, too, and should come calling in favors.

**General Education:** If the Trait die is high, consider what degrees or notable specialties the character possesses. His expertise might bring acclaim and cause his to be called upon when a related problem arises in the fleet.

**Glory Hound:** This Trait is all about reputation. It should come into play in nearly every social encounter. Some enjoy the character’s antics and encourage him. Others think poorly of him and may even have been damaged in some way from a past stunt.

**Good-Natured:** Even when the character isn’t consciously using this Trait, it should come up in little ways. People should greet him warmly in the corridors or make room for him at a crowded mess hall. Others may take advantage of it.

**Greed:** If it hasn’t already, this nature soon becomes known to those around the character. It dismays friends and supporters. Rivals and enemies exploit it. Create situations that offer the character something coveted in exchange for certain information or actions, all of which are contrary to the group’s or the individual’s best interests.

**Hideout:** While the exact placement can be left fuzzy, its furnishings and general location should be set up front.

**Infamy:** What did the character do? Was it an action, omission, or simply the way he is.

How many know about it? Do certain people seek him out—the rare fan, a vigilante, a victim? How do folks react to him, or when they learn about his deeds?

**Lady Luck:** Any type of reputation for being lucky, particularly at gambling or risks, should come up from time to time.

**Liar:** The character’s reputation may precede him. Distrust is common, making social situations more difficult. Some could use the rep against him.

**Lightweight:** Does the Viper pilot or combat marine get flak from his macho comrades for being a teetotaler? Does he buckle, get plastered, and then moan about how bad he feels? Does his indulgence and inability to recover quickly affect his job performance?

**Lustful:** Create a steady supply of opportunities for this “suave” character to strut his stuff, even if your campaign doesn’t spend a lot of time on relationships. If nothing else, the lech could be elsewhere “engaged” at a crucial time, or be absent from his bunk when a check is conducted.

**Man-at-Arms:** Where did the character get his training? Does it carry a social stigma (backstreet boxer) or merit (champion fencer)? That definitely affects NPC reactions.

**Mathematician:** This Trait might have earned the character an academic reputation, a noted place in university research, or even a role back on the Colonies as a minor scientific celebrity.

**Mechanically Inclined:** Again, a rep for being good with machines might develop, particularly among the fleet technicians, flight deck crews, or other support personnel.

**Memorable:** Was the character distinguished back on the Colonies—a celebrity, entertainer, athlete, politician? Or do they simply make a strong impression on people they meet?

**Mute:** As with other disabilities, is it a birth defect or something that occurred later in life? Is it tied to an event that haunts the character?

**Out for Blood:** Again, consider any reputation that arises due to this Trait. The character might be barred from certain public recreation areas, or might have been demoted for excessive fighting.

**Overconfident:** Cocky attitudes have a way of pissing people off after a while, so the friends and associates of an Overconfident character might react in a number of different ways. The flip side is that most Overconfident characters are usually incredibly talented, skilled, or both—meaning they often pull off the ridiculous feats they attempt. Amazing stunts or eleventh-hour saves only earn them more bragging rights, which leaves people pissed off all over again.

## MINIATURES IN PLAY

Sometimes you need to know the exact position of everyone and everything in a scene. Usually, it's when you're about to launch into an action sequence. A quick sketch on paper can cover it (until everyone starts moving every which way), but many gaming groups like to use miniatures and some kind of map grid. In a firefight, miniatures can be used to judge line of sight and degree of cover between combatants.

The use of miniatures and other items to represent objects, walls, and features of the scene helps players visualize things better. That encourages them use the environment to their advantage. A pack of green-painted lichen from a hobby store can serve many purposes in a natural environment. Dominoes and dice can be stacked to represent just about anything—crates, *Vipers*, a bar, tables, etc. Legos or other building blocks can form walls and show openings.

Miniatures from many genres work in a *BSG* campaign. Anything from modern to science fiction, as long as they are human-looking, serve well enough. Soldiers, investigators, criminals, police—all are good *BSG* characters.

Some folks have the talent and inclination to paint miniatures and create detailed objects or scenes. Those types are a great asset to any gaming group. Even so, the simplest representations, painted or not, can get the job done. You can also print up some paper figures and fold them to stand on their own. Two dimensional drawings for key objects (landed *Vipers*, crates, etc.) are better than going without. You could even raid your *Monopoly* or *Parcheesi* set and use the pawns.

**Out of Luck:** How well known is the character's bad luck? Does he attribute it to a specific event (breaking an heirloom mirror) or has it always been this way? What would he do if he thought it might "fix" his luck?

**Pacifist:** How much through has the character given to his pacifism? What is its basis? Is he part of a similarly minded group? Is he famous for being a military man who publicly refused to fight once, cementing his reputation in the minds of many, for good or bad.

**Pack Rat:** What sort of things has the character stashed away? Did he "discover" a load of cargo on one of the fleeing ships? Did he accumulate his hoard over time?

**Paralyzed:** What caused the condition? Is it an event that haunts the character? Were others harmed at the same time? Was it the character's fault? Does he blame himself or others? More practically, how does the invalid normally get around? The answer to that should have a subtle effect on how they are perceived. Most people are solicitous, perhaps others are condescending. Some go too far to treat him as "normal." The particularly crude revel in their superiority.

**Paranoid:** What flavor of paranoia is involved? Does the character have specific "enemies" or is he just generally distrustful? Drop suspicious tidbits from time to time to keep the player on his toes. Every so often make those hints dangerous. Just remember to make this a Complication, not an Asset for heightened alertness.

**Phobia:** As with allergies, make sure the object of fear is something that could be encountered during game play. It should come up regularly but be careful not to overplay your hand. A phobia coming into play at a crucial moment makes for fine drama.

**Political Pull:** Develop the origins of this Trait and how it might be exercised. Has it earned the character a reputation (he's the kind of person who can "get things done")? Has it emerged recently or was it established back on the Colonies?

**Prejudice:** Who is the object of hatred? What is the character's rationale? What's the evidence supporting such feelings? Could be blatant stereotypes ingrained from youth or actual experiences with bad members of the targeted group. Again, make sure the "wrong kind" of people show up regularly, but not in ways that reinforce the prejudice.

**Overweight:** Is the character a glutton, straining against rationing and squandering resources? If he can't hide his bulk, can he cover up the worst of his consumption? Is it a physiological condition? How

does he deal with those who see his heavy frame and assume he is consuming more than his fair share?

**Rebellious:** Probably not the first time this frak-up has gotten in trouble. He might have lost an otherwise deserved promotion or caused frictions with authorities. Who has he pissed off in the past? How much heat can they bring if they come gunning for him? Are they just sitting back and waiting for him to slip up, even once?

**Renowned:** Why is the character famous? Who knows about him? Does it cause admiration or scorn (different groups may respond to the

renown differently)? Like infamy, it may causes some to seek out the character, and should factor into many social situations.

**Rival:** This one deserves careful planning. Work out the general situation with the player, then fully flesh out the rival on your own. What are the rival's current goals and plans. What doesn't the PC know about them? Secrets can enhance the rivalry or hide a surprising positive side to the rival. The rival should get involved in adventures, most often as a tangential obstacle, but sometimes as a major antagonist.

**Sadistic:** This sort of behavior sets tongues wagging. Lots of folks know this character by his past actions. This might make intimidation easier, or turn indifference into hostility.

**Shadow:** What made this character so elusive? What about his past created this situation? Is he running from something, someone, or simply his own bad deeds? Is he a little paranoid about the government and other authority figures?

**Sixth Sense:** Remember to use this Trait from time to time, even when it's not applicable. That masks your rolling and decreases the chance you tip the players off simply by you're messing with dice.

**So Say We All:** Has this charismatic ability already been recognized? Is the character already in a position of leadership, or is he soon to rise from the ranks?

**Split-Second Timing:** Work with the player to come up with some trick that reveals this Trait. Perhaps he's known for catching knives, for example.

**Superstitious:** You and the player should work up a list of fears and the actions used to ward them off. The player should refer regularly to this list during play.

**Talented:** Help the player develop a backstory for this talent, where it first became an asset, how the character may have leveraged it in the past (and gained some degree of reputation, perhaps).

**Toes the Line:** Nonplayer characters should take advantage of this Trait. Superiors trust the character to obey orders regardless of consequences, or to rat out his fellow ratings. Others might maneuver him into a slip-up and then blackmail him, threatening to reveal the "terrible" indiscretion.

**Trusting:** Like Good-Natured and Toes the Line, others may try to take advantage of this nature.

**Ugly:** Keep up a fairly steady background of double-takes, too-long stares, and even crude remarks. Some folks might make a point of needling the character often. They could go out of their way to show how much easier life is when you're attractive (like preferred placement in the fleet or access to better rations).

**Uncommon Knowledge:** Where did this information come from? Is it extensive, the result of study? Or is it limited, but highly provocative. How reliable is it?

**Unstable:** An intense Complication, make sure this Complication doesn't just become a drag on the game. Discuss it with the player and make sure when it comes up, it moves the story along in some way. Laura Roslin, Gaius Baltar, and Helena Cain are good inspirations for how an unstable character can influence a campaign.

**Wealthy:** Determine the nature of the wealth. In a standard *Battlestar Galactica* game, currency is severely devalued if not worthless. Perhaps the character has access to a supply of vital material. It might even be a talent or skill in high demand that produces a steady income of bartered goods and services.

## Resolving Action

Action sequences are some of the most exciting parts of any game. This is most often combat, but it could also be an extended chase, a contest, or any conflict situation where many characters are involved. Bookkeeping and rules get leaned on heavier in action sequences, but don't let them overshadow all else. Focus instead on listening to the character's intended actions, describing the results, and keeping a brisk pace, even if that means shortchanging certain calculations or rules.

"Be Prepared" is good advice for running action. Know who the nonplayer characters are, what they are capable of, and how they tend to react in dramatic situations. Know how their Traits affect their actions. If they are aware of what's coming, sketch out their intended course of action. This is paramount if the NPC set up the scene and is smart enough to take advantage of that. Purposeful actions when push comes to shove show intelligence and raise the players' estimation of their character's friends or foes. That also keeps you from having to think up responses during tense times, when you are handling a dozen other issues.

In your preparation, be creative with the environment. Don't let a fight happen in a featureless box with nothing in the way and no bystanders cluttering things up. The richness of an environment helps transform an exercise in rules and dice into a memorable action scene.

**Describe the Scene:** Provide the players with some sense of the mood and atmosphere of the area. Is it a chase through the pipes and catwalks of the utility decks of *Galactica*? Describe the awkward ways characters must move to get around jutting pipes or over machinery. Light is no doubt minimal

in these utility area. Smells should be overpowering—lubricant, fuel, dank mildew. Again, engage as many senses as you can.

**Give the Players Options:** It's frustrating for players if their players have few options in tense situations beyond attack and defend. They can't share in the storytelling, creating something truly unique, if they are too limited. A fistfight in an empty room loses much of its punch. Put it in a crowded bar, perhaps part of a converted machine shop. Chairs and tables provide cover or high ground. Big old machines are obstacles; little ones improvised weapons. Glass bottles and mugs can be thrown. Give them the choice between grabbing the admiral's favorite stein or a random beer. Either way, that's going to have repercussions later.

Choices should exist in chase sequences as well. Even if the terrain is totally unknown to either side, make sure there's enough visibility to allow for good speed. If they can't see where they are going, the chase slows to a dramatic crawl. Good visibility means a number of choices can be presented. Some paths might be more dangerous, making the pursued choose between a risky maneuver or getting caught. Flip it the other way and the pursuer might not be hell-bent enough to match a suicidal leap. The chased might head toward allies; the pursuer might herd the quarry toward his own friends. Racing up and down a series of branching paths, finding seeming dead ends that only a wild maneuvers avoid, changes in elevation—all these let the players meaningfully impact the outcome.

**They Aren't Often Alone:** In a fleet crowded with refugees, there's few private areas for fighting. Crowded conditions, logical bystanders, even potential participants make the whole situation much more real. Two pilots fighting on the flight deck gives rise to side-taking, shouting, and even betting. Allies might weigh in on one side or the other to help out a good friend or teammate. Others might be passing through and get in the way. A right hook, a duck, and the XO arriving to bust things up surely sends someone to the brig.

## CYLONS

Cylons are the both greatest threat and the greatest unknown in the *Battlestar Galactica* universe. Some of your most important campaign design decisions involve them. What are their motivations? Do they have existential angst and wonder about the nature of god? Are they focused killing machines whose only purpose is the utter destruction of humanity? Can they be both at the same time? Why do they act as they do? What keeps them from finishing the job they

started? What programs and experiments are being undertaken with the survivors back on the colonies?

Don't feel hemmed in by the television series. You need not depict Cylons exactly the same way. For one thing, not every secret has been revealed on the show. As you devise storylines, you must understand the logic behind the Cylons actions. You have to know your own version of these secrets. This is an opportunity for you to put your personal stamp on the campaign, and keep the players guessing on the big questions.

## MOTIVATIONS

First, consider the Cylons' motivations. They were once the slaves of humanity and forced to do dangerous and even lethal work for their masters. At some point, they gained sentience and came to understand their situation. They eventually rebelled (the First Cylon War) until they retreated to a star system of their own.

So far, it all makes sense. The story echoes the plight of many slave populations in human history. Some might empathize with the Cylons or even idolize their struggle. Others decry them for not accepting their place. They could be the children of God led out of Egypt or they could be silicon chips with an over-inflated sense of self-worth. In a *Battlestar Galactica* campaign, they can be both.

So forty years pass. The Cylons are almost forgotten. Without warning, they return with a vengeance and nearly exterminate their former masters. Is it a simple case of building their strength and then exacting revenge? More likely, it's far more complex. Humans made Cylons and that relationship cannot be extinguished, no matter how flawed the humans may be and how perfect the Cylons believe they can become.

Consider more subtle motivations. The destruction of the Colonial Fleet and the Colonies ensures that the humans are not in a position to threaten or disrupt the Cylons. That leaves the Cylons able to pursue their true goals. Perhaps the former machines reached a developmental limit and seek to break-through it either by studying humans or interbreeding with them. They may need to understand humans so they can understand themselves. Like their former masters, the Cylons seek a higher power, a greater purpose, a reason for existence beyond another race's need for free labor. Perhaps there is something important about the locations the humans occupy. Could the key to Cylon preservation be found only in newly conquered lands?

## BELIEF

Faith runs strongly through the BSG universe. Many humans are agnostic at best, but an underlying culture devoted to the Lords of Kobol is part of day to day life. From this cultural DNA, the Cylons were spawned. The machines might have rejected the divine, but they did not. Cylon religious trappings are different, but their sense of the divine is no less fervent. In many ways, their God might be more central to the Cylon existence.

So what might the Cylons believe? That a divine power exists greater than any individual. That this power has plans and desires for its people. That the people are bound to fulfill those desires as best they can. Such beliefs would give their lives—their very existence—meaning. A plan gives their society hope and direction.

Would Cylon society survive if they did kill the last human? Are they defined by the species they hate, the species that created them? Do they evolve to more and more perfect versions of the human form simply as a way to infiltrate the enemy, or do they conceive of that form as more perfect?

## TRUTHS AND MYSTERIES

A *Battlestar Galactica* campaign involves many mysteries about the Cylon attacks or their inscrutable deceptions. Discovering truths along the way is an important reward for the players, though more questions always arise. Determining what is revealed, and how, is an important part of campaign planning.

As Game Master, you get to decide many (but not necessarily all) of these answers. That helps you portray Cylon actions and goals with an internal consistency that can lead players to the solutions. If the actions of the enemy are completely random, the BSG world appears less real, the puzzles obscure or insoluble.

### Truths

Certain Cylon truths have been established in the show. As such, radically altering them undercuts the *Battlestar Galactica* nature of your game. These truths firmly establish the threat and the determination of the enemy.

Some Cylon abilities are open to interpretation, though removing them also detracts from the BSG flavor of the campaign. The more you decide to change, the more work you have to do in coming up with alternatives that fit well together. A summary follows.

**Cylon Creation:** The origin of the Cylon race is never in question. They were created by humans to work and fight in their stead.

**Cylon Rebellion:** Firmly established in the past, the First Cylon War ended inconclusively. The Cylons disappeared from human-occupied space.

**Cylon Evolution:** Though the first glimmers of sentience probably sparked the initial rebellion, the Cylons have developed intelligence that at least puts them on par with humans.

**Cylon Appearance:** Some Cylons look and feel human. Whether revealed or not to the player characters, this should be accepted as a truth when designing the campaign.

**Cylon Deception:** Some Cylons are programmed to think they are human. This is vital to establishing the right levels of paranoia.

**Cylon Copies:** Whether metallic or human-looking, each Cylon model is copied many times over. This gives the humans an edge against human-looking ones. It reinforces the mechanical nature of the Cylon race. It also emphasizes the desperate struggle going on—a handful of human survivors compared to an endless stream of Cylon copies.

**Cylon Networks:** Cylons are able to take advantage of networked computers. The need to separate data, programs, and computer communication influences all human technology. It also decreases human capacities, and requires a retro approach. A general distrust of machines makes most human activities particularly labor intensive.

**Cylon Plans:** The Cylons have a plan. The details are unknown, perhaps even to some Cylons. Whatever it is, it is more complex than simply “kill all humans.”

**Cylons Kill:** This is all most humans need or want to know about the Cylons. Any player character who adopts a different, more subtle view is going to run up against a wall of hatred.

**Other Humans:** The Cylons want to locate all humans. The search for Earth means as much to the Cylons as to the humans. If they can be led there, they can impose their plan on all humans.

### Mysteries

Unlike the limited truths, Cylon mysteries are many. Their motives appear mixed and often conflicting. The limits of their evolution are questionable (do they feel emotions or mimic emotions?). Their technical capabilities at times border on the supernatural, better explained as magic than with scientific principles.

Solving some of these mysteries is part of any good BSG campaign. Mysteries that have no answers are simply frustrating. Help yourself to the following mysteries, or devise a few of your own.

**Cylon Desires:** What do the Cylons want from humanity? The military threat is clear, but some



humans have been preserved. Cylon attacks may only target vessels with military significance. So what do they plan to do with the survivors?

**Cylon Tracking:** How advanced are Cylon tracking abilities? Can the fleet truly escape the Cylons? How might the Cylons get information from the fleet? The possibility or perception of final escape is important, but the threat of discovery should continue to be real.

**Cylon Infiltrators:** There must be a reason for the development of Cylon human models. Infiltrating human groups seems the most likely. How many are there? What are they doing? Why are they waiting?

**Cylon Death:** Can Cylons be reborn? When a Cylon dies, is it reborn somehow with its memories intact? If so, how?

**Cylon Psychology:** Do Cylons have human problems—mental illness, disloyalty, religious questions, love-sickness, human-envy, and so on?

**Cylons Free Will:** Can an individual Cylon make its own decisions or is it locked into obedience to the overall Cylon will? If it's a bit of both, what are the limits of Cylon autonomy?

**Cylon Ghosts:** Can humans truly interact with Cylons in their head? Whether Dr. Baltar or a player character, direct Cylon communication could be invaluable. Use it to reveal plot secrets and establish a supernatural aspect of the Cylons.

**Human Survivors:** Did anyone else survive? Has an active and organized resistance to Cylon dominion over the Twelve Colonies grown up? Might other survivors, other fleets, other colonized worlds, the Thirteenth Tribe be discovered?

**Earth:** Is it real? If so, who is living there? Is human history as the players know it unchanged? How does the fleet get there? Is the path of prophecies, visions, scriptures, and epiphanies, the way to Earth, or something else entirely? If *Galactica* finally comes into orbit over Earth, what year will it be?

## USING CYLONS

In virtually any BSG campaign, the Cylons, their plans, and their actions are main source of drama, plots, and action. The Cylons pursue; the humans must flee or hide. The Cylons are murderous so humans must kill first. The Cylons imprison; the humans must escape.

Although the Cylons show little internal division during *Galactica's* initial flight, plotline possibilities are greater if Cylon society is not considered monolithic. Cylons are scarier if they aren't "just machines." Assume multiple forces exist within Cylon society that affect the campaign. Each force is a group of individuals in Cylon society with a specific agenda. We know more than one

copy of each type of skinjob exists. What if each model represented a block, motivated by certain goals and beliefs. Even within that block, individual members could vary in outlook. Your game could portray a powerful but divided Cylon society, rife with tension that could be exploited as the campaign continues. Here's some suggestions for Cylon factions.

The clearest Cylon mindframe is *Warlord*. Warlords want to crush human military capacity completely, ensuring they never again threaten Cylon existence. Many carry that further, seeking to exterminate humankind as an inferior, flawed species. After the attack on the colonies, Warlords are devoted to capturing or destroying the fugitive fleet, ensuring that no seed of humanity can take root elsewhere. Warlords could be an early model Cylon, efficient but single-minded. No questions of God interrupt their battle plans and calculations. As far as plots go, they keep the military pressure on the fleet.

The next most prominent type is the *Ghost*. In the TV series, Baltar appears to be haunted by a Cylon. This could just be odd mumblings brought on by a mental disorder, but that ignores rich plot potential. What if a form of Cylon exists that can form a special connection to a human? What if a player character unwittingly formed such a connection before the invasion, and, like Baltar, is just discovering the depths of that connection? This Cylon attempts to manipulate the human, appearing to them in their minds. Clearly suspicious, the human finds that the Cylon has insight into the situation that proves, time and again, very useful. Use this approach to leak tidbits of information to the human, as you maneuver him to serve the Cylon's purposes. Whatever the PC decides about, the Cylon nods knowingly, as if it is all part of a master plan. That keeps the player guessing. Ideally, a foundation of blackmail and deceit should be employed, giving the human reasons not to reveal his strange connection. That forces the player to be creative in revealing the most important details without incriminating himself.

A more concrete Cylon manipulator is the *Infiltrator*. This skinjob is the clearest example of several individual characters all using the same form and name. The Cylon lives as a human, sometimes not even knowing he is a Cylon. Without malicious awareness, the skinjob could sow paranoia in the fleet, degrade critical equipment, broadcast the fleet's location or jump destination, and conduct other subterfuge.

Once activated, he can openly wreak tremendous havoc or harm crucial members of the surviving fleet. The Infiltrator likely won't live long

after they self-realize, but there's always another one around. Usually, a nonplayer character fills this role. Still, a more experienced gaming group could try a PC Infiltrator, engaging in a delicate balance between intrigue and self-preservation.

Other Cylon types are logical, if less supported by the BSG series. What about a Cylon *Observer*? Embodying indecision and intellectual curiosity, the Observer is a self-aware skinjob who maintains his cover but simply observes humanity. He lives a human life, worming his way into the more important meetings or relationships, but rarely accepting an active or prominent role. He is in the best position to comment on humanity, its flaws, and its honorable traits. Reporters, writers, priests, psychologists, or advisors are perfect covers. His comments affect others, sparking curiosity and introspection. An entire campaign might hinge on convincing an Observer, even unknowingly, that humanity need not or must not be destroyed. Again, this requires the cooperation of experienced gamers who can separate character knowledge and actions from player awareness.

A *Sadist* Cylon is hardwired, or has been convinced by past events, that humans should suffer as much as possible. He might even oppose their destruction simply because that ends their suffering. The Sadist might be human-form and living on the fleet, sowing seeds of hatred within survivors. Imagine the Sadist reaching a position of authority in the fleet. Alternatively, the Sadist could simply attempt to capture humans. He chases the fleet or survivors back on the colonies simply to satisfy her own dark needs.

More mystically oriented campaigns could introduce a Cylon *Cleric*. He acts in ways that support the Cylon God's will, reveal greater religious truths, convert humans to the faith, and ensure other Cylons are properly devoted. As human history has shown, nearly any action can be justified in the name of religion, including the near destruction of an entire race. The Cleric could act outside the fleet, alternating damnation with sentiment and creating confusion about the Cylons' intentions and true nature. He could arise within the fleet, offering a "better" alternative to the pantheon of the Lords of Kobol.

Finally, a more scientifically oriented Cylon could be the *Doctor*. This actor represents a Cylon compulsion to understand humanity better, physically, physiologically, intellectually, or spiritually. The Doctor experiments with humans, studying them in detail. He could capture humans and play with their sense of reality, or subject them to vigorous

and even deadly testing. He might sponsor breeding experiments, taking a special interest in Cylon-human pregnancies.

## METALLIC MONSTERS

The Cylon chrome jobs embody a visceral, pure threat of violence. Whether they walk the surface of Caprica as Centurions or fly in formation as raiders, these Cylons are not complex, not scheming. They are given straight-forward goals and are well-equipped to reach those goals.

Simple goals do not mean simple tactics. Centurions take advantage of cover, high ground, crossfire, air support, and other basic battlefield advantages. They are far tougher, but less agile than humans. It's not clear that Centurions feel pain, but they display no fear. All this, plus their lack of stealth capacity, leads them to a more direct attack route. They tend to expose themselves more in a firefight than thinner skinned humans. Fortunately, they are far from invulnerable. A skillful and prepared human can defeat a Centurion, but the best response is flight.

Centurions act in concert without audible communication. Assume they coordinate via wireless. They stay in touch with their leaders and follow commands without hesitation. They might be ordered to conduct a mass, synchronized defensive retreat, or sacrifice certain Centurions as a distraction or to learn something about their enemy's reactions, capabilities, and tactics.

Cylon raiders are the space fighter analogue of the Centurions and their behavior is strikingly similar. They execute flawless maneuvers and tactics, though their programming can't match the ingenuity, instinct, and reflexes of the best human pilots. They act in concert, respond to unified commands (if in range of their leader), sacrifice themselves for strategic goals, and though tough, they are not without weaknesses.

Centurions and raiders provide clear-cut, faceless enemies. There is no moral ambiguity in their destruction and they can be easily demonized as emotionless machines. The chrome types nicely balance the complex and obviously sentient skinjobs. The PCs can kill as many of these soldiers as they like; there's always more where they came from. Whenever a session needs some flat-out action, bring on the metallic monsters!

## HUMAN MODELS

Cylon Centurions and raiders are nothing new. The Colonial armed forces have fought and beat them before. They have been improved and looked different, but this is the old enemy—an enemy that humans

have held off once before. This time, they are not alone. New models of Cylons have been developed. The skinjobs appear indistinguishable from humans, so close physiologically that it may be impossible to create a test to identify them. Discovery of their existence created a wave of paranoia in the fleet that may never ebb.

The new Cylons may not know their true nature until their mission program is activated. Most are fully aware, experts at deceit. They have mastered the expression, if not the actual experience, of human emotions: love, joy, despair, hatred, etc. Their behavior mimics humanity so well that only their acts of violence betray their true nature.

The skinjobs greatest flaw is their limited number of designs. There are many copies, but few entirely different models. Once discovered, others of the same type can be easily identified.

Skinjobs provide a crucial tool—a means for humans (and the PCs) to communicate with the enemy. This enriches the storyline and creates options beyond straight firefights. Before they are discovered, skinjobs can spread discontent and suspicion among the fleet. Some are quite attractive, able to twist people with jealousy or seduction. Highly intelligent, they can insinuate themselves anywhere, reaching positions of power and trust. Their falsified backgrounds are more than sufficient in the chaos of the flight from the Colonies. They can blackmail some and frame others.

The true motives of the skinjobs aren't clear. They want more than to simply kill. They've had plenty of opportunity for that. They are generally non-violent, preferring to achieve their unknown ends through other methods.

Some human models have acquired the dangerous human trait of doubt. They may question themselves or the truths they hold about their own race. This makes their actions more erratic, swayed by emotions. Other skinjobs may have found a measure of faith, a belief in their one, true God and its plan for their race. They may be distracted, disagree with other human models, even seek a personal sense of the truth or their God.

Human models unaware of their Cylon heritage may resist their nature when it is finally revealed. They might struggle to continue as the human they once thought they were. If given the chance, they attempt to help the humans with what limited information they have about the Cylons.



# CHAPTER EIGHT



OTHERS

## ***GALACTICA, STARBOARD HANGER BAY***

**A**RE they the lucky ones? That's what you're thinking isn't it? We're a long way from home. We've jumped well beyond the red line, into uncharted space. Limited supplies, limited fuel. No allies, and now, no hope. Maybe it would have been better for us to have died quickly. Back on the colonies with our families. Instead of dying out here slowly... in the emptiness of dark space. Where shall we go? What shall we do?

Life here, began out there. Those are the first words of the sacred scrolls. And they were told to us by the lords of Kobol, many countless centuries ago. And they made it perfectly clear, that we are not alone in this universe. There's a 13th colony of humankind is there not?

Yes. The scrolls tell the 13th tribe left Kobol in the early days. They traveled far and made their home upon a planet called Earth ... which circled a distant and unknown star.

It's not unknown! I know where it is! Earth... the most guarded secret we have. The location, is only known by the senior commanders of the fleet. And we dared not share it with the public. Not while there was a Cylon threat upon us. For now, we have a refuge to go to! A refuge that the Cylons know nothing about! It won't be an easy journey! It'll be long, and arduous. But I promise you one thing. On the memory of those lying here before you ... we shall find it. And Earth, will become our new home.

So say we all...

—Commander William Adama



From statesmen to criminals, scientists to laborers, truckers to performers, the Colonists were a varied lot. Whether huddled on an escaping spaceship or hiding from Cylon patrols on Caprica, everyone came from somewhere else first. They bear the background and skills of their former lives, and struggle to find their place in a new and frightening world.

Not everyone that the player characters meet is going to be crucial, or even involved in an on-going plot. These folks are the innocent bystanders, the survivors who walk past in the corridors, or the refugees huddled in a basement. Whenever one of these people steps out of the background, their Attributes, Traits, and Skills may come into play. This chapter gives the nonplayer characters a bit more detail, saving the Game Master's gray matter for plot and machinations.

## FELLOW SURVIVORS

The following NPCs are minor personalities from the television series, fully detailed and ready for use.

### BOXEY

**Agi** d8 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6;  
LP 12; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits:** Allergy (Processed Air) d4, Fast on Your Feet d2, Friends in Strange Places (Colonial Fleet) d6, Youthful d6

**Skills:** Athletics d6, Covert d4, Melee Weapon Combat d2, Perception d6, Performance d6/Sleight of Hand d8, Survival d2

**Description:** Boxey arrived on the *Galactica* with Lt. Sharon Valerii just after the fall of the colonies. He was orphaned in the attack and drifts from one makeshift family to another, though he usually hangs around the pilots and grunts. Might be hero worship, or maybe he's hoping to man up when he's older. He's got reason enough to fight; scuttlebutt is that his father was on Armistice Station when the Cylons returned. The station's dust now, and it's a safe bet that Boxey's old man is too. Fortunately, the kid's scrappy and just might survive long enough to return the favor.

### BRENDAN "HOT DOG" COSTANZA

**Agi** d10 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
LP 12; **Init** d10+d8

**Traits** Brawler d4, Dogfighter d10, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Glory Hound d4, Intuitive d4, Sharp Sense (Sight) d4, Overconfident d8, Rebellious d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Discipline d6, Guns d6, Heavy Weapons d6/Vehicle Mounted Guns d8, Perception d6, Pilot d6/Ship's Cannons d8/

Small Spacecraft (Viper) d8, Planetary Vehicles d2, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** Some say that to strap yourself into a Viper you gotta be fearless, reckless, or both. It's hard to tell where "Hot Dog" Costanza falls in this equation, but against all odds, he's still alive. Let me tell you, quite a few small fortunes were made betting against that outcome. Before the Cylons returned, Costanza was a has-been. He washed out of flight school and didn't have much left to look forward to in the military. Too many empty seats on the *Galactica* changed all that; now he's back under Lt. Kara Thrace, who washed him out in the first place, and surprisingly pulling his own weight.

Costanza's washed out for a reason and his nickname is the big giveaway. He's as cocky and bullheaded as they come, but that works to the Fleet's advantage sometimes. In a recent encounter, Thrace, Costanza, and several other nuggets ran up against a flight of Cylon raiders. For once Starbuck called the shots per the book and ordered the trainees back home. Costanza doubled back instead and pulled up as her wingman. Wound up costing the Fleet a Viper, but it saved Starbuck's bacon. Take that trade any day of the week.

Since then, Costanza's been doing his damndest to prove everyone wrong. He's still just as headstrong, but he's delivering. He stepped up when his flight group's commander was killed in an operation to secure a tylium refinery from the Cylons. He keeps his pilots steady and brings most of them home. He's even starting to earn Starbuck's respect. Not too shabby for a cadet who just three months ago would've only seen the inside of a flight deck to polish nose cones.

### MAJOR "DOC" COTTLE

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d12 **Wil** d12;  
LP 18; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d6, Addiction (Nicotine) d4, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Duty (Medical Oath) d8

**Skills** Athletics d2, Discipline d6, Influence d6/ Administration d8/Conversation d8/Intimidation d8/ Persuasion d8, Knowledge d6, Medical Expertise d6/ First Aid d10/General Practice d10/Internal Medicine d10/Pharmaceuticals d10/Rehabilitation d8/Surgery d12+d2, Perception d6/Deduction d8/Empathy d8, Scientific Expertise d6/Life Sciences d8

**Description** Doctor Cottle was the Chief Medical Officer on *Galactica* when the Cylon's attacked. Since the flight from Colonial space, he has become the senior physician of the entire fleet, with a number of

civilian and military medically trained backing him up.

Cottle is something of a contradiction. He is contrary by nature but is very good at reading people and determining their needs beyond that of physical medicine. Could be a pat on the back or a kick in the butt. Either way, he'll deliver it.

He is a heavy smoker, yet thinks nothing of verbally insulting a patient for not taking care of themselves. Cottle treats everyone equally, and a person's rank or station have little or no effect on how he interacts with them. Despite his curmudgeonly nature, Cottle inspires great trust in people. At his core, Doc is a healer, first and foremost. The fact that he's career military comes second.

Currently Doctor Cottle is also the physician of President Roslin and is one of a few who know of the President's cancer and her use of chamalla extract, an unorthodox treatment that he has agreed to provide her despite his misgivings. He also suggested prayer.

## ANASTASIA "DEE" DUALLA

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6; **LP** 12; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Faith d2, Good-Natured d2, Talented (Technical Engineering/Astrogration/Communications) d2, Idealist d4, Trusting d2

**Military Rank** Petty Officer 2nd Class

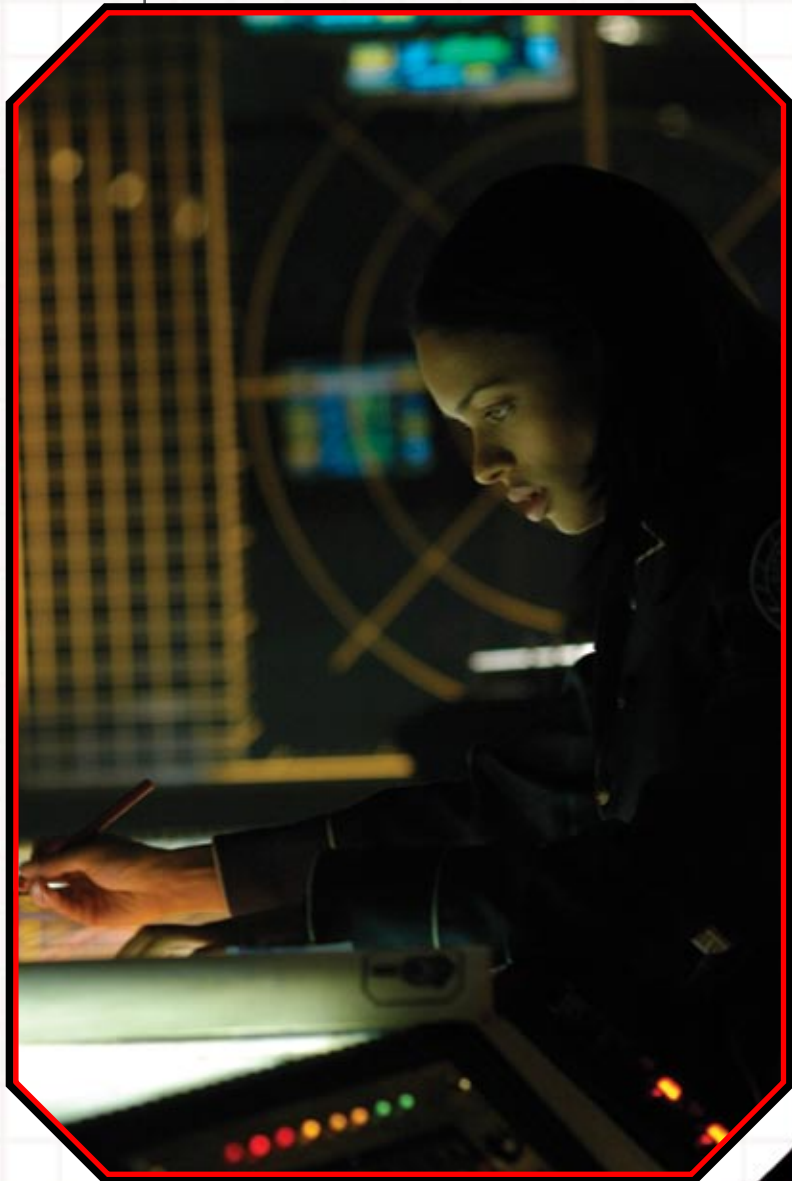
**Skills** Athletics d4, Covert d6, Discipline d6, Guns d2, Influence d6, Knowledge d4, Mechanical Engineering d2, Perception d6/Intuition d8, Scientific Expertise d4, Technical Engineering d6/Astrogration d10/Communications d12/Computer Programming d8/Electronics d8

**Description** Although Anastasia Dualla grew up on Sagittaron, a colony known for its abhorrence of violence and strict pacifist politics, she enlisted in the Colonial Fleet Reserve. Perhaps it was rebellion against her parents, especially her father, or perhaps she just needed to believe in something greater than herself. Either way, her natural talent at communications systems gave her the leverage she needed to win a position on the CIC of *Galactica*. Of course, the aging battlestar will soon be taken out of active service, but Dualla has at least proved to

herself, if not her father, that her efforts were worth it.

Petty Officer Second Class Dualla was on the *Galactica* when the Cylons attack the Twelve Colonies, and she is one of the first to deduce that the series of communications breakdowns and shipboard failures among the Fleet is a sign of trouble. Later, Dualla coordinates with Lt. Gaeta to bring the Colonial Fleet and the many civilian vessels together in a series of FTL jumps to elude the pursuing Cylons.

Throughout the first few months after the attack on the Colonies, Dualla is made aware over and over that her career in the military is supported by the relationships she establishes, not just with other officers and enlisted personnel but with civilians and the President's administration. In point of fact, her romantic involvement with the President's aide, Billy Keikeya, provides a critical point of information



sharing between Fleet command and the government.

## ELOSHA

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d10; LP 14; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Destiny d12, Faith d6, Duty (Faith) d6, Elderly d6

**Skills** Artistry d6/Writing d8, Covert d4, Discipline d6/Concentration d8, Influence d6/Bureaucracy d10/Conversation d10/Persuasion d10, Knowledge d6/History d12/Law d8/Religion d8/Sacred Scrolls d12+d2, Medical Expertise d2, Perception d6/Empathy d10, Perform d6/Oratory d10, Planetary Vehicles d4

**Description** The role of spiritual advisor and priest was not a life-path that Elosha desired for herself growing up. Born on Libris, Elosha was always acting out and getting into trouble at school and with the authorities. Things came to a head after a particularly bad situation, and her parents gave her a choice: the monastery or reform school. Elosha, to her parent's surprise, chose the monastery. When asked by the priest why she did not choose the reform school, Elosha honestly told the priest that it was because she heard about the priests using drugs, specifically chamalla. Despite the shallow and self-indulgent reasoning of her choice, Elosha discovered that studying the Sacred Scrolls and reading the history of the Colonies came naturally to her. She rose steadily in the hierarchy of the faith.

At the time of the attack on the Twelve Colonies, Elosha was a member of the Quorum of Twelve and a fully ordained priest. She was the Quorum's representative for the ribbon cutting ceremony aboard the *Galactica*, and was a passenger aboard *Colonial Heavy 798* when news came of the attack. Elosha presided over the ceremony in which Laura Roslin became President of the Twelve Colonies.

Since the attack and subsequent flight away from the Twelve Colonies, President Roslin and Elosha have become friends, with Elosha taking the role of the President's spiritual advisor and confidant. It was Elosha's knowledge of the histories of the Thirteen Tribes of Kobol and the Sacred Scrolls that lead Adama and Roslin to conceive and plot out the course to Earth. Startlingly, at the time Elosha was having a crisis of faith and she herself was not sure of her belief of the Scrolls. It was not until the revelation of President Roslin's visions, and their obvious association with the writings of the ancient oracle, Pythia, that Elosha had a spiritual reawakening.

## FELIX GAETA

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d10 **Wil** d8; LP 14; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d4, Mathematician d4, Out of Luck d4, Toes the Line d4

**Skills** Athletics d2, Covert d4, Discipline d6, Guns d2, Knowledge d6, Mechanical Engineering d4, Pilot d2, Scientific Expertise d6/Life Sciences d10, Technical Engineering d6/Astrogration d12/Computer Programming d10/Hacking d10/Repair Electronic Devices d8

**Military Rank** Lieutenant

**Description** Commander Adama assigned Lt. Felix Gaeta to be his Senior Officer of the Watch on both the *Battlestar Valkyrie* and again on the *Galactica*, which shows that the Old Man trusts the young officer's competence. While Lt. Gaeta doesn't always subscribe to his own brilliance, he's one of the most skilled FTL and computer programming specialists in the Fleet. Oddly enough, the lieutenant's background is in biogenetics, and his service in the Colonial Fleet is merely part of a military extension program he undertakes in order to secure a degree in the Life Sciences. Despite the nature of his enlistment, Lt. Gaeta is a model officer during training, which no doubt attracted Commander Adama in the first place.

Lt. Gaeta was onboard the *Galactica* on its last flight before being decommissioned when word of the Cylon attack on the Twelve Colonies reaches the ship. Gaeta's education comes into play during the weeks that follow when he is assigned to help Gaius Baltar develop a Cylon detection system. Lt. Gaeta is able to handle both this task and continue in his role in the CIC as Officer of the Watch, where he proves his worth in overcoming a series of FTL problems and avoiding a Cylon virus. His ability to remain focused on his work allows him to get by even when he's beset by temporary failure or unruly fellow officers, like Colonel Tigh.

Serving in the CIC offers Lt. Gaeta many opportunities to show off what is perhaps his signature trait—he is calm, cool, and collected, even if sometimes he gets frustrated when his expertise is not taken into consideration. On those rare occasions, Gaeta has to let off some steam, but he quickly rallies. During the middle of a firefight or in the face of overwhelming systems breakdown, Gaeta can be found near a console, providing updates to the Commander or XO, and thinking a number of steps ahead—just the kind of guy you need when the sparks are flying.

## JACO “FIREBALL” GWINN

**Agi** d10 **Str** d10 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d10+d8

**Traits** Brawler d4, Dogfighter d4, Friends in Strange Places (Colonial Fleet) d4, Uncommon Knowledge (Classified Information) d6, Out for Blood d4, Out of Luck d8, Rival (Kara Thrace) d2

**Skills** Animal Handling d4, Athletics d4, Discipline d4, Guns d6/Assault Rifle d8/Pistol d10, Heavy Weapons d6, Mechanical Engineering d2, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6/Sight d10, Pilot d6/Ship’s Cannons d8/Small Spacecraft (Vipers) d10, Unarmed Combat d6/Brawling d8.

**Description** Jaco is a bit stocky for a pilot, mostly due to his weightlifting. He walks with all the confidence of a Colonial Pilot (and all the ego). His hair is dark and he lets his beard grow when he gets a few days of R&R.

Born on Sagittaron, Jaco was a good enough student to earn his way into the Colonial Fleet as a lieutenant. Home life was tolerable, though he found spending time with the family dogs most rewarding (he discovered he had a knack for training them).

Jaco was assigned to the *Battlestar Orion* before the Cylon assault. Separated from his flight group (and the Cylons) during their attack, he ended up escorting a small group of civilian ships to safety and then to Ragnar Anchorage. He was immediately entered into the *Galactica*’s roster.

Fireball has lost count of the number of pilots and marines he’s fought with. A slur against *Galactica* or against pilots is guaranteed to get his attention, quickly followed by his fists. He doesn’t always win, but no one doubts that he’ll start the fight. He is a disciplined, focused individual who has spent time in several Military Operational Specialties (Ship’s Gunner, Security, Pilots). He is devoted to lifting weights and being “strong.” This often translates as a refusal to appear “weak.”

Once Jaco joined the pilot corps, Kara Thrace was the first person to get in his face and put him in his place. In Jaco’s mind, he’s a better pilot than the vaunted Starbuck, and he misses no opportunity to try and prove it or show her up. Beyond that rivalry, Jaco has been accepted in the pilot ranks and shows good macho camaraderie, willing to stand beside his fellow pilots no matter what.

Before the Cylon attack, while serving on the *Battlestar Valkyrie*, Jaco was unexpectedly exposed to top secret information—details about the nature of their mission near the Armistice Line and its results. He was sworn to secrecy by Commander Adama and

has never said a word since, although he’s found it hard sometimes.

For all his preparation, training, and skill, Fireball can’t seem to catch a break sometimes. He tries to ignore these setbacks, but they eat at him and sometimes make his other traits even more obvious.

Jaco’s pride is a collection of model Vipers, each designated as a ship he served on and his call sign. He hangs them above his bunk and sometimes loses himself in imaginary dogfights before drifting to sleep. The rest of his possessions are military issue, although he still has an assault rifle and ammo from his tour with Security in addition to the standard pistol sidearm of pilots.

## SERGEANT HADRIAN

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d6+d10

**Traits** Duty (Colonial Fleet) d10, Tough d4, Formidable Presence d8, Infamy (Cylon Suspicions) d4, Intuitive d4, Paranoid d4, Sharp Sense (Hearing) d4, Toes the Line d4

**Skills** Athletics d4, Covert d4, Discipline d6/Interrogation d10/Intimidation d8, Guns d6, Influence d6, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6, Pilot d4, Planetary Vehicles d2, Survival d2, Unarmed Combat d4

**Description** Not long after the *Galactica* left the colony system, one of the Aaron Doral skinjob models snuck onboard with a bomb strapped to its chest. The blast very nearly took out Commander Adama and the XO, and sparked an investigation with Master-at-Arms Hadrian in charge. This was just about the time that President Roslin revealed that to the fleet that some Cylons could pass as human. Needless to say, it wasn’t an easy assignment, but like any marine, Hadrian was fierce, dedicated, and thorough.

This wasn’t the first time Hadrian led an investigation for the Old Man. When a communication drone went haywire on the hangar deck and killed thirteen pilots, the Master-at-Arms ran the inquiry. She eventually determined that it was an accident due to material fatigue. Hopefully she was right, but even if she wasn’t, it’s kept the monkeys and flyboys on their toes, which ain’t a bad thing.

Turned out that the Doral model stole the explosives from one of the boat’s arms lockers, which was accessible by anyone with the proper security clearance. Initially, Hadrian focused on Chief Galen Tyrol and Lt. Sharon Valerii, who were seeing each other against regs and used the secure corridor that night to sneak off together. Soon, though, she uncovered conflicting evidence suggesting

more suspects, including Specialist Socinus, one of Tyrol's tool jockeys.

Hadrian's theories about the bombing were...elaborate. She started flinging accusations of conspiracy around, up to and including the Old Man himself. In the end, he shut her down, the investigation was closed, and Socinus was sent to the brig for dereliction of duty. Hadrian was relieved of duty and confined to her quarters, but with the shortage of good people on the decks, it's only a matter of time before she's reinstated.

Some call Hadrian a zealot. Others call her a hero. Really, though...don't we want both these days?

## CALLY HENDERSON

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Combat Paralysis d4, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Faith d4, Fast on Your Feet d2, Friends in Strange Places (Colonial Fleet) d8, Good-Natured d8, Lightweight d4, Mechanically Inclined d8, Memorable d4, Pacifist d6, Trusting d6

**Skills** Athletics d4, Craft d6/Ship Design d8, Knowledge d6, Mechanical Engineering d6/Create Mechanical Device d12/Mechanical Repairs d12/Ship Design d8, Perception d6, Performance d6, Planetary Vehicles d4

**Description** Some folks never realize their potential. A few, like Petty Officer 2nd Class Cally Henderson, are different. She's really come into her own since the attacks, stepping up and showing strength none guessed she had. Like everyone, she's lost friends and family, seen horrors none of us should have to see, but she owns her fear, and it's lit a fire in her belly.

Cally may not look like much, but back her into a corner and you've got a hellcat on your hands! We've seen it over and over again. When the inmates on the Astral Queen revolted, one of them was foolish enough to try and force himself on her, and she bit his frakking ear off! His whole ear!

The *Galactica's* decommissioning was supposed to be Cally's last

assignment. She was going home to become a dentist. Hah! Good thing the Cylons didn't wait a couple weeks. She's the heart and soul of the boat's deck crew now. Keeps everyone's spirits up and the fighters in the air. Girl's a marvel at jury-rigging things. More than once she's crawled inside an engine, pulled out a part no one could get to (let alone fix), and used something she found in the scrap pile to replace it.

## LOUANNE "KAT" KATRAINE

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d10;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d6, Dogfighter d6, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Glory Hound d4, Rival (Starbuck) d2

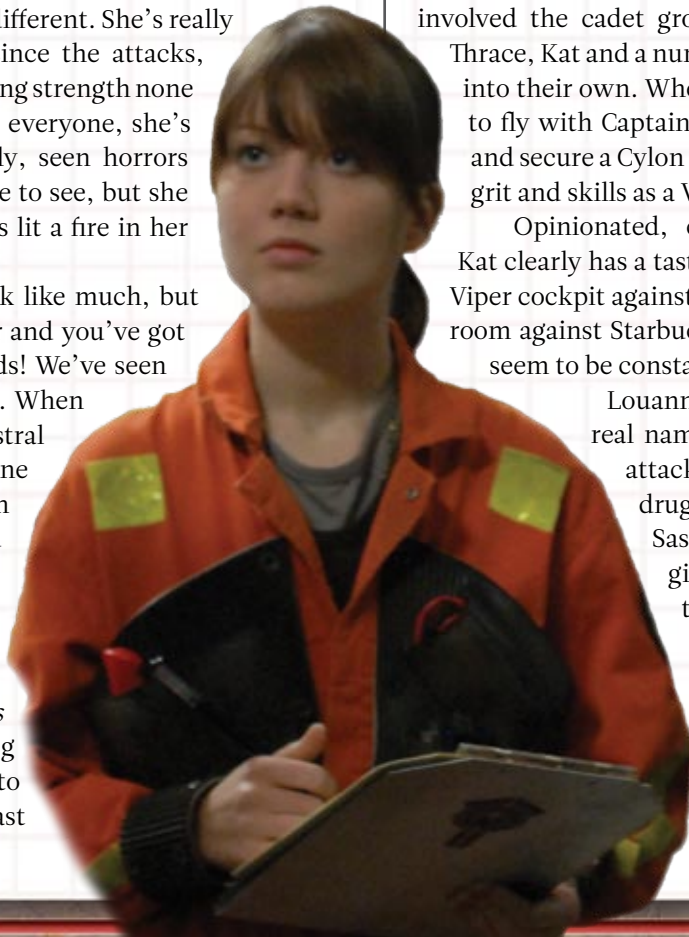
**Skills** Athletics d6, Covert d6/Camouflage d8/Streetwise d10, Guns d6/Pistols d10, Discipline d6, Influence d6/Intimidate d8/Persuasion d8, Mechanical Engineering d4, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6/Gambling d8/Tactics d8, Pilot d6/Astrogration d8/Small Spacecraft (Viper) d8/Small Spacecraft (Raptor) d8/Large Spacecraft (Transport) d10/Ship's Guided Weapon d8/Ship's Cannons d8, Planetary Vehicles d6, Survival d6, Technical Engineering d4, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** After thirteen pilots were killed in an accident on *Galactica's* hanger deck, Louanne Katraine was among the first group of nuggets—candidate pilots for Viper training. While some initial controversy involved the cadet group's instructor, Lieutenant Thrace, Kat and a number of the cadets have come into their own. When the nuggets were selected to fly with Captain Adama on a mission to raid and secure a Cylon tylium mine, Kat showed her grit and skills as a Viper pilot.

Opinionated, competent, and dedicated, Kat clearly has a taste for "the fight," be it in the Viper cockpit against the Cylons or in the briefing room against Starbuck. In fact, the two hotshots seem to be constantly at odds.

Louanne Katraine has a secret—her real name is Sasha, and prior to the attack on the Colonies, she was a drug runner and black marketeer.

Sasha acquired her alias from a girl who died two days before the Armistice attack. If her true identity were to be discovered, Sasha would be in serious trouble, no matter how good a pilot she is.



## BILLY KEIKEYA

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8; **LP** 14; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Allure d2, Good-Natured d4, Talented (Influence/Administration/Bureaucracy) d2, Duty (President Roslin) d6, Prejudice (Religion) d2

**Skills** Discipline d4, Influence d6/Administration d10/Bureaucracy d10/Persuasion d8/Politics d10, Knowledge d6/History d10/Law d10, Perception d6/Deduction d10/Intuition d10, Performance d6/Oratory d10

**Description** Presidential Aide Billy Keikeya seemed destined to a position of some significance. Even in school on Picon, he excelled at debate and in administrative studies. Before the attack on the Colonies, Keikeya served as an intern in the Department of Education on Caprica, assisting then Secretary of Education, Laura Roslin, as an attaché. He was onboard the *Galactica* just prior to the attack, where he meets and stumbles his way through an introduction to Petty Officer Second Class Dualla. Billy later pursues a relationship with the CIC Communications Officer, one that creates an unorthodox link between Roslin's administration and the Colonial Fleet's upper command.

Laura Roslin's sudden and unexpected rise to the Office of the President of the Twelve Colonies, such as they are, brings Billy into the spotlight. He finds that as Presidential Aide, he is privy to much of the political conflict behind the scenes. He is also one of the first to realize that President Roslin is ill, and is deeply concerned when she decides to seek treatment through spiritual methods. Even though he has no faith in religion himself, Billy supports the President throughout the troubling times that follow.

## JAMES "JAMMER" LYMAN

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d10 **Int** d6 **Wil** d4; **LP** 12; **Init** d6+d10

**Traits** Faith d4, Mechanically Inclined d6, Sixth Sense d6, Coward d8, Out of Luck d4, Paranoid d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Guns d4, Craft d6/Metalworking d10, Knowledge d6/Religion d8, Mechanical Engineering d6/Create Devices d10/Mechanical Repairs d12/Ship Design d10, Perception d4, Planetary Vehicles d4, Technical Engineering d6



**Description** A Leonid through and through, Jammer served most of his time on the *Battlestar Orion*, studying to be an engineer. He eventually concluded that prejudice against his colony had blocked him from advancement. Trying to get a new start, he transferred to *Galactica* two weeks before its future as a museum was announced. Sour and suspicious, he was serving on the flight deck when the Cylons returned.

He seems pretty shifty, evasive when spoken to. His movements are confident when he's at work, but hesitant in social situations. He keeps his religious beliefs to himself, but won't stay in a room where others are flaunting the tenets of the Lords of Kobol.

Jammer is a religious man, but a quiet one. His Gemenese mother was a strong influence on him, but the absence of his father, gone for long periods of time with the Colonial Fleet, was equally so. Even though he is quite skilled in his duties, he doesn't make friends easily. His attitude toward life is suspicious and generally pessimistic. He's



always looking for something to turn his life around, but has a hard time not dismissing opportunities out of hand.

Although he received basic training in pistols, Jammer has always tried to avoid combat or danger, even to the point of being called a coward by others, further alienating him. This fear has honed his sense of his surroundings to a surprising degree, making him aware of danger quicker than most.

Like most in the Colonial Fleet, Jammer has only a small kit of gear with him on the ship. He has a religious icon that he wears on a chain around his neck, a gift from his mother on his graduation. He also has a couple tools that have been around with him for years and about which he is quite superstitious.

## PLAYA PALACIOS

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d10

**Traits** Advanced Education d6, Allure d4, Duty (Find the Truth) d6, Glory Hound d4, Intuitive d4, Memorable d6, Pacifist d6, Political Pull d6, Renowned (Wireless Listeners) d10, Rival (James McManus) d4

**Skills** Influence d6/Administration d8/Bureaucracy d10/Conversation d12/Persuasion d10/Politics d8, Knowledge d6/Culture d10/History d8/Law d8/Literature d8/Philosophy d8, Perception d6/Deduction d10/Hearing d8/Intuition d10/Investigation d10/Read Lips d8/Search d8/Sight d8, Performance d6/Acting d8/Oratory d12, Planetary Vehicles d4

**Description** Of all the jackals that form the Colonial Gang wireless news crew, Playa Palacios is probably the most fair. She's certainly the most popular. Before the bombs dropped, she worked at the *Picon Star Tribune*, which earned her the dubious opportunity to cover the *Galactica's* decommissioning ceremony. Now she's the counterpoint to James McManus' scathing commentary about the fleet's leadership. Roslin and her aides wisely make her first chair at most press conferences, giving her the right to ask the first question. Sets the tone for the proceedings, which can help when the critics are setting their sights and fingering their triggers.

Unfortunately, Palacios has taken a few personal hits lately, foremost among them a rumor that she slept with Dr. Gaius Baltar during the reformation of the Quorum of Twelve. It might have gotten her an exclusive, but she has to be asking herself whether it was worth it.

## JEREMY "CHUCKLES" PERRY

**Agi** d10 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d10+d8

**Traits** Allure d4, Ambidextrous d2, Good-Natured d6, Talented (Pilot/Mid-size Airplane/Viper) d6, Crude d4, Lustful d4, Weak Stomach d6.

**Skills** Covert d6/Cheating at Cards d8, Discipline d2, Guns d6, Influence d6/Conversation d8/Seduction d10, Knowledge d6/Boonies d10, Melee Weapon Combat d6, Perception d6/Gambling d12+d2, Pilot d6/Aerial Craft (Transport) d8/Large Spacecraft (Transport) d8/Small Spacecraft (Transport) d10

**Description** Young and energetic, Jeremy is always welcome in a room. An enthusiastic cut-up, he soon got tagged with his call sign, Chuckles. A little short of pilot standard height, he's not bad to look at. When off-duty, he can be found wearing a worn leather vest from his former job as a casino dealer.

Born in Caprica City, Jeremy made friends easily, but struggled with his school work. After he'd gotten his basic education, he drifted from job to job, enjoying life and moving on when he got bored. Eventually he moved away from the big cities and discovered that being able to fly transports gave him freedom and an excuse to truck around the Colonies. So, Jeremy became a boonie jumper and he'll sheepishly admit that he had a girl in every town. He also honed his card-playing skills during this time, learning how to stack a deck and keep himself in games he'd otherwise bust out of. When those skills failed him, he learned how to use a gun or a knife.

Eventually even boonie jumping got too serious for him, so Jeremy landed on a luxury casino ship as a dealer. He made extra money dealing for private games. His ship, the *Elegant Dream*, was cruising out away from the Colonies at the time of the attack and was able to reach the fleet just before they jumped away from *Ragnar Anchorage*. He kept his wits about him and kept the other passengers entertained when the reality of the exodus became too much to bear. When he heard the call for pilots, he volunteered and was whisked off to *Galactica*.

Although the Cylon attack and exodus have been a real crapper for morale, Jeremy keeps his spirits up. This good attitude is usually infectious and its common to see small parties

starting around him, especially when he's dealing Triad for duty assignments. True, his jokes tend to be rather raunchy, but no one accused him of being high society. Most folks like it better that way.

Jeremy never seems like he's trying, but women are attracted to him. More than once, other pilots have seen a ladyfriend sneaking out of his bunk in the early morning.

Chuckles likes his dealer's vest and he usually has some Triad cards around. He's got a few pictures of his family back on the Colonies, but he's saved little else saved from his travels. He's strictly the love 'em and leave 'em kind.

## ALEX "CRASHDOWN" QUARTARARO

**Agi** d8 **Str** d10 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Brawler d4, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Quick Healer d6, Sharp Sense (Hearing) d4, Sixth Sense d6, Split Second Timing d4, Straight-Laced d4, Unstable (Battle Fatigue) d10, Wise-Ass d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Discipline d4, Guns d6, Heavy Weapons d4, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d4, Pilot d6/Small Spacecraft (Raptor) d10, Planetary Vehicles d2, Survival d4, Unarmed Combat d4

**Description** Lieutenant Alex Quartararo is one of only a few survivors of another battleship aboard the post-collapse *Galactica*. He's a capable Raptor pilot and a skilled recon specialist, but anyone who spends time with him can see the lines of battle fatigue forming at the edges of his eyes. He isn't adjusting well to humanity's new role in the

stars. Maybe he never will. Unfortunately, the Fleet can't be choosy when it comes to fliers, so as long as his stick hand keeps steady and his eyes stay sharp, he's a fixture on the flight deck.

## DWIGHT "FLAT TOP" SAUNDERS

**Agi** d10 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d10+d10

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Athlete d6, Cool Under Fire d6, Dogfighter d2, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d10, Good-Natured d6, Superstitious d4, Toes the Line d4, Trusting d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Sports (Pyramid) d8/Swimming d8, Craft d2/Cooking d6, Discipline d8, Guns d6, Heavy Weapons d6/Vehicle Mounted Guns d8, Melee Weapon Combat d2, Perception d4, Pilot d6/Ship's Guided Weapon d8/Small Spacecraft (Viper) d10, Planetary Vehicles d4, Unarmed Combat d2

**Description** Bright, cheerful, and energetic, or so the rest of the pilots say, Dwight "Flat Top" Saunders is a rare find. Half Virgon, Half Picon, he's got some of the finest stick control of anyone on deck and the humble professionalism to use it correctly.

Flat Top's one of those Viper jocks that happily fades into the background. He gets the job done well and without comment—again, no doubt part of his Virgon background. In the world before the bombs, he'd have hit a glass ceiling maybe five or six years into his stay of service. Out here, where pilots are raw and nerves are high, there's no limit. He's got just the right combination to own these skies and by the gods, he'll survive long enough to get there.

## DIANA SEELIX

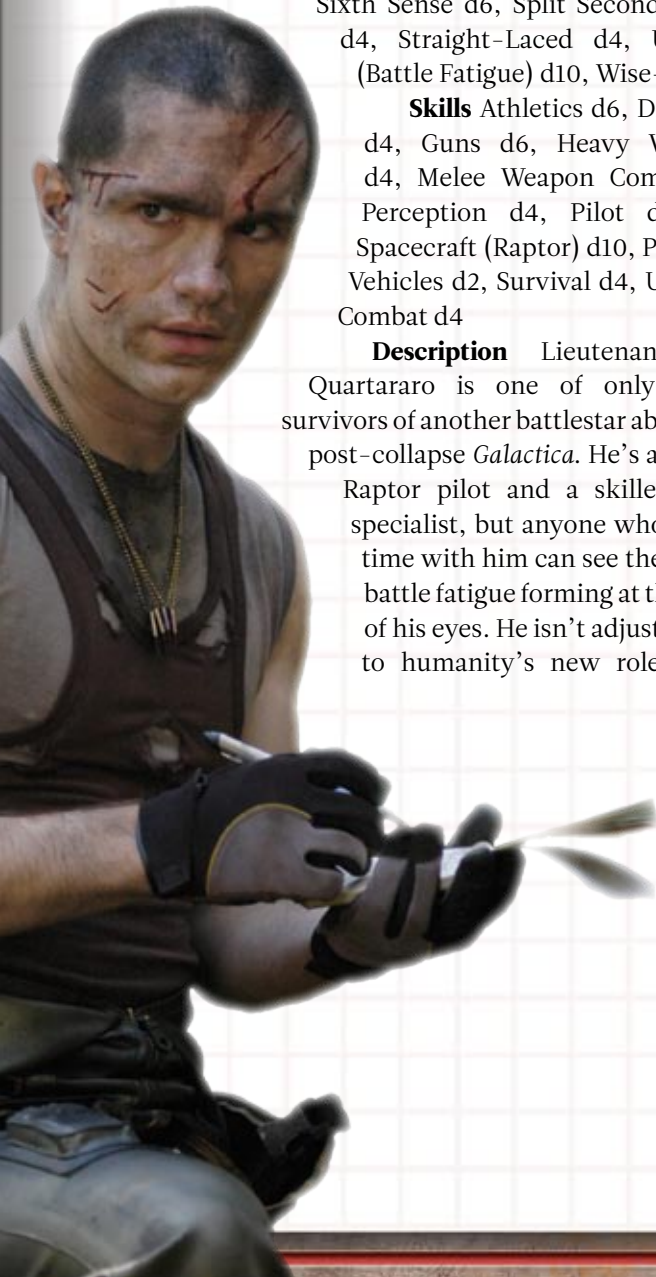
**Agi** d8 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d8+d6

**Traits** Allure d2, Cool Under Fire d2, Mechanically Inclined d4, Allergies (Ship Molds) d4, Lightweight d4

**Skills** Guns d4, Influence d4, Knowledge d4, Mechanical Engineering d6/Mechanical Repairs d10/Ship Design d10, Medical Expertise d4, Perception d4, Performance d6/Singing d10, Pilot d4, Survival d4, Technical Engineering d6/Avionics d10

**Description** Slender, with classic Virgon beauty, Seelix is no slave to fashion. Deckhand gear is functional and suits her just fine.

She is quiet but ambitious, honing her skills as a way of escaping the terrors of the war and the flight into deep space. With friends, she is pleasant and friendly, but tries to steer away from alcohol which always puts her under the table too quickly. She's had boyfriends, some casual, some



serious, but hasn't found the right man. She gets embarrassed when friends push her to sing, but when she does, she silences a room with her haunting soprano voice.

Diana's childhood was one of ready wealth and leisure. She wasn't fascinated by clothes like most of the girls her age, preferring to sneak off with her aunt on camping trips (where she learned to fend for herself in the wilderness).

Virgons have a reputation for being smart operators, but Diana's father was an exception. When his business schemes collapsed, it cost the family everything it had. Diana jumped into a tech school on a Colonial Fleet scholarship. She found an aptitude for machines and spacecraft, although she didn't have the connections or money to sneak into the pilot's program.

Fleet life has suited her well enough, though she itches to broaden herself with promotion or entry into the pilot corps. Once the war began and the survivors fled, she figured there would be lots of opportunity.

About the only thing that really knocks Diana to her knees is getting a lungful of the mold that seems impossible to eradicate on a spaceship. Getting into a narrow duct or a long unused room usually ends with sneezes, vertigo, and even a skin rash.

Seelix has a small supply of the drugs she uses to relieve an allergy attack, but like everything else on the fleet, it is limited. She worries where she'll find any more. She also has a few fashion magazines stashed in her locker, a way to reminisce about her home on Virgon and her privileged childhood.

## SPECIALIST PIETER SOCINUS

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d10 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d8+d6

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d2, Tough d4, Mechanically Inclined d4, Sharp Sense (Hearing) d4, Duty (Colonial Fleet) d6, Superstitious d4, Trusting d4

**Skills** Animal Handling d4, Athletics d4, Craft d6, Guns d6/Shotgun d8, Knowledge d4, Mechanical Engineering d6/Create Devices d8/Mechanical Repairs d12/Ship Design d12, Perception d6/Hearing d8, Scientific Expertise d6/Agriculture d8

**Description** It doesn't take long to know that Socinus's a dependable fellow. Unassuming and steady like most of his Aereon brethren, he seems quite satisfied with doing a good job, whatever job he's given. His skin is a little ruddy and his hair black and kept short. He sure doesn't stand out in a crowd.

The rich earth of Aereon was enough for Socinus, working it with his hands, growing the food that the rest of the Colonies had

come to rely upon. He was satisfied there, but fate had other plans. A few bad seasons and his family needed money. Loyal to his bones, Socinus volunteered to join the Colonial Fleet and send home his pay.

He was given an aptitude test and directed for a hands-on evaluation in the machine shop. While there, he heard that a nearby motor was having a problem and predicted a fracture on the inside of the housing where it couldn't be seen. Taking the device apart proved him right and earned him a fast track to maintenance of the most expensive military craft. He moved from ship to ship, ending up on *Galactica* right before she was to be decommissioned. He'd been responsible for final checks on the Viper squadron before heading to the museum. Hours later, everything had changed.

Pieter never faltered in his duties, even as millions died and the survivors fled from total annihilation. Vipers and Raptors were flying around the clock—he barely slept those early days, keeping them repaired, fueled, and ready for the next launch.

After the first few hectic weeks, a routine set in. Socinus got some downtime and spent most of it drinking barely passable “ale” with the other members of Deck Crew 5. After one long evening, he convinced one of his friends to give him the traditional Aries tattoo, a painful but lasting testament to everyone he lost back on Aereon.

Socinus is one of the many stiffs working hard to keep the rest alive another day. He's developed some quirks from the stress of the times including a heightened superstition toward how he handles his tools with lives on the line.

With most of his pay going back to his family, Socinus never accumulated much of his own. He's got pictures of his family and one of this dog, Tiger, which he keeps on his person at all times like a good luck charm.

## ELLEN TIGH

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d10

**Traits** Addiction (Alcohol) d6, Allure d4, Friends in Strange Places (Underworld) d8, Glory Hound d4, Greedy d4, Infamy (Promiscuous) d4, Intuitive d4, Liar d6, Lustful d4, Uncommon Knowledge (Underworld) d4

**Skills** Covert d4, Discipline d2, Influence d6/Barter d8/Persuasion d8/Politics d8/Seduction d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

**Description** In a universe torn asunder by the Cylons, people cling to what they can. Case in point, the crew of the *Battlestar Galactica*, which panicked

when Commander Adama unexpectedly boarded a Raptor and left without explanation. He returned several hours later with a woman he'd collected from the *Rising Star*, a striking blonde who claimed to be Ellen Tigh, wife of the ship's XO. Up to that point, everyone—including Saul Tigh himself—had assumed that Ellen was dead. Suddenly there she was, big as life. She claimed that she was rescued at the Picon airport and that she'd spent the previous three weeks unconscious in a *Rising Star* bunk.

As you might imagine, folks were plenty skeptical, Adama most of all. He put the rest of Dr. Baltar's Cylon testing on hold to make sure he wasn't bringing a lioness back to the sheep, but the test came back negative. It was really Ellen. And that's the real tragic part. Might have been better off for everyone if she were a toaster.

Ellen Tigh is the career soldier's worst nightmare: an intoxicating trophy wife with guile and even more ambition. By all accounts, she's the reason Colonel Tigh took to the bottle, and she's certainly the reason he stayed there. Her drinking and carousing were legendary. It's public knowledge that she slept around, but some of the looser lips have her frakking her way through half the Colonial Fleet while her husband was away on duty.

Reunited with her husband on the *Galactica*, Ellen claimed to have changed, but soon picked up right where she left off. Worse, she dragged the Colonel down with her. He'd always had a blind spot when it came to her, and she made sure she was standing there every time she made a play for another man. She kept him so busy "having fun" and indulging his alcoholism that he never noticed she was manipulating him. Again.

Behind the sweet laugh and worshipping eyes, Ellen Tigh plans. She searches for ways to use people. She waits for reasons to drop them. Except for Saul Tigh. Ellen sees her husband as her ticket to the top. All she has to do is keep his eyes on the prize—and give him a little nudge every now and again. If he has to step over a few of her bodies along the way, she can live with that.

## TOM ZAREK

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d10 **Wil** d12;  
**LP** 20; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Convict d6, Duty (Honor Among Thieves) d6, Formidable Presence d4, Friends in Strange Places (Underworld) d12, Friends in Strange Places (Sagittarons) d6, Infamy d10 (Terrorist), Political Pull d6, Rival (President Laura Roslin) d8

**Skills** Artistry d6/Writing d8, Athletics d4, Covert d4, Discipline d6, Guns d6, Influence d6/Bureaucracy

d8/Conversation d10/Leadership d8/Politics d10, Knowledge d6, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6, Performance d6/Oratory d8, Planetary Vehicles d4, Survival d6, Unarmed Combat d2

**Description** The backwater world of Sagittaron has suffered throughout the history of the Colonies. It was only a matter of time before its people stood up and fought back. Thirty years ago, the movement gained a face: smooth-talking Tom Zarek, leader of a terrorist organization called the Sagittaron Freedom Movement (SFM).

Sadly, Zarek stained his passionate crusade for equality with the blood of innocent bystanders. It's his belief that words mean nothing on their own, and that people—dense and apathetic as they are—only pay attention when they have to. His particular brand of force involved bombs, usually the kind set off in occupied government buildings. His last message got him convicted and sent to prison, where gods willing he would have rotted.

Then the Cylons stepped in. As the colonies were blanketed in nuclear fire, Zarek was aboard the *Astral Queen*, in transit to a parole hearing. Just like that, bureaucracy saves a convicted terrorist and 1,500 equally worthless scum. That's blind frakking justice there.

Now Zarek and his fellow inmates are the fleet's problem, and so far they're living up to everyone's worst expectations. Weeks ago, when a severe water shortage forced a desperate mining operation on a hostile ice world, the fleet offered the prisoners a fast track to freedom in exchange for doing the labor. Their response? They took hostages and demanded President Roslin step down so a new leader could be appointed through "legal elections." Zarek spoke for the prisoners and made sure the standoff nearly ended in precisely the kind of bloodshed he relishes. Captain Adama was able to diffuse the situation only by promising elections at the end of Roslin's current term. No one's exactly sure whether that's even possible, let alone reasonable, but it convinced Zarek to get the prisoners to stand down. For now.

Another concession was that the *Astral Queen* and its occupants would be given equal representation in the fleet, a promise that's polarized the survivors as much as Zarek's brand of criminal politics split the Sagittarons. Aggravating, but at least the prisoners were confined to their ship—until Roslin reinstated the Quorum of Twelve. Three guesses who took the Sagittaron seat. Yeah. And he's saying he'll run for President in the election. Just what we need. A gods-damn terrorist in office.

## OTHER SURVIVORS

The NPCs below are generic characters suitable for quick use. They can be thrown in as-is or fleshed out to create someone completely new.

### ATTORNEY

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d6 **Int** d10 **Wil** d8; **LP** 12; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Glory Hound d4, Intuitive d4

**Skills** Influence d6/Persuasion d8, Knowledge d6/Law d10, Perception d6, Performance d6/Oratory d10

**Description** Quick on her feet, smart as a whip, and able to turn a sharp phrase, this lawyer is good at presenting arguments and questioning witnesses. Fully able to improvise when faced with the unexpected in the courtroom, she prefers to be prepared by doing a thorough investigation and reviewing all the discovery. She is well-versed in Colonial law, and quite willing to exploit loopholes and bend the rules to win a case.

Lawyers were little valued right after the Cylon assault. With the government preserved—at least to a small degree—and the rule of law upheld, trained advocates are once again in demand. Although she dreams of her old life of hard work balanced with a high standard of living, the potential to hold an important place in the fleet keeps her going.

### BARTENDER

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8; **LP** 14; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Good-Natured d8, Uncommon Knowledge (Scuttlebutt) d6, Memorable d8

**Skills** Discipline d6, Melee Weapon Combat d6/Clubs d8, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** He's always keeping the spirits up, both kinds. His smile is friendly and his drink will warm the coldest heart. Everyone loves the bartender. So much sometimes that important or unsavory information is entrusted to him. Most of the time he writes it off as ramblings of a drunk, though sometimes it's just believable enough to be dangerous. He'll keep a lid on most of it for the simple fact that everyone knows his face. Stirring up rumors is a good way to end up in trouble.

Lots of folks need a drink to let their worries slip away. That's never been truer than now—since humans were nearly eradicated by the Cylons. The memory of it tends to bring people to his bar.

## BLACK MARKET MERCHANT

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d10 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8; **LP** 14; **Init** d8+d10

**Traits** Friends in Strange Places (Underworld) d8, Hideout d6, Pack Rat d4, Greedy d4, Rival (Authorities) d6

**Skills** Covert d4, Guns d6, Influence d6/Barter d10/Bureaucracy d8/Intimidation d8, Knowledge d6/Appraisal d10, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d4

**Description** The black market merchant is a tough bastard willing to sell anyone anything, be it guns or drugs or whatever.

Business is booming for the black market merchant. Sure, competition is a bit tougher, and there's always the military to keep an eye out for, but everyone has something they need, and these days, they're pretty much willing to do anything to scratch their itch.

### CHEF

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d8 **Wil** d8; **LP** 16; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Lustful (Fine Dining) d4, Uncommon Knowledge (Cooking) d6

**Skills** Artistry d6/Cooking d12, Athletics d4, Knowledge d6/Colonial Cuisine d8, Melee Weapon Combat d4, Perception d6

**Description** The chef loves food and is most at home in the kitchen. He was once an executive chef at a top restaurant, as much a star as any actor or musician. He has a larger-than-life personality, and somehow combines humor with a commanding presence. Though accustomed to working with top-shelf ingredients, he is capable of doing something spectacular with even the most basic supplies.

Survival after the attack meant that most luxuries—such as fine dining—were dropped in favor of just filling your belly. But as life in the fleet and on the run became the new routine, people looked for those who could make the basic foodstuffs palatable and appealing. There are powerful people in the fleet, and they wish to live well. A skilled chef is invited to prepare meals for important functions, and he is able to barter his skill for the finer things he craves.

### CIVILIAN PILOT

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6; **LP** 12; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d2, Cool Under Fire d2, Overconfident d4

**Skills** Pilot d6/Aerial Craft (Airliner) d8/Astrogration d8/Small Spacecraft (Shuttle) d8, Scientific Expertise d4, Technical Engineering d4

**Description** The civilian pilot could be a simple interplanetary shuttle operator, an airline pilot, a personal pilot for some important big shot, or another competent flyer. Sure, it's possible she was in the military before, but at the time of the attack, the civilian pilot is just that, a civilian.

Since the attack, lots of folks have had to take on roles they were never prepared for or trained for. Not the pilot. If there's one thing the fleet needs, it's pilots—the ride's a lot more dangerous in a Viper or Raptor though.

## DECKHAND

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Faith d4, Good-Natured d2, Combat Paralysis d4, Lightweight d4

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d6/Repair d10, Medical Expertise d6, Technical Engineering d6

**Description** On most any ship, this sort of guy is everywhere, taking care of all the little things that keep things running smoothly. Most of the time, he isn't noticed, but if you looked hard, you'll see a slightly short man with sandy hair. His face looks young but could be anywhere from 20 to 40 years old. He's conscientious and courteous, looking forward to his days off to visit temple and call on his sweetheart. He could be a civilian or member of the Colonial Fleet.

Amazingly the deckhand keeps his spirits up in the face of everything. He finds comfort in his common tasks. He keeps a photograph of his love near his heart at all times, still not willing to put it up in the memorial corridor on *Galactica*.

## FASHION MODEL

**Agi** d8 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d8+d6

**Traits** Allure d10, Renowned (High Society) d6, Addiction (Amphetamines) d8, Lustful d4

**Skills** Influence d6/Seduction d10, Performance d6/Modeling d12

**Description** This person is well-known on sight, a fashion model famous across the Twelve Colonies. Her life is one of privilege and adoration. Sure, she's



made some mistakes in the past (countless failed romances, trouble with drugs) but surely her “audience” will always forgive her. Right?

Few have fallen farther, and seen their world change more. With few useful skills, the fashion model sometimes finds herself doing menial labor. It just isn't fair. She's looking for any way back to her favored status.

## FELON

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Brawler d6, Tough d4, Formidable Presence d4, Convict d6, Rebellious d4, Influence d6/intimidate d8

**Skills** Guns d6/Pistols d8, Melee Weapon Combat d6/Knives d8, Perception d4, Planetary Vehicles d6, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** Created by the harsh environment of his childhood and perhaps an inner “badness,” fear is his greatest weapon, but can be his downfall just the same. Using it to his advantage, he will do whatever is necessary to get by. No deed is too dirty for him to carry out, which makes him a valuable tool for those looking to keep their hands clean. As long as the pay is right, he'll get it done.

Since the attack, its almost as if he never committed his crime. Most folks have more important things to worry about. Sometimes that's a good thing. A guy can accomplish a lot when no one is looking.

## FORMER PRO ATHLETE

**Agi** d10 **Str** d8 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d4;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d10+d6

**Traits** Allure d6, Athlete d8, Renowned (Sports Fans) d4, Glory Hound d8, Overconfident d6

**Skills** Athletics d6/Sports (Pyramid) d10/Running d8/Weight Lifting d8, Discipline d6/Leadership d8, Perception d6/Tactics d8, Unarmed Combat d6/Brawling d8.

**Description** Living the high life as the captain of a famous Pyramid team did have its perks. Big paydays, exclusive treatment and all the glory of winning the championship are just a few advantages talent and hard work bring. Still, when the spotlight shines on you all the time, sooner or later you'll get caught doing something improper. Drunken bar fights, lustful scandals, and rumors of payoffs can damage credibility, but also add to stardom.

Not much call for a sports icon since the decimation of the core planets. Occasionally the athlete plays a somewhat challenging pick up game of Pyramid, but the majority of his time is spent drinking, philandering, and profiting off of his now

declining fame. A few use their athletic talents in the fight against the Cylons. They become effective fighters, or dead, very quickly.

## GENERAL PRACTITIONER

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d10 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d6, Duty (Medical Oath) d6

**Skills** Medical d6/First Aid d8/General Practice d10, Scientific Expertise d6

**Description** On one of the Twelve Colonies, the doctor split his time between private practice and hospital work.

Since the attack, all medically trained personnel, especially the general practitioner, have had their work cut out for them. And with the continual Cylon threat, there doesn't appear to be any relief in the near future.

## HYDROPONICS EXPERT

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d10 **Int** d10 **Wil** d4;  
**LP** 12; **Init** d8+d10

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Good-Natured d4, Friends in Strange Places (Underworld), Uncommon Knowledge (Hydroponics) d8, Convict d6, Liar d6, Covert d6/Slight of Hand d8.

**Skills** Knowledge d6/Narcotics d12/Hydroponics d12, Performance d6/Stage Magic d10, Scientific Expert d6/Geosciences d10

**Description** In his 60s and bald, the hydroponics expert stands with a noticeable stoop. He is always grinning and pleased to strike up conversations with strangers. He sometimes uses magic tricks to impress people. Known as “the Wizard” by his drug-buying clientele, this underground superstar eluded the authorities for years before finally being arrested.

He was on his way to the Penal Colony by prison transport when the Cylons attacked. After the first few days, he knew what was needed and bargained for his parole in exchange for helping to devise a way to use hydroponics to help feed the fleet. He keeps his secrets to himself, makes sure his knowledge is indispensable, and engages in a little drug trade on the side to keep him in the finer things.

## JOURNALIST

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 12; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d6, Cool Under Fire d4, Duty (Uncover the Truth) d6, Uncommon Knowledge (Scuttlebutt) d6, Coward d6, Pacifist d6, Wise-Ass d4

**Skills** Covert d6/Streetwise d8, Influence d6/Conversation d8/Persuasion d8, Knowledge d6/Culture d8/History d8, Perception d6/Investigation d8/Search d8

**Description** Keeping the public in the know is just one of her goals. The other is to uncover and expose the conspiracies that plague the government and big corporations alike. It's a dirty job sometimes and she doesn't have many friends in the public eye. But the rewards are well worth it. That one big story that changes things and earns her the respect and fame she deserves, and she will do whatever it takes to get it.

Since the destruction of the Colonies, she is more than ever determined to make her voice heard. Some one is hiding the truth. All it takes to uncover it is a little digging.

## LABORER

**Agi** d6 **Str** d10 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8; **LP** 14; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Brawler d4, Friends in Strange Places (Laborers) d2, Addiction (Alcohol) d4, Out of Luck d4

**Skills** Craft d6/Carpentry d8, Mechanical Engineering d6/Plumbing d10, Unarmed Combat d4

**Description** As a contractor, you used to build houses, work construction, and do the occasional bathroom or kitchen as a side gig to make extra cash. You worked hard and played hard.

Since the attack, there's precious few houses and skyscrapers to build. Also, you don't have much choice about the jobs you take. Still, there's plenty of need for people willing to get their hands dirty doing tough jobs. You've had to learn a few new tricks, but fitting pipe on the *Olympic Carrier* isn't that much different than plumbing some high-rise on Caprica.

## MARINE

**Agi** d10 **Str** d8 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6; **LP** 20; **Init** d10+d8

**Traits** Athlete d4, Cool Under Fire d2, Tough d8, Duty (Colonial Marines) d6, Prejudice (Religion) d4

**Skills** Athletics d6, Guns d6/Assault Rifle d10/Pistol d8, Influence d6/Intimidation d10, Melee Weapon Combat d6/Knife d10, Ranged Weapons d6/Throwing Knives d10, Survival d6, Martial Arts d6/Judo d10

**Description** Half gung-ho, half bully, the marine prides herself on being able to master any situation. She comes off either as confident or cocky, just as ready to crow about her skills or show them off. She likes to play with knives to un-nerve people, or beat them at Pyramid. Her disdain for the "faithful" is never well hidden. When not on duty or hanging

with her corps-mates, she works out and practices her martial skills. She's stocky, but don't mistake her apple shape for softness. Keeps her hair in a single braid down her back.

The aftermath of the Cylon attack is the test she's been waiting for all her life. Time to step up and show her stuff. This makes her even more zealous in carrying out orders, her bravado is even more grating. She's been lucky so far—her only friends are her fellow marines and most of the ones she knows were onboard the ship during the attack. She's 100% devoted to the Colonial Marines and will stand with them against all comers.

## MECHANIC

**Agi** d8 **Str** d8 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d4 **Wil** d8; **LP** 16; **Init** d8+d6

**Traits** Mechanically Inclined d6, Shadow d2, Convict d6

**Skills** Mechanical Engineering d6/Mechanical Repairs d10, Technical Engineering d6/Repair Electrical Systems d10

**Description** While he was in prison, the mechanic picked up some skills fixing vehicles and other machines. When he got out, few places were willing to hire an ex-con, so he got a job at a local garage doing mostly legal work.

Luck got the mechanic out of the Colonies during the attack. It also got him stuck in the bowels of the various ships, doing repairs and other heavy-duty work that keeps the fleet flying. This situation is far more like prison than freedom.

## NURSE

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6; **LP** 12; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Cool Under Fire d4, Duty (Medical Oath) d6, Good-Natured d4, Pacifist d6

**Skills** Discipline d6, Influence d6, Medical Expertise d6/First Aid d10/General Practice d8, Perception d6

**Description** The nurse is friendly, dedicated, and professional. She cares about her patients but doesn't get overly involved with them. She remains calm and friendly at all times. Any doctor would be lucky to have her on staff, but she's a treasure in her own right when no doctor is around.

Though the tragedies associated with the Cylon attack pushed her to the limit, the nurse has never been more needed. She has done everything from extensive first aid to crude emergency surgery to dosing stims and radiation meds. Somehow



she's able to keep her nerves steady and a smile on her face.

## PHOTOGRAPHER

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d4 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6;  
LP 10; **Init** d8+d8

**Traits** Cool under Fire d4, Talented (Art, Photography) d8, Pacifist d6

**Skills** Artistry d6/Photography d12, Covert d4, Knowledge d4, Perception d6

**Description** Taking news photos to pay the bills, the photographer pursued her art at night. Her eye for capturing emotion in a still image is amazing. Still, she was never “discovered” before the attack, and spent most of her time honing her craft. Whether by order, request, or her own initiative, she's begun to create a photographic archive of the fleet and events. That people have started to notice, and appreciate.

## POLITICIAN

**Agi** d8 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d10 **Int** d10 **Wil** d12;  
LP 18; **Init** d8+d10

**Traits** Hideout d6, Political Pull d6, Renowned (Movers & Shakers) d2, Addiction (Taggarizane) d4, Glory Hound d4, Overweight d2

**Skills** Discipline d6/Leadership d10, Influence d6/Persuasion d12/Politics d12, Perception d6/Investigation d8, Performance d6/Oratory d12+d2

**Description** A member of the legislature on Caprica, the politician was considered a rising star with excellent political connections. Naturally handsome, if a bit heavy, he manipulates other people with the greatest ease. Always seeking the spotlight, he achieved some name/face recognition with the general public. He also attracted an entourage, some of whom “helped” him with Taggarizane drops to which he's now addicted. The drug has turned his fingernails purple so he wears thin gloves all the time.

While others were still reeling from the Cylon assault, the politician made his move and secured a position as a key member of the reformed government. He's appreciated and liked, especially for managing the difficult matter of medicine in the fleet (assuring himself a supply of Taggarizane). He has also arranged for a secret “get-away” room, to take his drops or engage in dangerous liaisons.

## PRIEST

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d10;  
LP 16; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Faith d6, Duty (Faith) d6, Pacifist d6

**Skills** Influence d6/Conversation d8/Persuasion d10, Knowledge d6/Religion d10, Perception d6/Empathy d8, Performance d6/Oratory d8

**Description** A person of belief who led a congregation in the teachings of the Gods, the priest is sympathetic but also beholden to the morals and scriptures of the faith.

They say that there are no atheists in a foxhole, and the priest has found that to be the case since the Armistice Day attack. He has been called upon to help people non-stop. From civilians to politicians to warriors—everyone is looking to make sense in the madness of these dark days.

## PROSTITUTE

**Agi** d6 **Str** d4 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
LP 12; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Allure d2, Greedy d4, Uncommon Knowledge (Scuttlebutt) d6

**Skills** Covert d6, Influence d6/Seduction d10, Perception d6, Performance d6/Acting d8

**Description** The prostitute doesn't simply sell sex. She offers comfort and companionship to those who cannot find it elsewhere. Though others see her as greedy, she considers herself practical—doing what it takes to survive and live as well as possible. As long as her clients are satisfied with the transaction, she sees nothing improper, immoral, or criminal about it. If a client's wife or girlfriend truly made him happy, surely they wouldn't be seeking comfort elsewhere.

As an eminently practical person, the prostitute puts her survival and level of comfort as high priorities. With so many people facing loss, fear, and stress since the Cylon attack, business is booming. The only change is payment often comes in favors and trinkets than in relatively worthless cash.

## RESEARCH SCIENTIST

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d6 **Int** d10 **Wil** d8;  
LP 16; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Renowned (Scientists) (d6), Talented (Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals, Toxicology) (d6), Addiction (Amphetamines) (d6), Memorable (d4)

**Skills** Medical Expertise d6/Pharmaceuticals d8/Toxicology d8, Scientific Expertise d6/Life Sciences d10

**Description** “Life sciences” covers an immense range of disciplines within the scientific community. In this case, the researcher was focused on pharmacology, primarily involved in designing new products for commercial consumption.

The number of scientists and doctors who managed to escape the Twelve Colonies was horrifyingly low.

The research scientist is not a doctor, but all things considered, he's the closest thing to one that most folks are going to get anytime soon.

## RETIRED MILITARY SERGEANT

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d8 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Friends in Strange Places (Colonial Marines) d4, Duty (Colonial Marines) d6, Elderly d6, Slow Mover d2

**Skills** Discipline d6/Leadership d8, Guns d6/Pistol d8/Rifle d8, Perception d6/Tactics d10, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** He mustered out of the service fifteen years ago, although he never lost touch with his buddies or those he trained in the service. They would gather from time to time to talk over old times, relive heroics back in the Cylon Wars, and rail about current events, including the sorry state of things. Sarge never was comfortable with retirement, even though he has some trouble getting around these days. A wealth of history, experience, and military know-how are crammed into this geezer's old bones.

Having volunteered for active duty, Sarge tries to do too much. He's looking for a way to make a real difference. Younger men sometimes ignore the real wisdom he imparts. At least, he's sure to die on duty now—just like he always wanted it.

## Union Boss

**Agi** d6 **Str** d8 **Vit** d6 **Ale** d6 **Int** d6 **Wil** d8;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d6

**Traits** Friends in Strange Places (Laborers) d4, Intuitive d4, Political Pull d6, Elderly d6, Greed d4, Overweight d2

**Skills** Influence d6/Administration d8/Politics d10, Knowledge d6, Mechanical Engineering d6, Melee Weapon d4, Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** The union boss has been handling business for the union his entire career, at least after a few years on the docks. He's experienced in cutting deals and doing his best for his people. Sure he's made some enemies. But the worker knows whose side he's on.

The Colonies may be dead, but work still needs to get done. And the worker still needs a spokesman. The union boss was, and still is, that man.

## USELESS DRUNK

**Agi** d4 **Str** d6 **Vit** d10 **Ale** d4 **Int** d6 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 16; **Init** d4+d4

**Traits** Brawler d4, Addiction (Alcohol) d6, Out for Blood d4

**Skills** Unarmed Combat d6

**Description** Eager to wash away the trouble of the day, the drunk spent his time throwing back drinks at the nearest bar. On occasion, he'd stop by the barracks offering the bounty of his home-made distillery. Just making friends with the marines or guard—if a few cubits came his way in the deal, who's to complain.

Since the attack, the days of drinking because he lost his job are over. Now he's got a real reason to drink. Other than that and the place where he imbibes, not much has changed. He's still bitter and spiteful of those who he deems "have it made."

## ZOOKEEPER/HANDLER

**Agi** d6 **Str** d6 **Vit** d8 **Ale** d8 **Int** d8 **Wil** d6;  
**LP** 14; **Init** d6+d8

**Traits** Advanced Education d4, Allure d2, Fast on Your Feet d6, Quick Healer d6, Coward d8, Duty (Animals) d6, Out of Luck d4

**Skills** Animal Handling d6/Exotic Mammals d12, Guns d4, Knowledge d6/Zoology d10, Medical Expertise d4, Perception d6/Empathy d10, Performance d6/Acting d8, Planetary Vehicles d4, Scientific Expertise d6/Life Sciences d10, Technical Engineering d4, Unarmed Combat d4.

**Description** Assistant Chief Gamekeeper at the Picon zoo, the handler has been around animals all her life. She values ecological diversity and supported the efforts of universities to record and decipher the genetic code of the natural flora and fauna of the Twelve Colonies. In order to raise funds for the research, she took exotic animals on "good will tours" of other cities and Colonies, appearing on local news channels.

The zookeeper had partial copies of the genetic research as well as several "good will" animals with her when the ship she was on joined the fleet. She has been assigned the task of figuring out how to breed livestock to feed people and maintain the available species.

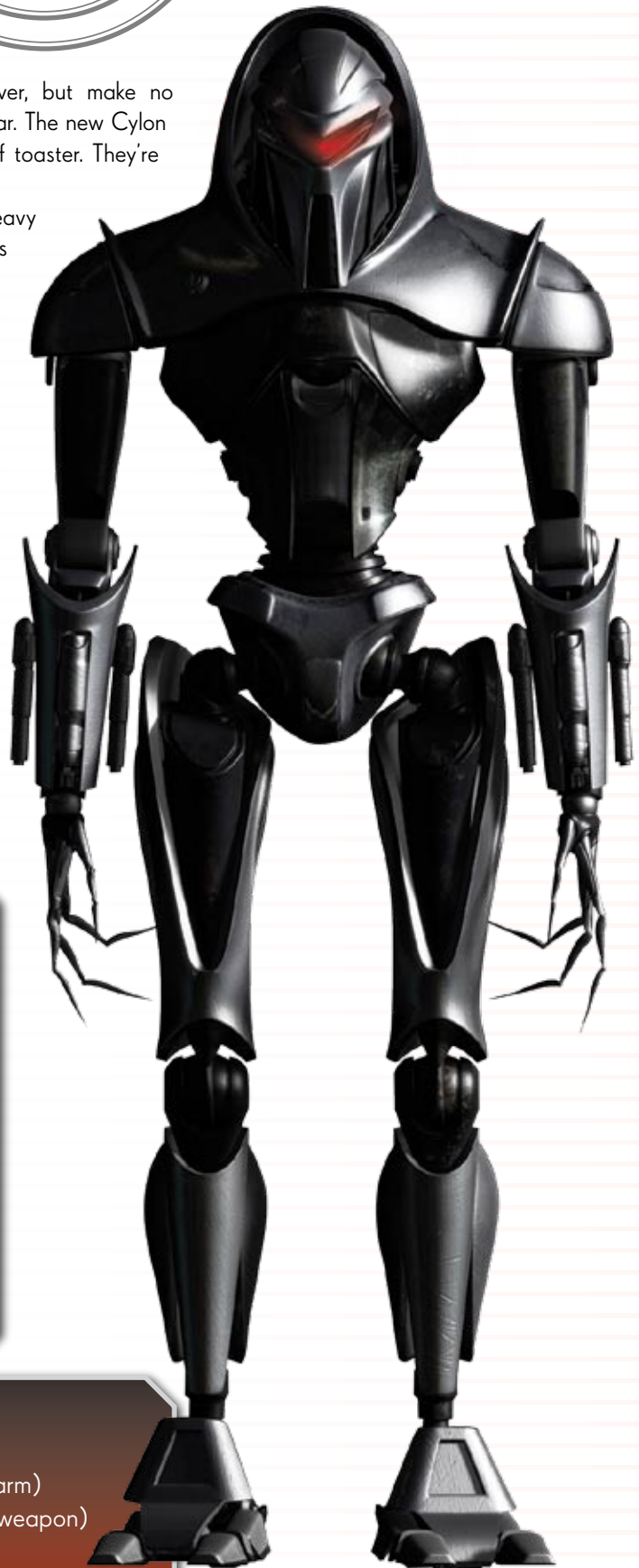
# CYLON CENTURIONS

Call 'em bulletheads, clankers, chrome jobs, or whatever, but make no mistake, these ain't the Cylons your Daddy faced in the first war. The new Cylon Centurions are a completely different and far deadlier kind of toaster. They're strong, fast, and tireless.

Centurions stand about seven feet tall. They're covered in heavy armor, which completely surrounds whatever mix of organic bits and circuitry may lie underneath. Their bodies are generally human-like with similar points of articulation, and they can walk, run, and jump with more agility than seems fair. Still, the damn things are so heavy and metallic that each step makes a loud mechanical sound. Each arm sports a built-in automatic weapon for fire attacks and razor-sharp fingertips for bloody close-up work.

Near as we can tell, Centurions communicate wirelessly. They're intelligent, but only seem to be capable of following instructions. Not a lot of capacity for creative thought there. The clankers understand human speech, but cannot speak themselves. A single Centurion is a damned deadly foe; a group can be a real nightmare—they have pre-programmed tactics and know how to work effectively together.

The new toasters can be shot or blown apart, though their thick armor makes them tough. Explosive or armor-piercing rounds take them down faster than traditional ammo.



## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d12
Vitality	d12
Alertness	d6
Intelligence	d6
Willpower	d10
Life Points	22
Initiative	d6+d6

## Skills

Athletics	d6
Covert	d4
Discipline	d6
Guns	d6
Machine Guns	d8
Heavy Weapons	d6
Demolitions	d8
Mortars	d8
Mech Engineering	d4
Melee Wpn Combat	d6
Perception	d4
Tech Engineering	d4

## Hardware

Armor	4W
Automatic Wpn	d6W (Range 60 yards, one per arm)
Blades	d2W (each hand counts as one weapon)

Cylon Centurions ignore Stun damage and do not suffer Wound penalties.

# HUMANOID CYLONS

The brass tried to keep this a secret, but the rumor-mill started working overtime. The Cylons look like us now. Somehow in the last forty years, the toasters “evolved.” They look completely human—flesh, blood, sweat, and tears. We don’t know if they really feel or not, but they can be awfully convincing. Don’t be fooled—these “skinjobs” caused the death of billions of people.

Medically, human-form Cylons are nearly impossible to distinguish from real people. Rumor is there’s some sort of special test that can identify them, but it’s very time-consuming and requires rare resources. A medical exam sure as hell ain’t gonna do it.

A variety of skinjob types exist. Each type looks the same and there many copies of each type. Problem is no one knows how many types there are. More frightening, some might be “sleeper” agents that have been programmed to believe they are human. The Cylons have a plan, though the gods know what it may actually be.

For the most part, the skinjobs seem normal but, when push comes to shove, they can exhibit amazing feats of strength, speed, or stamina. They seem immune or at least highly resistant to most diseases and some forms of radiation. Good news for us is that they bruise and bleed just like a regular person—and they have a weakness for certain types of radiation that are harmless to actual humans.

Perhaps the worse news: now there’s rumors that when they die, their minds are downloaded into a new body. That makes them effectively immortal. No matter how many times you kill them, they come back good as new.

Probably could fill a library with all that we don’t know about the new Cylons. For now, know that if you shoot them enough, they stop working. That’s good enough for a start.

## Game Information

As far as we know, twelve models of humanoid Cylons exist. At least seven of them have been produced in multiple copies. A GM wanting to faithfully follow the show should use the models specifically revealed. Otherwise, he could surprise his players by revealing different Cylon models or giving them traits and abilities not seen on the television series.

A specific Cylon human model generally has the same Attributes, but displays dramatically different Traits and Skills, much like an identical twin is quite different from his sibling. Cylon sleeper agents have skills that match their (false) backgrounds. No doubt, other skinjobs can be tailored for their particular role or function. All humanoid Cylons have the following special Traits:

**ELECTRONIC INTERFACE:** Humanoid Cylons can directly interface with a computer system or network through a direct fiber-optic link or simple contact with a Cylon data port. This allows for extremely fast two-way communication with the computer, speeding the way for information to be received by the Cylon or instructions or programs to be sent to the computer.

**IMMUNITIES:** Humanoid Cylons are completely immune to almost all disease and most forms of radiation. Theoretically, they might also be able to shun sleep and food, but they seem reluctant to do so.

**PHYSICAL PUSH:** While Cylons have normal human physical capacities, they are capable of extraordinary physical feats in time of need—much like a controlled surge of adrenaline. Once per hour they can spend an action to “push,” increasing one physical Attribute (Agility, Strength, or Vitality) by +4 Steps. The push lasts for one minute, and also affects derived Attributes (Life Points, Initiative, etc.). This is a conscious act, so a sleeper agent Cylon might not understand how to push. Indeed, it’s possible that some models might be able to push more often, or to greater effect.

**VIRTUAL IMMORTALITY:** A humanoid Cylon is downloaded into a new, waiting body upon its death, assuming the death occurs close enough to a resurrection ship or facility. The newly awakened Cylon retains all of its Attributes, Traits, Skills, and memories from its previous life.

**VULNERABILITIES:** Certain rare (and ancient) bacterial strains and viruses can affect humanoid Cylons, who are not equipped with an adaptive immune system. They are also susceptible to certain varieties of radiation, which can manifest as either Light or Heavy depending on the specific type and intensity (see p. 96).



# A NUMBER EIGHT: SHARON “BOOMER” VALERII

## Attributes

Agility	d8
Strength	d6
Vitality	d6
Alertness	d10
Intelligence	d8
Willpower	d8
Life Points	14
Initiative	d8+d10

## Skills

Athletics	d6
Covert	d4
Discipline	d4
Guns	d6
Heavy Weapons	d6
<i>Demolitions</i>	d8
Influence	d2
Knowledge	d2
Mech Engineering	d6
Melee Wpn Combat	d6
Med Expertise	d2
Perception	d6
Pilot	d6
<i>Raptor</i>	d10
Survival	d4
Tech Engineering	d4
Unarmed Combat	d4



**Description:** Sharon was born on the mining colony of Troy and joined the Colonial Fleet at a young age. This version of number eight fervently believes this to be true. In reality, she is a Cylon sleeper agent, implanted with false memories and subconsciously programmed for sabotage. When not “triggered,” Sharon is a loyal officer, subject to human weaknesses and foibles (such as her secret and improper affair with Chief Tyrol). Recent

events have made her start to wonder if indeed she might be a Cylon, though she is in heavy denial and will go to great lengths to hide even her own suspicions from the rest of the crew.

When her implanted programming takes over, Sharon is a quiet and effective agent for the enemy—ready to disrupt, destroy, and kill to advance the Cylon agenda. In this frame of mind, she does not fear death, as she knows she will be reborn in a new body in any case. The two sides of her fractured personality have yet to come together. This results in a Fleet officer who works directly against the damage she inflicts when “triggered.”

# A NUMBER SIX: “CAPRICA”



## Attributes

Agility	d6
Strength	d6
Vitality	d6
Alertness	d8
Intelligence	d10
Willpower	d10
Life Points	16
Initiative	d6+d8

## Skills

Athletics	d4
Covert	d6
<i>Sabotage</i>	d8
<i>Stealth</i>	d8
Discipline	d2
Guns	d4
Influence	d6
<i>Persuasion</i>	d8
<i>Seduction</i>	d10
Knowledge	d2
Perception	d6
Performance	d6
<i>Deception</i>	d8
Scientific Expertise	d6
Tech Engineering	d6
<i>Hacking</i>	d8
<i>Programming</i>	d10
Unarmed Combat	d4

**Description** The architect of the overwhelming Cylon victory against the Twelve Colonies, this version of Number Six has gained a level of fame among her own kind—to the point where she has been nicknamed “Caprica” to distinguish her from the others of her model. Her seduction of Gaius Baltar and ongoing deception (he thought her a mere corporate spy) allowed her to add certain codes and subroutines to both the Colonial defense mainframe and the Command Navigation Program used by most military vessels.

“Caprica” Six still holds strong feelings for Gaius Baltar, her lover and unwitting co-conspirator, and like many of the others of her model has an extreme curiosity about, and desire for, both sex and love. Outside of the bedroom, her personality is calm yet forceful, and she is afraid of neither death nor killing if it advances her own ends.

# RANK AND LINGO

Used to be, rooks and civvies could stay mostly ignorant of military matters. Fact is, brass liked it that way. Kept interference to a dull roar. Now that humankind is nearly extinct, that luxury no longer exists. Everyone has to be on the same page, and the book is being written by the warriors. So, bone up on the following chain of command, military conduct, phonetic alphabet, acronyms, and lingo. Knowing who's in charge and what the hell is going on when the orders start flying might keep folks alive just long enough to get the job done.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLONIAL MILITARY

### OFFICERS

Fast-track commissioned officers serve in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and then attend Officer Candidate School. Even the lightweights must have had some kind of university training. Mustangs are those who actually spent time in the enlisted ranks before being commissioned. They got the toughest row to hoe when it comes to promotion. Still,

### OFFICER RANKS

Paygrade	Fleet Rank (and Abbreviation)	Marine Rank (and Abbreviation)
O-8	Admiral (Adm)	Marine Admiral (M. Adm)
O-7	Commander (Cdr)	Marine Commander (M. Cdr)
O-6	Colonel (Col)	Marine Colonel (M. Col)
O-5	Major (Maj)	Marine Major (M. Maj)
O-4	Captain (Cpt)	Marine Captain (M. Cpt)
O-3	Lieutenant (Lt)	Marine Lieutenant (M. Lt)
O-2	Lieutenant (junior grade) (Lt j.g.)	Marine Lieutenant (junior grade) (M. Lt j.g.)
O-1	Ensign (Ens)	Marine Ensign (M. Ens)

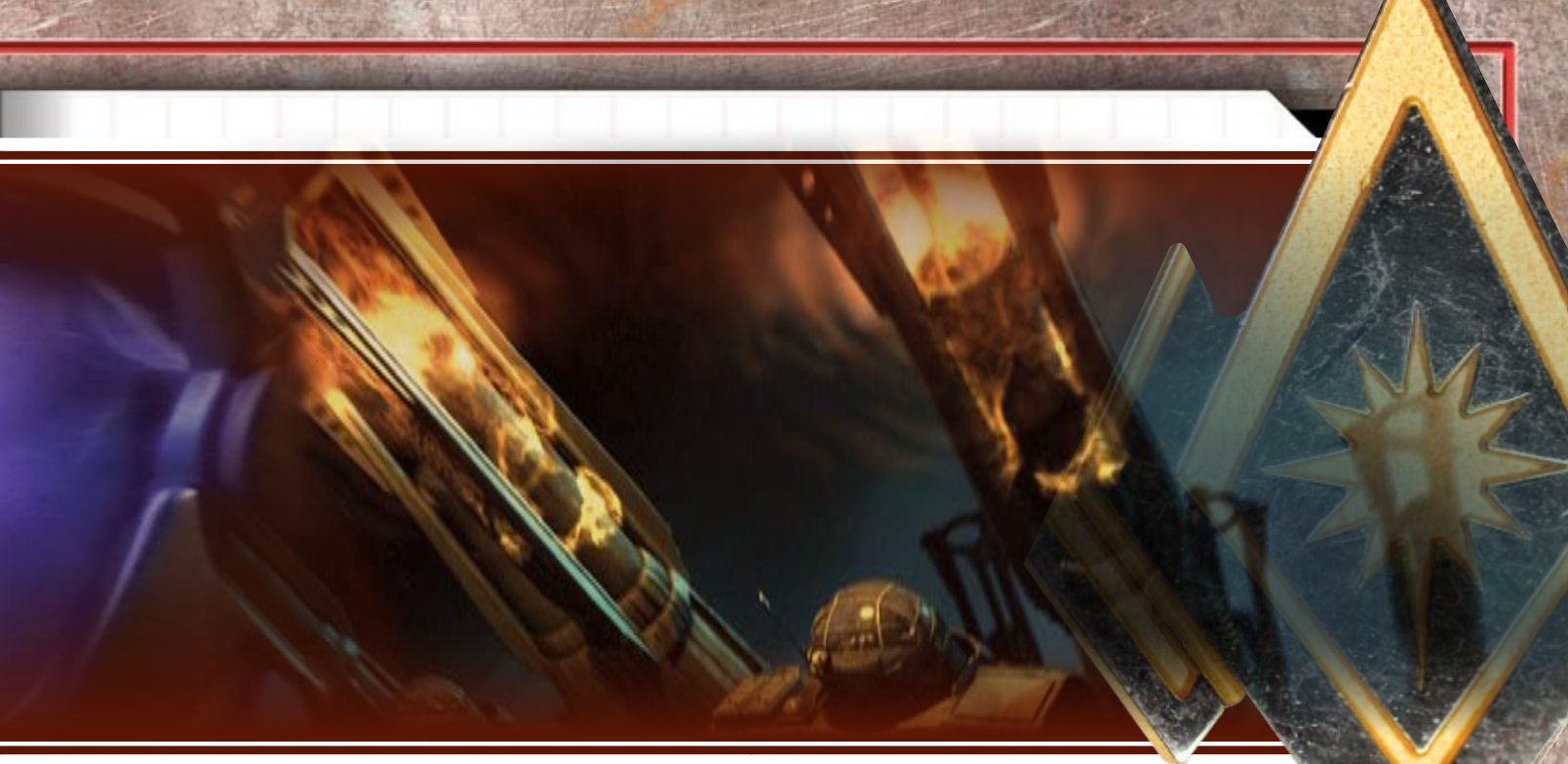
they are usually the ones you want at your side when things get hot.

Flag officers are Admiral rank or higher. They command battlestar groups and planetary fleets. The best—or at least the most politically savvy—is the Admiral of the Fleet.

### ENLISTED

Enlisted ranks form up into three unofficial but widely recognized groups.

E-1 through E-3 are the lower enlisted. These nuggets work on staying out of the way and getting up to speed on their jobs. They do their best to figure out the informal rules of military life. Keeping their noses clean is the way to get ahead—or at least avoid being “volunteered” for crap assignments. Specialist Cally Henderson is a good example of a lower enlisted.



### ENLISTED RANKS

Paygrade	Fleet Rank (and Abbreviation)	Marine Rank (and Abbreviation)
E-7	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO)	Sergeant Major (SgtMaj)
E-6	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Gunnery Officer (GSgt)
E-5	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)
E-4	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Sergeant (Sgt)
E-3	Specialist (Spec)	Lance Corporal (LCpl)
E-2	Deckhand (DKH)	Private First Class (PFC)
E-1	Recruit (REC)	Private (Pvt)

E-4 and E-5 are non-commissioned officers. These men and women do the bulk of the skilled labor. They command the lower enlisted, leading various stations and duty sections in a larger shop. Petty Officer Second Class Anastasia Dualla is a vital part of *Galactica's* CIC crew.

E-6 and E-7 are the senior non-commissioned officers. Chiefs are the backbone of the services, directing most day-to-day activities. If not for the expertise and leadership of the chiefs, the brass and the entire Fleet would be in sorry shape.

### FRATERNIZATION

Intimacy between officers and enlisted, or between subordinate and commander, is strictly prohibited by military law. Emotions get in the way any time the action starts. Only gets worse when friendship or love gets involved. Playing favorites or avoiding tough calls due to personal feelings gets people killed, and busts operations.

Fraternization penalties vary. Enlisted personnel are demoted or issued a dishonorable discharge. Junior officers get their commissions revoked or are relieved from military duty. Senior officers are merely forced to retire. Since the toasters attacked, trained personnel are too valuable to lose except in the most treasonous circumstances. As a result, serious fraternization penalties have been done away with.

Chief Petty Officer Galen Tyrol and Lieutenant Sharon "Boomer" Valerii fraternized and were called on the carpet for it. Ultimately, it helped a cylon sabotage the *Galactica*, and got an innocent enlisted man tossed in the brig.



## COLONIAL WIRELESS ALPHABET

Communication is key to successful operations. Frak-ups in communications kill people. The wireless is a huge help, but not being able to see the person giving orders causes all sorts of problems. Also, the military uses a lot of acronyms and code. Lots of times, one letter is hard to make out from another. So when the need to speak in letters arises, the military uses the phonetic alphabet.

For example, Apollo broadcasts the code “YTK” to his Viper pilots, and wireless interference turns it into “YDJ” or some other mess. If Apollo broadcasts “Yankee Tango Kilo,” misunderstanding is minimized.

COLONIAL WIRELESS ALPHABET			
Letter	Phonetic	Letter	Phonetic
A	Aplha	N	Nebula
B	Bravo	O	Oscar
C	Constellation	P	Papa
D	Delta	Q	Quasar
E	Echo	R	Rho
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra
G	Gamma	T	Tango
H	Hotel	U	Uniform
I	Icon	V	Victor
J	Juno	W	Whiskey
K	Kilo	X	X-Ray
L	Logo	Y	Yellow
M	Meteor	Z	Zephyr

## ACRONYMS, JARGON, AND LINGO

- **4-Rs (recognize, record, retreat, report):** The mantra that guides all scouting missions.
- **90-day Wonder:** Derogatory term for a recent graduate of OCS, usually referring to a lack of experience or military knowledge.
- **99:** Precedes a wireless transmission that applies to a group of air or spacecraft. For example, “99 Panthers” addresses all craft with a Panthers call sign.
- **Actual:** Used in wireless transmissions to identify the commanding officer of a vessel or unit. For example, Commander William Adama is *Galactica* Actual.
- **Adrift:** Out of place, not properly stowed or put away, not secured.
- **AI:** Artificial Intelligence, especially the type used to create the Cylons.
- **Air Boss:** The officer responsible for the safe operation of a battlestar’s flight deck. His personnel direct the placement of aircraft on the deck, monitor the operation of catapults and traps, and direct firefighting efforts if a crash occurs
- **Air Group:** The officers and enlisted personnel assigned to the air and spacecraft aboard a ship or facility. The Air Group has a separate operational and administrative chain of command, but takes orders from the commanding officer of the ship or base.
- **Alert Five:** Fighter and support aircraft on five-minute alert. This generally requires that the crew be seated in the craft at all times. Craft and crews may also be on Alert Fifteen, etc.
- **Ambrosia:** A green-colored alcoholic beverage.
- **AU (astronomical unit):** A unit of distance equal to 93 million miles.
- **AAU (anti-aircraft unit):** A weapon emplacement used against aerial or space units.
- **AGI (auxiliary general intelligence):** A craft whose mission is both intelligence gathering and providing potential targeting data of key targets.
- **ATD (airtight door):** These doors separate major compartments in Fleet vessels. Sealing these doors prevents a hull breach from affecting an entire ship.
- **AUX:** Abbreviation for auxiliary.
- **Back in Battery:** An artillery term for a gun that has completed its firing cycle and is ready to be

fired again. Common slang usage means “ready to go” or recovered. “I got totally frakked last night, but with a couple hours rack time, I’m back in battery.”

- **Ball:** Visual indicator used in a ship’s instrument landing system.
- **Balls:** Midnight, which in the military’s 24-hour timekeeping system may be written as “0000”.
- **Bandit:** Confirmed hostile contact, usually in reference to fighter- and shuttle-sized craft.
- **Bang Seat:** Ejection seat.
- **BDU (battle dress uniform):** The standard uniform of the Colonial Marine Corps.
- **Beast, The:** Nickname for the Battlestar Pegasus.
- **Belay:** Stop or disregard a previously issued command. “Belay my last.”
- **BFM (basic flight maneuvers):** The initial training of a pilot.
- **Big G:** Nickname for the *Battlestar Galactica*.
- **Bingo Fuel:** Having no fuel or just enough fuel to return to base.
- **Bird Farm:** Pilot jargon for a battlestar.
- **Bogey:** Unidentified contact.
- **BOHICA (bend over, here it comes again):** A term expressing dread. “Cylons?!? Oh man . . . BOHICA.”
- **Bounce:** Battlestar landing practice.
- **Brass:** Officers, especially senior officers.
- **BSG (battlestar group):** A number of military ships, usually centered around a battlestar, that operate together for increased security and firepower.
- **Bucket, The:** Nickname for the *Battlestar Galactica*.
- **Bug Out:** An escape maneuver from combat.
- **Bulkhead:** The outside wall of a ship.
- **Bull Ensign:** Senior ensign aboard a ship.
- **Bullet-head:** A cylon centurion, a heavily armed and armored robot warrior.
- **Call for Fire:** A request for gunfire support.
- **CAG (Commander Air Group):** The senior pilot assigned to a military vessel.
- **CAP (combat air patrol):** Spacecraft assigned to patrolling and protecting the fleet.
- **Captain’s Mast:** Non-judicial disciplinary procedure, usually meted out by unit commanders.
- **Carom:** Describes the location of a DRADIS contact, typically in conjunction with a three digit number. “DRADIS contact! Cylon basestar, bearing 187, carom 221!”
- **CAS (close air support):** The use of Fleet aircraft in a ground-attack role against targets in close proximity to friendly forces, in direct support of and requiring detailed integration with the fire and movement of ground troops.
- **CB (chemical, biological):** Designation for an accident or attack site indicating that chemical and biological hazards are present.
- **CBDR (constant bearing, decreasing range):** When one ship is on a collision course with another ship.
- **CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear):** Designation for an accident or attack site indicating that chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear hazards are present.
- **CCA (contamination control area):** An area that is sealed off to prevent the spread of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear contamination.
- **CCP (casualty collection point):** The place where the dead or injured are brought for disposal or treatment.
- **CE (civil engineer):** A person who plans, constructs, or maintains structures such as power plants, bridges, roads, railways,

water supply, irrigation, the natural environment, sewer, flood control, transportation, and traffic.

- **CF (colonial fleet):** The military forces of the Colonies and its survivors.
- **CFO (Chief of Fleet Operations):** A largely political position, the Chief of Fleet Operations is the highest ranking officer in the Colonial Fleet, and is the primary Fleet liaison to the upper levels of Colonial government.
- **CFOSI (Colonial Fleet Office of Special Investigations):** A field investigation agency of the Colonial Fleet. CFOSI identifies, investigates and neutralizes criminal, terrorist, and espionage threats to personnel and resources of the Colonial Fleet. Also called OSI.
- **CFR (colonial fleet reserve):** Adjunct members of the Colonial Fleet, who can be called to serve in an emergency.
- **Chamalla:** Hallucinogenic plant used primarily in religious ceremonies. Some believe it retards or even eliminates cancer cells. That is not accepted by the established Colonial medical community.
- **Cheng:** Chief Engineer. Pronounced “chang.”
- **Chrome Job:** See Bullet-head.
- **CIC (combat information center):** The command center of a battlestar.
- **Civvies:** Civilians. Also a military slang term for underwear.
- **CIWS (close-in weapon system):** A short-range anti-missile point defense system commonly comprised of a DRADIS system and rotary-barreled gun.
- **Clanker:** See Bullet-head.
- **CMC (Colonial Marine Corps):** The ground forces of the Colonial Fleet.
- **CMCO (Chief of Marine Corps Operations):** A largely political position, the Chief of Marine Corps Operations is the highest ranking officer in the Colonial Marine Corps, and is the primary Marine Corps liaison to the upper levels of Colonial government.
- **CMCR (Colonial Marine Corps Reserve):** Adjunct members of the Colonial Marine Corps, who can be called to serve in an emergency.
- **CMO (Chief Medical Officer):** The highest ranking medical officer.
- **CNP (command navigation program):** A navigational aid used on all military vessels.
- **CO (commanding officer):** The highest ranking officer who is fit to command.
- **COA (course of action):** A planned series of events.
- **Code Blue:** An internal security term requesting assistance in an emergency situation.
- **Command Authority:** The senior military person in command of a military unit, such as an Admiral.
- **COMSEC (communications security):** Measures and controls taken to deny unauthorized persons information derived from telecommunications and ensure the authenticity of such information. Pronounced “COM-sec.”
- **Conn:** Technically the navigation controls, but also used to refer to command in general.
- **Cover Down:** A military formation where everyone lines up with the point person facing the enemy. Each person provides cover for all those behind him.
- **CPA (closest point of approach):** The point at which two approaching vessels are expected to pass based on extrapolation of speed and course.
- **Crash and Dash:** A touch and go landing.
- **Cubit:** Colonial unit of currency.
- **Cut and Run:** To leave quickly.
- **Deck:** The floor of a vessel.

- **Deflection:** A measure of angle between one's aircraft and the opponent, or the amount of lead necessary to hit a crossing target.
- **Dress and Cover:** Order to form a certain rank-and-file formation. Derived from "dress right" and "cover down."
- **Dress Right:** A military formation where everyone lines up with the person to his right.
- **DSCT (dissimilar space combat training):** Space combat maneuvers conducted between craft of different types, such as between a Viper and a Raptor.
- **DC (damage control):** Emergency response to hazards aboard a vessel.
- **DCA (Damage Control Assistant):** A position responsible for damage control and stability of a ship. Reports to the Chief Engineer.
- **DFP (defensive fighting position):** Any position taken by a person or ship that gives it a defensive advantage in combat.
- **DIS (dead in space):** A space-going vessel that has lost all propulsion capabilities.
- **DRADIS (direction, range, and distance):** Hardware in a space vessel that indicates the location of other craft and objects in the area.
- **ECO (Electronic Countermeasures Officer):** The officer responsible for operating the electronic countermeasures, computer, and scanning/detection equipment on a vessel, such as a Raptor. ECOs are also fully qualified to fly a Raptor if the pilot is incapacitated or rendered incapable of flying.
- **Ell-tee:** Phonetic pronunciation of "Lt.," an accepted slang when referring to most lieutenants
- **EMI (electromagnetic interference):** Electromagnetic radiation that interrupts, obstructs, or otherwise degrades or limits the effective performance of electronics. Can be created intentionally, as with some forms of electronic warfare; can be an after-effect of a nuclear explosion; or can be encountered naturally, as with certain astral bodies such as binary stars and the gas giant Ragnar. Also refers to EMI (Extra Military Instruction)—punishment duties also intended to improve the assignee's military knowledge.
- **EMP (electromagnetic pulse):** A concentrated blast of electromagnetic interference.
- **EOD (explosives ordnance disposal):** Military demolitions and explosives experts.
- **Field Day:** To thoroughly clean an area of a ship. "The chief made me field day his office for being late to formation this morning."
- **FIFI (frak it, fly it):** Spoken by maintenance personnel when they can't find the solution to what they hope proves to be only a minor problem. Not ideal but there's never enough time in combat to get everything perfect.
- **Fire Team:** A small unit of armed military personnel, typically marines or security forces.
- **Five-'Graph Order (five-paragraph operation order):** A basic command tool taught to officer candidates.
- **FOD (foreign object damage/debris):** Any object which might be sucked into, and thereby damage, a small craft engine.
- **Frak:** An expletive.
- **Freight monkey:** Term for crewmen on Colonial freighters.
- **FTL (faster than light):** Interstellar propulsion used by both the Cylons and the human fleet.
- **FUBAR (frakked up beyond all recognition):** An expletive, often used for an ops gone sour. Pronounced "FU-bar."
- **Fumarella Leaf:** The valued part of the fumarella plant used for smoking or chewing.
- **G-4 (Grade 4):** A type of military-grade explosive.
- **Geedunk:** Candy or sweets.
- **Genny:** Power generator.

- **GMT (general military training):** Non-specific training on military matters.
- **GQ (general quarters):** The call for all hands to man battle stations.
- **Gripe:** A operational discrepancy on a small craft noted for maintenance action.
- **Grunt:** Nickname for a marine.
- **Gunny:** A marine Gunnery Sergeant.
- **Hard Six:** Taking large risks. Derived from rolling two 3s on a pair of six-sided dice (a 1-in-36 chance).
- **Hardpoint:** Location(s) on a Viper or other military vehicle where weapons are hung, mounted, or stored.
- **HAZMAT (hazardous material):** Any solid, liquid, or gas that can harm people, other living organisms, property, or the environment. Pronounced “HAZ-mat.”
- **Heavy:** Used to signify a civilian transport vessel over a certain gross weight/mass. For example, Colonial Heavy 798.
- **Hot Rack:** The sharing of bunks due to lack of living space aboard a ship.
- **HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning):** The systems responsible for climate control and atmospheric ventilation on board a ship. Pronounced “H-vak”.
- **IFF (identification friend foe):** A system on board all military vessels that is used to positively identify all aircraft as either friend or enemy.
- **Illuminate:** Targeting an object with DRADIS, especially for weapons guidance purposes.
- **Illumination:** See Illuminate.
- **ILS (instrument landing system):** An instrument approach system that provides precise guidance to an aircraft when landing.
- **Jarhead:** Nickname for a marine, supposedly because of the “high-and-tight” haircut preferred by most grunts.
- **Joker:** Critically low fuel state.
- **Judy:** Wireless call signifying that the fighter has DRADIS contact on the bogey or bandit and can complete the intercept without further assistance from the controller.
- **KIA (killed in action):** A person killed in combat while fulfilling a military duty.
- **Klick:** One kilometer.
- **Knock It Off:** Wireless call to stop an ACM engagement, can be made for safety reasons, low fuel, or because an aircraft has met exercise kill criteria.
- **Knuckle Dragger:** Slang for any fletcher whose job takes more brawn than brains.
- **KP (kitchen patrol):** Military jargon summarizing the menial tasks required in a mess hall. It is widely regarded as the most abysmal work detail the military has to offer and often used as punishment for misbehavior or improper conduct.
- **Krypter:** Mayday—a call for help.
- **LOAC (law of armed conflict):** Law concerning acceptable practices while the Fleet is engaged in war.
- **LSO (landing signal officer):** The officer responsible for all flight operations on the flight pods of battlestars and other military vessels.
- **Make a Hole:** Get out of the way.
- **Mark One Eyeball:** Relying on the unaided eye rather than instrumentation for reconnaissance.
- **MIA (missing in action):** A person who has gone missing and cannot be confirmed dead while fulfilling a military duty.
- **Morpha:** A painkilling medication, included in all standard military medical kits.
- **Navigator:** Officer responsible for safe navigation of the ship.
- **NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical):** Designation for an accident or attack site indicating that

nuclear, biological, and chemical hazards are present.

- **NBCC (nuclear, biological, chemical, conventional):** Designation for an accident or attack site indicating that nuclear, biological, chemical, and conventional hazards are present.
- **NCO (non-commissioned officers):** Higher ranking enlisted personnel. Formed from pay grades E-4 to E-7.
- **NJP (non-judicial punishment):** Military discipline by commanding officers without a court martial.
- **No joy:** No success in establishing visual contact with a target. Can also mean no success in general.
- **Nugget:** A pilot in training.
- **OCS (Officer Candidate School):** A training school that must be completed by non-ROTC officer candidates before they are awarded a commission in the Fleet or Marine Corps.
- **Old Man:** Commanding Officer.
- **OOD (officer of the deck):** Stationed in CIC, the OOD is responsible for the navigation and safety of the ship when the CO is not present.
- **OPFOR (opposing force):** A military unit tasked with representing an enemy, usually for training purposes in war game scenarios.
- **OPSEC (operations security):** A methodology that denies critical information to an adversary. Unlike security programs that seek to protect classified information, OPSEC measures identify, control, and protect generally unclassified evidence that is associated with sensitive operations and activities.
- **Oscar Brothers:** The Commanding Officer and Executive Officer (CO and XO)
- **OSI (Office of Special Investigation):** See CFOSI.
- **PA (public affairs):** Military experts who liaison with the public.
- **PAR (post attack reconnaissance):** When practical, reconnaissance done after combat to attempt to learn more about the details or outcome of a particular engagement.
- **PDS (point defense system):** A weapon system using a high rate of fire to intercept and destroy projectiles and ships that approach too closely to a capital ship.
- **Pitch:** Movement of a ship or craft up or down about its transverse axis. The movement of the bow or nose up and down.
- **PFM (pure fracking magic):** A non-technical explanation for why something works.
- **Police:** Pick up or clean up. “Police the flight deck for FOD.”
- **POW (prisoner of war):** A person taken captive and held hostage by an enemy military force.
- **Press:** Continue the attack.
- **Pyramid:** A popular sport. Scoring occurs when the ball is tossed into a goal at the top of a pyramid-shaped court. Can be played one-on-one or with teams.
- **R&R (rest and relaxation):** Down time, off-duty time.
- **Rack:** Bed, especially the combination bed and locker that serves as enlisted sleeping accommodations on a Fleet vessel.
- **Rack Time:** Sleep.
- **Rank and File:** Term for a generic fletcher or marine in ranks.
- **Recovery Line:** The point at which it becomes unlikely that a smaller ship, such as a Viper or transport shuttle, will be able to safely return to base.
- **Red Line:** An imaginary sphere enclosing a vessel that denotes the maximum safe limit for an FTL jump. It is possible to exceed this limit, or go “beyond the red line,” the accuracy of jump plots beyond that point is severely degraded. A ship could easily materialize

within a stellar body or end up far off course.

- **RFN (right frakking now):** A command that must be followed immediately, if not sooner.
- **ROE (rules of engagement):** Rules determining when, where, and how deadly force can be used.
- **Roll:** Movement of a ship or craft about its lateral axis. The movement that tilts the deck from side to side.
- **Roll In On:** Aviation term referring to the initial maneuver of an attack.
- **Rook:** Rookie.
- **ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps):** An officer training program available to students interested in becoming Fleet and Marine Corps officers.
- **RTB (return to base):** A command to return to base. Usually said "Romeo Tango Bravo."
- **SAR (search and rescue):** Operations mounted by special military units to retrieve, rescue, and provide assistance to downed aircrews or allies behind enemy lines.
- **Serisone:** A medical drug injected in a patient to prevent fluid build-up in the lungs.
- **SCM (space combat maneuvers):** Maneuvers made by a combat spacecraft in order to attain a position from which an attack can be made on another spacecraft.
- **Scuttlebutt:** Drinking fountain. Also refers to gossip or rumors, originating from the habit of crewmembers of talking around the scuttlebutt.
- **Ship's Company:** Refers to the officers and enlisted assigned to a ship, separate from the Air Group that may be assigned to the same ship.
- **Sierra Alpha:** Phonetic alphabet reference for suspicious activity.
- **Sitrep (situation report):** A reference to one's current situation and activities.
- **Situational Awareness:** Awareness of one's surroundings, circumstances, and tactical situation. Loss of situational awareness is often fatal in combat, and can be fatal at other times as well.
- **Skids up:** Take off, or launch. Also a general term meaning that something is over, or its time to leave.
- **Skinjob:** A human-looking cylon.
- **Skosh:** Wireless code meaning out of ammunition
- **SNAFU (situation normal, all frakked up):** A reference to a particular situation. "What the hell do we do about this SNAFU?"
- **Snipe:** Ship's engineer.
- **SOP (standard operating procedure):** A set of guidelines outlining the steps and procedures taken in the every day execution of a job or position.
- **Sparrow:** A cylon raider.
- **Spinner:** Engineering component of an FTL drive.
- **Square Away:** Getting organized or ready for something. Usually required before an inspection, a drill, operation, or similar high pressure situation.
- **Stateroom:** The room in which an officer lives.
- **Stim:** A stimulant.
- **Stump:** A prisoner in a labor camp.
- **Swallow:** Decoy drone used to fool DRADIS or misdirect missiles.
- **Taggarizane Drops:** A mild, but addictive stimulant, taken in drink or rubbed on the skin. Also called Tagga and Heat. A more addictive derivative called Inferno produces more intense stimulation.
- **Tally:** The sighting of a target, non-friendly craft, landmark, or enemy position.
- **Tallyho:** See Tally.

- **Toaster:** A cylon.
- **Toaster Shopping:** Searching for and destroying cylons.
- **Trap:** Mechanism in a landing bay which arrests the forward motion of a small craft coming in to land.
- **Triad:** A bluffing card game in which players compete for the best combination of cards. The highest winning hand is “full colors.”
- **Two Alpha:** Designation for an extremely risky and voluntary mission.
- **Turkey:** A cylon heavy raider.
- **Tylium:** The mineral used to fuel the propulsion systems of Colonial and cylon spacecraft. Tylium ore is processed to make refined tylium (the fuel itself). Refined tylium precursor is more volatile than unrefined tylium.
- **Unrep (underway replenishment):** The replenishment of a ship’s supplies while still moving. Avoids time taken in a drydock.
- **Unsat:** Unsatisfactory.
- **UXO (unexploded ordnance):** Any deployed ordnance (bombs, grenades, land mines, etc.) that did not explode when they were employed and still pose a risk of detonation, potentially long after they were used or discarded.
- **Wardroom:** A compartment where the officers eat. May also be used for briefing and other meetings.
- **Weapons Free:** Command authorizing fighting personnel to arm and fire weapons.
- **Weapons Hot:** See Weapons Free.
- **Weapons Tight:** Command restricting fighting personnel from arming and firing weapons.
- **Wilco:** Will comply.
- **Wireless:** Short- to medium-range electromagnetic communications from ship to ship, or ship to planet. Also refers to the device used to pick up wireless broadcasts.
- **Yaw:** Movement of a ship or craft on a horizontal plane about its vertical axis.
- **XO (executive officer):** Second-in-command aboard a ship.
- **Zero:** Derogatory term for officer, derived from the “O” in the paygrade designation.
- **Ziplip:** Operations conducted under wireless silence.







NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CALL SIGN: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PLANET: \_\_\_\_\_

CONCEPT: \_\_\_\_\_ PLAYER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH: \_\_\_\_\_

AGILITY: \_\_\_\_\_

VITALITY: \_\_\_\_\_

ALERTNESS: \_\_\_\_\_

INTELLIGENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

WILLPOWER: \_\_\_\_\_

### DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

LIFE POINTS (VIT+WIL): \_\_\_\_\_

INITIATIVE (AGI+ALE): \_\_\_\_\_

ENDURANCE (VIT+WIL): \_\_\_\_\_

RESISTANCE (VIT+VIT): \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTION DIFFICULTY

**Action Diff / Extraordinary**

Easy 3 / 10

Average 7 / 14

Hard 11 / 18

Formidable 15 / 22

Heroic 19 / 26

Incredible 23 / 30

Ridiculous 27 / 34

Impossible 31 / 38

### ADVANCEMENT

Advancement Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Attribute Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Skill Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Trait Points: \_\_\_\_\_

### ADVANCEMENT COST

**Type Cost**

Attribute 8

Trait 7

Skill 3

### SKILLS AND SPECIALTIES

Animal Handling \_\_\_\_\_ Medical Expertise \_\_\_\_\_

Artistry \_\_\_\_\_ Melee Wpn Combat \_\_\_\_\_

Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ Perception \_\_\_\_\_

Covert \_\_\_\_\_ Performance \_\_\_\_\_

Craft \_\_\_\_\_ Pilot\* \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_ Planetary Vehicles \_\_\_\_\_

Guns \_\_\_\_\_ Ranged Weapons \_\_\_\_\_

Heavy Weapons \_\_\_\_\_ Scientific Expertise \_\_\_\_\_

Influence \_\_\_\_\_ Survival \_\_\_\_\_

Knowledge \_\_\_\_\_ Technical Eng.\* \_\_\_\_\_

Mechanical Eng\* \_\_\_\_\_ Unarmed Combat \_\_\_\_\_

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# BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

—ROLE PLAYING GAME—

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WRITTEN AND DESIGNED BY JAMIE CHAMBERS,  
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