

Blood of Pangea
RETROSPACE

A PULP SCIENCE FICTION EXPANSION
BY
JAMES & ROBYN GEORGE



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Dice
House
Rules

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Electronic Edition

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For Robyn, who thankfully is
in my future, and to our beloved mother,
Mia Inez Archer (1930-2015), who
loved the stars and all residing there

Cover and interior art
from *Danger in Deep Space*, illustrated
by Louis Glanzman and now,
quite luckily, in the Public Domain

With many heartfelt thanks
to the Google+ community, Bill Lackey
and Mike Hill for their superb
editorial skills, and anyone else
who delights in the thrilling
spectacle of human history and progress!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1	ENGAGEMENT.....	10
MODES OF PLAY.....	1	A SAMPLE ENCOUNTER.....	10
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK...	1	BOARDING PARTIES.....	11
SPACEMEN.....	3	ASTEROID FIELDS.....	11
BIRTH.....	3	REPAIR DROIDS.....	12
ALLEGIANCE.....	3	PSYCHIC ABILITIES.....	12
SPECIES.....	4	PSIONICS.....	12
NARRATIVES.....	4	PLANETFALL.....	13
MONEY AND EQUIPMENT...	6	DEEP SPACE.....	13
A SAMPLE CHARACTER.....	8	THE LIVING WORLDS.....	13
LIFTOFF.....	9	ALIEN LIFE.....	15
SPACE COMBAT.....	9	POLITICS.....	16
ABOVE AND BELOW.....	9	LANGUAGES SPOKEN.....	16
APPENDIX I: CYBORGS AND PSIONS.....			17
APPENDIX II: VARIANT SPECIES.....			20
APPENDIX III: THE UNIVERSAL TIMELINE.....			24

INTRODUCTION

While sword and sorcery was popular among pulp enthusiasts, it was science fiction that ruled the genre. These stories imagined futuristic worlds where man had reached out to the stars and the stars responded, often with violence! Retrospace is a Blood of Pangea expansion that aims to recreate pulp adventures in this style...

Retrospace requires Blood of Pangea to play, adding new rules and additional content, including playable alien races, robots, and special rules for epic battles in deep space.

Like sword and sorcery, pulp science fiction was a human genre that imagined new heights of technological advancement safe in the knowledge that mankind was up to the task. These were thrilling, action-packed adventures that emphasized heroics as much as hard science, with strange creatures on par with the beasts of mythology!

MODES OF PLAY

Science fiction is a broad genre, and there is really no wrong way to approach a campaign. Most of the time, however, these will fall into one of the following (negotiable) categories:

FUTURISTIC campaigns are set in Earth's own future. The judge can imagine a so-called "realistic" setting with no aliens and whatever story elements seem appropriate to the milieu selected.

Alternately, humans have made contact with various alien species and established a **GALACTIC FEDERATION**. The emphasis here is still on science and exploration, although virtually anything can happen.

SPACE OPERA also imagines a vast, inhabited universe, although one set elsewhere and divorced from history. The feeling and style of such campaigns is more akin to true fantasy, although science and technology still figure prominently within its implied setting.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Except where noted (there are many new rules), all actions are resolved using Blood of Pangea and with the same basic assumptions.

As written, player characters are ordinary men and women, even the otherwise alien races, who may fight and/or attempt any action normally available to an able-bodied adult. Furthermore, they can pilot vessels built for deep space, opening up the farthest corners of the universe and going where earthbound souls can only dream. The cosmos awaits...

While the character's narrative will doubtless contain many skills, certain ones require additional explanation and/or rules for how they work in the course of an adventure game:

SKILL	NOTES
Hacker	database access, system override
Mechanic	--
-Droid	repair, maintain simple droids*
-Vessel	both space/terrestrial based*
Partisan	familiar with interplanetary law
Robotics	medical treatment for cyborgs#
Scientist	--
-Biology	identify extraterrestrial life
-Botany	detect edible/poisonous flora
-Genetics	recognize alterations, mutation
-Geology	assess ground/terrain hazards
Medicine	make diagnosis, render first aid#

*Droids/vessels repaired at half price

#Wounded heal +1 LIFE per day of treatment

Technology demands that medical and/or repair skills be available, although, per the rules, qualified characters may only speed healing and must still roll for all attempts per the judge.

Narratives must include name, race, and gender, as Retrospace offers several alien races (referred to as species), each having their own unique powers and abilities. Simply citing species is enough to enjoy the applicable powers, subject to whatever rules may apply, although this is unnecessary in a speculative (historical) setting...

All characters are adventurers or thieves, regardless of the species otherwise chosen. Sorcery is not available in a science fiction setting, although psychic disciplines (psionics) can easily substitute, subject to these rules and the dictates of the judge, noting here that such abilities must be written into the character's narrative.

Finally, MIGHT is renamed LIFE, for although sci-fi can be heroic, characters may be scientists or other non-combat specialists, reflecting the genre at its best. Furthermore, LIFE can be spent to improve any sufficiently difficult action and not just physical ones.

Pulp science fiction is an exciting genre that combines rollicking adventure with complex cosmology. These rules allow the judge to create thrilling narratives in a universe where new worlds await discovery, complete with strange alien civilizations and lost technology set against the intrigues (and politics) of a vast interplanetary setting...

I. SPACEMEN

As previously explained, character creation follows Blood of Pangea, introducing new rules and content as befits a thriving universe having many alien races inhabiting endless worlds...

BIRTH

The conditions of birth matter greatly, and those born and otherwise raised on a single world are called PLANETBORN, adding +1 when reciting facts about their home planet. Anyone born in space, whether on some colony or vessel, is considered SPACEBORN and knows a third language as befits the specifics of the judge's game.

ALLEGIANCE

Broadly speaking, characters fall into the following basic social groups, although more are possible and highly encouraged:

CORPORATES are aligned with some commercial interest, but given much freedom to travel and adventure. For instance, prospectors or surveyors under contract to explore new planets, etc.

FREEBOOTERS constitute the majority of characters; often, wanderers seeking fame and fortune. Being unbound by social obligations, they can generally come and go as they please, making them flexible.

GANGSTERS are criminals acting outside Universal law, whether being associated with a syndicate or acting alone. These may or may not have a bounty on their heads, making for great adventures!

Obviously, allegiances may shift during play, and this element of narrative role-playing is encouraged because it emphasizes storytelling and ensures more dynamic characters. Note, however, that doing so is potentially dangerous, especially when attempting to escape a former life of crime (perhaps as a smuggler or thief) per the desired campaign...



SPECIES

This game imagines an inhabited universe with several prominent and highly intelligent races, each having their own unique culture, history, and abilities within its imaginary setting:

SPECIES	ABILITIES	NOTES
Aturan	camouflage	martial reptilian people
Cyborg	repair	not a true species; enhanced
Ordian	strength	strong ursine humanoids
Sirian	mind reading	psychically gifted alien race
Terran	cleverness	anatomically human; common

ATURANS are humanoid reptiles. As a species, they are aggressive, but with a peculiar code of honor such that they can generally get along with other races and peoples. If unarmored and remaining completely still, they can blend in perfectly with their background (challenging), although potentially visible to thermal sensing devices.

CYBORGS do not constitute a separate species. Instead, they are part living (Terran) and part machine. Owing to special programming, cyborgs can instantly restore 2 points of LIFE once per game day, making them excellent guards and/or mercenaries, etc.

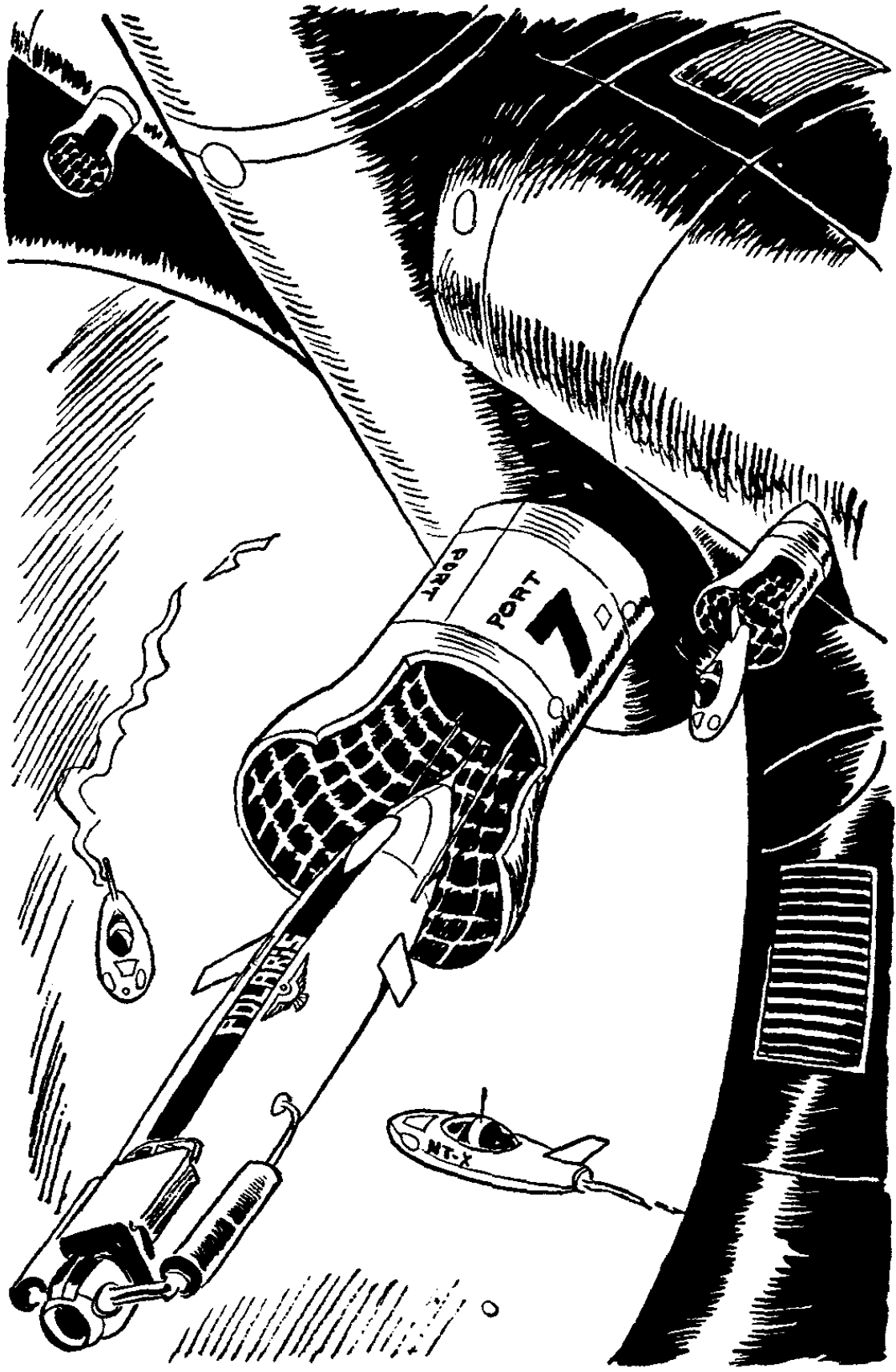
ORDIANS are a vaguely ursine race, standing 6' tall and having double human strength. Accordingly, they add +1 to all related actions and prefer their claws in close quarters. Ordians can only speak their own guttural tongue, but may learn and comprehend others.

SIRIANS are slender, graceful humanoids; hairless, and with enormous and/or elongated skulls. A psychically talented species, they can perceive hidden minds within 30' and read surface thoughts in a 5' radius; the latter, being draining, but once per game day.

TERRANS are human, although spread across many worlds and taking a prominent role in politics. Given their (extraordinary) cleverness and greater adaptability, they obtain LIFE faster (5 EXP) and add +1 to all experience earned. Note that while most cyborgs are Terran, they forfeit the above benefits in exchange for self-repair abilities.

NARRATIVES

Once again, a character's race (species) must be included in their personal narrative, noting here that just doing so is enough to possess the above-listed racial abilities. Otherwise, all characters speak a native (planetary) tongue and the UNIVERSAL STANDARD; a created language popular among diplomats, merchants, and interstellar travelers.



MONEY AND EQUIPMENT

Universal credits (CT) are the monetary standard here, noting that a futuristic setting will include many special items with specified values as per the following equipment table:

ARMOR	COST (CT)	NOTES
Archaic	10	medieval and/or industrial types
Field	20	generates a local force field
Synthetic	15	advanced high-impact polymers, etc.
ROBOTICS	--	--
Droid, archive	1,000	reference/information storage
Droid, combat	2,500	bodyguard robot with mounted laser
SUPPLIES	--	--
Radio	25	enables communication over 1 mile
Rations	5	nutritious gel/pills for 1 week
Space suit	500	allows survival in vacuum of space
VEHICLES	--	--
Cargo, small	15,000	transports 6 and 10,000 lb payload
Darter	7,500	small, single-person spacecraft
Payload, large	25,000	crew of 12 with 20,000 lbs of cargo
Speeder	750	levitating vehicle for 6 persons
WEAPONRY	--	--
Archaic	10	often medieval/pre-industrial
Blaster	varies	hand-held laser or proton firearms
Energy/field	20	phase blades; functionally archaic

ARCHAIC armors correspond to those up to the 20th century, although primitive worlds, like Sirius, use leather. FIELD armors generate a very close (assume 1 inch) force field around the wearer, while SYNTHETIC or polymer ones use a tough, but flexible, plating.

ROBOTS (or droids) are short (3' tall) and either spherical or square, moving 20' per round with their tractor-like wheels. ARCHIVE droids can recall facts about the campaign (+2 doing so), but possess no offensive capability. COMBAT droids are equipped with special lasers for protection within a limited (30') radius/180 degrees:

DROID*	LIFE	NOTES
Archive/protocol	5	add +2 when recalling information
Combat/protection	10	lasers scan targets to 30'/180 degrees

*Droids cannot heal; repair cost is 10 CT per point of LIFE

Other droids and/or robots may exist, although these should go beyond anything the players can obtain. The working droids possess near-human intelligence and communicate in beeps that count as a language.

VEHICLES include CARGO vessels made for interplanetary travel, the maneuverable (single-passenger) DARTER, and PAYLOAD ships known to most traders and smugglers, etc. The common SPEEDER is otherwise a simple ground vehicle used on many worlds:

VEHICLE	MOVEMENT/SPEED
Cargo	2d6 days between worlds
Darter	deploys from a carrier/warship*
Payload	1d6+1 days between planets
Speeder	300' per round over most terrain

*Carriers/warships move as payload

ARCHAIC weapons include variant medieval/primitive arms as per the basic rulebook. BLASTERS are small energy generators that do not employ rounds or other ammunition, including pistols, etc. ENERGY weapons approximate archaic, but use focused beams to form their blade, like the legendary burn swords of the Sirians, etc.

WEAPON	RANGE	COST (CT)
Blaster	30'	10
Blaster rifle*	60'	15
Plasma repeater*	120'	30
Power grenade#	30'	150
Timed bomb#	90' radius	300

*Assume two-handed with no shield use

#Deal 2d6 damage; bombs detonate on a timer

As always, characters begin having supplies and money per the basic rulebook and may further equip themselves, funds otherwise permitting, with inputs from the judge as suits their campaign.

Once again, valuable and useful equipment can be won and/or seized during adventures. In fact, salvage might be a huge motivator for those risking life and limb in space, as scrap is highly sought after!



Players should be allowed to develop characters as they wish, although with input from the judge. Even so, adventurous types can choose to roll on the following character generation table:

1d6	BIRTH	1d6	ALLEGIANCE	2d6	SPECIES
1-2	Planetborn	1-2	Corporate	2	Aturan
3-6	Spaceborn*	3-4	Freebooter	3	Cyborg
--	--	5-6	Gangster	4	Ordian
--	--	--	--	5	Sirian
--	--	--	--	6-12	Terran#

*All characters know the Universal Standard

#Players can choose Terran, ignoring all results

Note here that the player must still compose an original narrative, with campaign-specific inputs from the judge.

A SAMPLE CHARACTER

The following sample character is the kind of adventurer who risks their life exploring the galaxy for fun and hard-won profit:

NAME: Mack Marack SEX: male

BIRTH: spaceborn (colonist)

CLASS: thief SPECIES: Terran

ALLEGIANCE: freebooter LIFE: 10

NARRATIVE: Mack Marack is a smuggler-turned-relic hunter who is also knowledgeable in cosmic history and spacecraft repair as befits his trade. He is a charming scoundrel and fast talker.

LANGUAGES: Droid, Terran, Universal

EQUIPMENT: archaic knife, blaster, flashlight, pack, rations

EXPERIENCE: 0 TREASURE: 2 CT

Assuming he survives his adventures, Mack will acquire new and more powerful tech, not to mention money and experience, aiding survivability in general (adding LIFE) and/or learning additional languages!

II. LIFTOFF

Task resolution, including combat, mirrors Blood of Pangea, but with the following additional rules and provisions...

SPACE COMBAT

Occasionally, the characters may engage in ship-to-ship combat. For instance, a small cargo under attack from pirates or enforcement vessels when playing gangster types. When this happens (and players can be the aggressor here), observe the following:

(1) Play follows a modified scale where 1 inch equals a SECTOR.

(2) Ships enjoy movement per round as follows:

VESSEL	SECTORS	NOTES
Cargo	3	also, research vessels, etc.
Carrier*	1	includes small military ships
Darter	5	fighters; carrier launched
Payload	4	merchant and/or trade vessels
Warship#	2	combat platforms; spacebound

*Carries 50-100 men/100,000 lbs cargo

#Spacebound; holds 1-300 troops/500,000 lbs

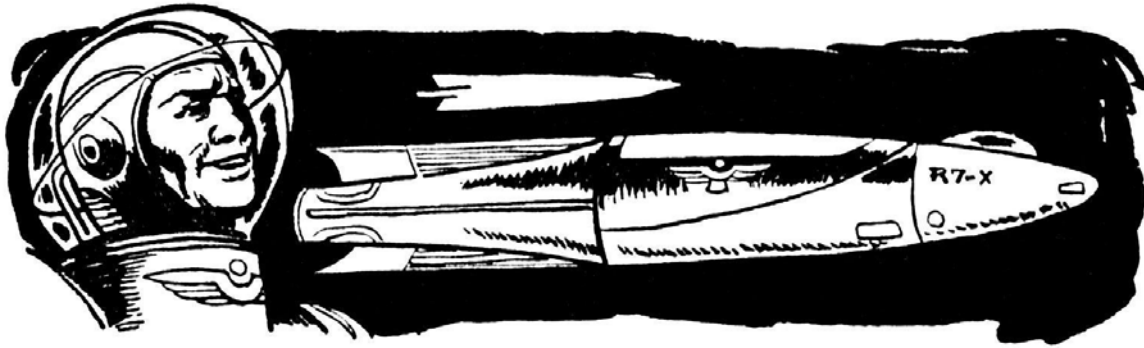
(3) Vessels have guns, whether (360 degree) mounted lasers and/or manned turrets or similar armaments as per the following:

VESSEL	RANGE (SECTORS)	FIRE (DEGREES)
Cargo	3	120
Carrier	7	180
Darter	2	60
Payload	5	120
Warship	10	360

Assume the maximum turning radius is 60 degrees (hexagonal playing surfaces help here) per sector, and that vessels must move ahead 1 sector when changing course and/or turning to re-engage, etc.

ABOVE AND BELOW

Interstellar combat is three-dimensional, and for greater ease, the weightlessness of space means that position is relative and everything evens out, so fighting occurs on a flat surface. This is simpler and reflects the fact that up and down are meaningless in outer space, noting that the judge can always devise their own unique house rules!



ENGAGEMENT

Combat uses Blood of Pangea, with all ships considered daunting when resolving combat, etc. Furthermore, battle-ready vessels have structural points that approximate LIFE in deep space:

VESSEL	STRUCTURE
Cargo	9 hits
Carrier	11 hits
Darter	8 hits
Payload	10 hits
Warship	12 hits

Note that ship combat operates on a different scale such that even a single structural hit represents 30-50 personal LIFE. Any vessel reduced to less than 3 hits is crippled (no movement or weaponry) and subject to boarding or eventual destruction...

A SAMPLE ENCOUNTER

The party's merchant cargo vessel (9 hits) is attacked by pirates in a payload ship (10 hits), and the first combat round begins. Initiative is rolled and the attackers win, moving a full 4 sectors and just barely coming within 120 degrees to shoot. The judge rolls a 10, hitting the ship for 1 point of structural damage to an exposed side.

Now the players can act. Since the whole party is inside, one person rolls for the ship, getting 12 and scoring 2 structural hits. The pirates, sensing that the advantage is lost, retreat at full speed, leaving the victorious party to continue in peace, although things might have ended differently with better luck and/or strategy.

Vessels reduced to zero (or fewer) structural hits are fully destroyed, although some useful salvage can remain. Short of this, individual passengers might be injured depending on their position(s) within the ship and/or the conditions of battle, subject always to the judge...

BOARDING PARTIES

Most inter-vessel communication is accomplished via radio or video transmission, with boarding activity carried out through the following methods, subject to conditions per the judge:

AIRLOCKS may be accessed by physically docking two compatible ships, normally from the same fleet or home world, like Ordian trade vessels or the Universal Alliance, etc. This requires 2d6 rounds to complete, with another 1d6 spent overriding security.

SPACEWALKS can also be used to access a vessel, although this is less efficient and fraught with peril. Except for certain species, boarding parties must employ space suits and be tethered (whether to the ship or their friends) to avoid being cast adrift in the weightless void of space; something the defenders will try to make happen!

Note here that all movement is made at 10', with just 3 hours of oxygen available (less in combat). Optionally, some suits come equipped with rockets for directional power, although these cost double and carry half the oxygen as per conditions and the judge...

TELEPORTERS are only available on more advanced ships, like Alliance vessels or military cruisers, etc. These instantly transport up to 6 men and their (worn/carried) personal effects aboard any adjacent ship or even the surface of a nearby planet, noting here that unwilling vessels still require 1d6 rounds to hack any onboard security.

Larger ships normally have ESCAPE PODS capable of bearing evacuees safely to any nearby world. These always have enough to accommodate the maximum crew and require 1d6 rounds to deploy:

VESSEL	BOARDING	ESCAPE PODS
Cargo	airlock	6
Carrier	teleporter	100
Payload	airlock	12
Warship	teleporter	300

Note that carriers/warships may also deploy smaller ships.

ASTEROID FIELDS

Debris is a constant hazard in space, and large asteroid belts are a particular threat. These may cover up to several hundred square sectors and require good piloting to safely cross. For simplicity, one player rolls once each round as daunting (adding +1 for trained characters) with failure dealing 1 structural hit to the affected ship or vessel...

REPAIR DROIDS

Onboard REPAIR DROIDS restore 1 structural hit per week. Otherwise, repair cost is always 10-20% of the ship's total value based on the extent of damage done. These come with the vessel.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES

Sirians are naturally psychic, although this rarely exhibits itself beyond their customary mind-reading abilities. Even so, there are some, about 10-20% of the total population, who possess greater power, called the OVERMIND, first mastered by the teacher KENUBA.

Psychic abilities are less common among other races, although with the right training, might be awakened. Such individuals are typically non-player characters, although the judge can always make exceptions for characters who join the Psion Order later on.

PSIONICS

Established long before the first off-world contact, the PSIONS were formerly a Sirian religious order founded by Kenuba as a means to bring peace to the war-torn planet. It is now open to any having the proper abilities, evolving over time into a semi-knightly order dedicated to the preservation and right use of psionics.

Those who join the Psion Order lose all species-related abilities, including the known Sirian power to detect minds, although they can now spend LIFE to work the following PSIONIC DISCIPLINES:

DISCIPLINE	NOTES
Delay/distract	mental illusions/thought control*
Read thoughts	briefly detect surface thoughts
Telekinetic lift	expend 1 LIFE per 10 lbs manipulated#

*Counter-spell rules apply between psychic targets

#Targets so influenced never move fast enough to injure

Once again, Psions forfeit all other species-related abilities, cannot employ armor and shield, or use blasters, etc. They are normally limited to archaic weaponry or energy/field arms that approximate the archaic style and function. Psionic abilities otherwise follow the sorcery rules with respect to duration, range, and/or LIFE cost to use.

Note here that psychic ability (but never individual powers) must be included in the narrative, like sorcery. Otherwise, characters who later join the Psion Order must spend 7 EXP and seek proper training...

III. PLANETFALL

Some knowledge of the setting might be helpful to start, although individual judges can add more. The idea here is that of an inhabited and heavily populated universe where many intelligent races trade, negotiate, and make war over territory and resources, using a galactic alliance as cover for their varied ambitions...

DEEP SPACE

The following worlds, or something like them, can be inserted into whatever the judge prefers, noting here that these may have any number of colonies with many local sub-species.

THE LIVING WORLDS

There are four primary planets, with as many secondary worlds (claimed, colonized, or otherwise) as the judge so requires:

ATURA orbits a great lifeless rock (the Ice Giant). Curiously, it is a jungle world, having deep forests and primordial swamps filled with terrifying carnivores. The Aturans have preserved a traditional way of life centered around hunting and a tribal code of honor while having highly advanced technology at their disposal.

ORDIA is cold in its mid-latitudes, with a tropical belt at the equator allowing for the evolution of the Ordian race. It was the frozen wastes that made them strong, however, and forged them into a technological powerhouse of the Alliance. Trade is central to Ordian culture, with the merchant guilds controlling the flow of vital goods.

SIRIUS lies in orbit around a great sun, such that it is a desert world formerly occupied by nomads. It was only when their great teacher, Kenuba, taught them to tap their innate psychic powers that they overcame their warlike nature and began to truly thrive, reaching out to other worlds and establishing the first truly enduring alliances.

TERRA is an Earth-like planet and first home to humanity, although curiosity has since taken them to other worlds. It has a history roughly analogous to that of Earth, with many of the same problems, even as it embraces life among the stars. Terrans were among the first to join the new Universal Alliance, although participation varies.

Once again, these races may be spread across multiple worlds, with an infinite number of local variants per the judge. Populating a universe, complete with original cultures and histories, is beyond the scope of a single rulebook, but doing so is both challenging and rewarding.



ALIEN LIFE

There are many worlds, and it would be impossible to sample even a portion of life in the universe. Nonetheless, the following basic types may serve as a useful guide to follow:

NAME	LIFE	MOVE	DAMAGE/BONUS*
Hunter	5-10	50'	bite, claws, or talons (+2)
Id	10	20'	energy, naturally psychic (+1)
Orchid	15	--	many poisonous spores (1d6)
Parasite	--	--	varies by life stage as shown
Mutant	1-5	40'	bite, 2 claws, weaponry (varies)
Sapient	5-10	50'	lasers, assorted arms (varies)
Shape-shifter	10	--	based on current shape (varies)
Trampler	10-20	40'	crush, stampede, trample (+3)

*Roll once, split between multiple targets within range

HUNTERS are fast, agile carnivores. They employ speed and will move in large packs to maximize their terrible efficiency.

IDS include any number of energy beings capable of using psionic disciplines without spending any LIFE doing so, being highly intelligent and communicating on a different level.

ORCHIDS are immobile plants that can grow quite large, extending their reach out to 30' and delivering a 1d6+1 poison.

PARASITES move freely between worlds, usually travelling within an unsuspecting host organism. These move quickly through multiple forms, spending 1d6 days in each stage of the early life cycle:

AGE	LIFE	MOVE	DAMAGE/BONUS	NOTES
Larvae	5	20'	minor bite (+0)	spider or insect-like
Young	10	30'	bite, 2 claws (+1)	man-sized; vaguely insectoid
Mature	20	50'	bite, 2 claws (+2)	larger (6' tall), lays eggs

MUTANTS are Terrans (humans) twisted by radiation. They are essentially feral, mindlessly prowling the ruins of their former homes.

SAPIENTS include any intelligent and self-aware androids showing the full range of human motivations. They employ lasers (30' range), whether specially mounted or the standard (hand-held) variety.

SHAPE-SHIFTERS are rarely seen in their true form; assuming, at will, anything they have previously been exposed to. They are otherwise of low intelligence, acting as stealthy (and terrifying) ambush hunters.

TRAMPLERS can be found on many planets, being large and normally herbivorous. These typically move in herds and are very easily spooked, stampeding all who lie in their destructive path.

It is assumed that the judge will add additional life forms, per the campaign desired, in accordance with their inspirations (there are many to choose from) and/or the above offerings.

POLITICS

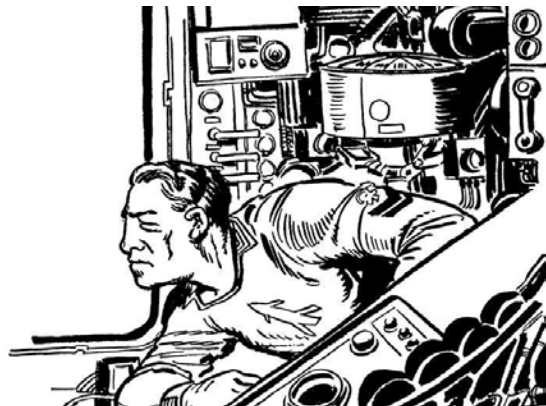
The UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE is a loose confederation of worlds based on peaceful trade and cooperation. Member governments keep their political independence, however, and there is much intrigue as special interests jostle for power and influence with the ruling Council.

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

Assume that characters speak their native tongue and the Universal variant adopted out of convenience (Terrans might know a regional/state language, especially in a more historical setting):

LANGUAGE	NOTES
Atur (Aturan)	hissing language, employs gestures
Droid (any)	beeps and pings from droids, etc.
Ilithi (Sirian)	melodic language similar to poetry
M'waar (Ordian)	only Ordians can actually utter this
Terran	--
Terrestrial	humans also have a "racial" tongue
Universal standard	pidgin language known by travelers

Once again, there is a wealth of literature and media for the judge to draw inspiration from, and this will always be better than anything one rulebook could possibly deliver. Nonetheless, this booklet provides a starting point and draws from some of the finest traditions of the genre, although there is nothing here the judge cannot make better...



APPENDIX I: CYBORGS AND PSIONS

Most Psions will be non-players, although judges might allow player characters as well, subject to the previously stated rules and the details of the individual campaign. Such characters, if allowed, have a unique allegiance referred to simply as the "Psion Order" and enjoy both special friends and powerful enemies when doing so...

THE PSION ORDER

All such characters, player or otherwise, are subject to the aims and teachings of FIRST MASTER KENUBA, emphasizing spiritual enlightenment and peaceful negotiation. Despite this pacifism, they will fearlessly defend themselves and aggressively seek out those doing violence against the innocent, being skilled fighters.

Most Psions are free agents or PSION RANGERS, who either travel the universe or settle on a single world, taking orders from their leaders when the need arises. This results in a vast network of non-player psychics who can be useful when constructing adventures and/or helping advance a current scenario as the judge so requires.

The COUNCIL OF MASTERS comprises the leadership of the Order, being scattered across many worlds and remaining in contact telepathically or through an exclusive form of psychic ASTRAL PROJECTION that enables interstellar communication. Masters are always non-players and never met personally except under great duress.

Psion Rangers might call upon their leaders for advice in critical situations, although response time will vary by the Master's location and the urgency of the situation. This is left to the judge:

LOCATION	RESULT
Same planet	astral contact in 1-2 days
Off-world	1d6+1 day response time
Remote galaxy	full contact after 1d6 weeks*

*May send local (nearby) Psion Ranger instead

Note that such contact lasts only long enough to answer a single question or deliver necessary instructions per the judge.

Masters have 20-30 LIFE and may perform any psionic power without spending this except when affecting multiple targets or telepathically manipulating more than 10 pounds. They are otherwise skilled in the wielding of Sirian burn swords and similar weaponry, although most avoid hostilities unless cornered or against the most heinous of foes.

No player character should ever ascend to the rank of Master without voluntarily leaving the game, although the judge can make exceptions if their campaign supports it. Nonetheless, Psion Rangers might rise to considerable prominence locally, especially when they intervene against hated enemies and for the collective good...

LEAVING THE ORDER

Rangers can, judge permitting, choose to leave the Order, although efforts will be made to retain them. These are officially retired and unable to call upon the Masters for advice or aid unless some great catastrophe somehow threatens the Psions and/or the common good, noting here that the Order may reach out first!

Occasionally, a Psion goes bad and must be removed from the Order, typically by use of force, although reasonable efforts will be made at rehabilitation first. In most cases, first offenders are warned and assigned some useful errand to show contrition and right whatever wrong was done, subject to conditions and/or the judge:

OFFENSE	PENALTY
First/minor	corrective errand
Second or violent	incarceration*
Third violation	removed from Order#

*On Sirius and under heavy guard

#Possible execution for violent crimes

Note here that retired Psions who stray will face justice...

BURN SWORDS

The Sirian BURN SWORD is an energy weapon using focused lasers to produce the blade. In the hands of a Psion Ranger, any blow that would otherwise kill may sever limbs instead, this being much less violent since the wound is cauterized and the target remains alive, but crippled, noting here that medical treatment is possible:

2d6	LIMB	ZERO LIFE AND...
2-8	--	death results (no severed limbs)
9-11	Arm/hand	attacks rendered impossible*
12	Leg(s)	hobbled; crawl slowly (10' per round)

*Loss of dominant hand 1-3 in 1d6 of the time

Severed limbs can be replaced using robotic parts (500 CT) or Terran cloning science (1,500 CT) that takes 1d6+1 days to successfully complete...

Note that characters having mechanical parts do not become cyborgs, although there is a 1 in 1d6 chance that severely injured ones may need a robotics specialist to recover. This requires that a qualified expert be located at a cost of 10 CT per LIFE restored...

Optionally, those with three or more robotic limbs may become cyborgs having all the previously stated abilities (and limitations) appropriate to that racial choice. If this seems unrealistic, consider that the neural implants required supersede all forms of psionic projection, making this rare among the Sirians and Psions alike.

SAPIENT ANDROIDS

Alternately, characters who die by normal means (not burn swords) may become sapient ANDROIDS. This assumes a brain and central nervous system within an advanced artificial body. These are typically humanoid and capable of normal healing, but not the self-repair function of the cyborg species. Sapients include the following:

PROGRAMMING	NOTES
Auditory circuit	high/low frequency hearing*
Optical implant	infrared/night vision*
Personal weaponry	ranged attack (30'), normal damage#

*Add +1 to party initiative, where applicable

#Mounted laser, may produce non-lethal force bolts

The body must be recovered within 1d6 hours and delivered to a fully equipped specialist. Cost is 5,000 CT and requires 1d6 weeks, noting here that all previous abilities are lost in the process.

THE SIRIAN CULT

Sirius was a hostile planet, and even as Kenuba was founding an order based on discipline and restraint, a rival cult of wicked Psions appeared under the leadership of SIMARON KLAKISH and his students:

The SIRIAN CULT embraces ambition and selfish desire as a means to personal power, viewing psychic abilities as a weapon and ruling through manipulation and fear. Otherwise, the Cult is organized much like the Psion Order, albeit with more intrigue and betrayal.

Cultists are psionics with all the same abilities, although some judges might allow them to inflict actual harm (a psychic blast) per the so-called true sorcery from the basic rules. The Cult aggressively seeks former members of the Psion Order for recruitment and might become hostile when refused, lest anyone think they can leave without consequence!

APPENDIX II: VARIANT SPECIES

Once again, the judge might wish to include variant species, whether products of colonization, divergent evolution, or an ancient panspermia event that spread these genes across entire galaxies. Indeed, having many intelligent races works especially well for space opera and those campaigns involving deep exploration:

NAME	SPECIES*	ABILITIES#
Churee	Terran	superior physical strength
Dr'ak	Aturan	curved claws (armor piercing)
Eugenic	Terran	heightened human abilities
Gizari	Aturan	regeneration/water breathing
Kazin	Ordian	multiple attacks from claws
Mori	Ordian	agile climbing and night vision
Mytara	Terran	limited shape-shifting ability
Navigator	Xeniform	conduct vessels through space
Psychlon	Sirian	superior computation skills
Racuda	Xeniform	deep sleep/suspended animation
Rigalian	Sirian	manipulate thoughts/feelings
Stari	Sirian	speak telepathically within 120'
Tajaris	Ordian	exceptional speed and stealth
Xenlu	Xeniform	restore any lost or severed limb
Zorn/Trak	Aturan	strength or poison (by gender)

*By body type; xeniforms are otherwise unique

#Except where noted, original abilities are replaced

Note here that judges are strongly discouraged from allowing these as player characters given their greater power:

CHUREES are a simian race, probably indicating a divergent evolution from humanity or some genetic experiment by advanced beings in Terra's distant past. Although not as strong as the robust Ordians, they easily perform within the upper limit of human ability, adding +1 to all related acts and fighting with claws or weaponry.

DR'AK appear much like the Aturans, but slimmer and having powerful curving claws that add +1 to all damage scored when used in lieu of weaponry, noting that shield use is still possible. Culturally, Dr'ak are very similar to the Aturans and acknowledged cousins...

EUGENICS are genetically enhanced Terrans (clones) engineered for superior speed, strength, and intellect. Accordingly, they add +1 to all dice when attempting related actions, noting here that clones cannot otherwise exceed human limits. This experiment ultimately failed because its subjects invariably developed strong sociopathic tendencies!



HOME WORLDS OF THE
UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE

GIZARI represent an ancestral form of Aturan who still exist in a primitive state on their home planet. These humanoid (4' tall) reptilians can breathe underwater and rejuvenate +1 LIFE per game day owing to their amphibian ancestry. Most are stone age folk, although judges can introduce a more advanced off-world variety.

KAZIN are genetically related, albeit distantly, to Ordians, although appearing more cat-like. They are an agile race capable of amazingly fast attacks, using both claws for +1 damage (no shields allowed) and dividing damage between multiple targets within range. They are highly advanced and active as raiders, etc.

MORI inhabit jungle worlds, representing a lost branch of Ordian development. They are still largely arboreal, climbing most structures easily and adding +1 to all attempts. A hunting race, they can see in total darkness out to 30' and use sophisticated nets and composite bows to subdue their prey, including "advanced" intruders!

MYTARANS evolved separately, but may still interbreed with Terrans, although rarely. They can spend 1 LIFE to physically assume any animal form (no smaller than a mouse or bigger than a bear), changing their very genes when doing so. Each transformation lasts but 1d6+1 combat rounds, but confers all natural abilities.

NAVIGATORS are vaguely humanoid, although strangely proportioned and almost wormlike. They can survive in the void of space and travel between distant worlds almost instantly through a form of teleportation unknown to other races and may guide vessels safely through asteroid fields and similar obstacles, making them sought after.

PSYCHLONS appear human-like, although still more closely related to ancestral Sirians. Their innate psychic power manifests as a heightened learning ability allowing them to master any language or employ any technology within a day of exposure, adding +1 when recalling knowledge about the judge's own campaign or world setting.

RACUDAS hail from an ocean world, looking much like humanoid fish, although still adapted to survive on land. When exposed to hostile environments (including deep space) they can enter a state of suspended animation and survive until rescued or conditions improve enough to permit recovery, making them well-suited for exploration.

RIGALIANS are closely related to the Sirians, although shorter (5') and with conical heads. Like their cousins, they can detect minds and often take up membership in the Psion Order or Sirian Cult. Otherwise, they can spend 1 LIFE to manipulate the emotions of any single living target within 10', causing anger or fear for 1d6+1 rounds as sorcery...

STARIS are tall (6") and slender Sirians. Being very sensitive, their psychic abilities are manifest by an innate ability to communicate telepathically with any living target within 120', translating languages and detecting surface thoughts. Ironically, this makes them aloof and reluctant to deal with other intelligent races.

TAJARIS can best be described as humanoid weasels, although genetics clearly relate them to Ordia. They are fast and agile, adding +1 to personal initiative and stealth-related actions, especially climbing and simple theft. While they generally prefer to avoid hostilities, their claws serve as highly effective weapons.

XENLUS appear as many-limbed insectoids, although they otherwise manipulate objects and wield weapons as human. Owing to their special biology, they can regenerate lost/severed limbs within 1d6 days of injury and heal +1 LIFE per day. Their fine manipulation ability makes them exceptional surgeons and droid mechanics, etc.

ZORNS are a variant Aturan breed having unique abilities based on gender, with males strong like a Churee and females (TRAKS) possessing a reproductive venom (1d6). The latter is delivered by means of their powerful claws and may only be used once per game day against living targets having a central nervous system...

Except where clearly noted, all of the above are spacefaring races and frequently met on Alliance vessels and similar locales.

LANGUAGES

The judge should assume that all such variants speak a separate and distinct language, even when residing on the same world, and that only those in space will know the Universal Standard.

FIRST CONTACT

Making first contact with any (previously isolated) alien species is generally hard to do. Achieving a positive response is a daunting task, modified by conditions and the beings so approached:

PARTY IS...	MODIFIER
Aggressive/noisy	-2
Calm/submissive	-1
Presenting food or gifts	+1
Sirian (or one present)	+2

Of course, judges are free, and highly encouraged, to imagine their own alien races and have total control over their responses, etc.

APPENDIX III: THE UNIVERSAL TIMELINE

Although individual worlds have their own calendars, most historians recognize the COSMIC RECKONING as a means of noting events of an interplanetary nature, understanding that these will have importance beyond any single planet or star system:

YEAR	EVENTS
372 BC	Ordian traders send manned vessel to nearby moon
341 BC	Kenuba founds the Psion Order and spreads his wisdom
288 BC	Rebellious Aturans launch first orbital satellite
227 BC	Nuclear exchange devastates several cities on Terra
204 BC	Aturan/Ordian Compact sets boundaries and averts war
197 BC	Sirius makes psychic contact with spacefaring races
122 BC	Border wars with Atura and Ordia over mining dispute
091 BC	Terrans launch first manned space flight/station
000 AC	First contact between Terra and Sirian patrol vessel
024 AC	Ordian/Terran Trade agreement angers the Aturans
097 AC	Terran Off-World Company proposes Universal Alliance
132 AC	Vuhl Syndicate formed from local smuggling gangs*
149 AC	Border clash with Syndicate forces military coalition
156 AC	Universal Alliance ratified in ceremony on Sirius#
163 AC	Psion Order recognized as sovereign diplomatic entity
196 AC	Reports of Sirian Cult alliance with Syndicate grow
223 AC	Vuhl reportedly organizing private army/space fleet

General Cosmic Reckoning is based on Terra's first entry into outer space, with time falling BEFORE CONTACT (BC) or AFTER CONTACT (AC), when humanity began shaping galactic history...

*The growing organization of trade offered many opportunities for criminal gangs, but also presented new challenges as law enforcement became more sophisticated. This led to the dangerous VUHL SYNDICATE spanning multiple worlds and, more recently, backed by the mysterious and increasingly influential Sirian Cult machine.

#While Terra was initially less advanced, it quickly adopted alien technology and became prominent. The Universal Alliance was formed mainly to protect Terran commercial interests, but fast became the foremost governing body, going so far as to field its own interstellar law enforcement or the UNIVERSAL POLICE (UP).

Like Pangea, this setting might be adopted completely or used as inspiration for an original campaign, with enough grey area left for judges to be creative. Indeed, ambitious ones might easily construct crossover adventures using Blood of Pangea, mixing swords and sorcery with pulp science fiction, perhaps some alien invasion, etc.

JUDGE'S NOTES

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