

## Odyssey Prime

A dual-stat d20 Modern/Unisystem game of exploration

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons(R) Player's Handbook, Third Edition, or d20 Modern, published by Wizards of the Coast(R)

### CREDITS

Mission Control (Publishers): Bizzaro Games & Eden Studios

Operations Coordinator (Game Concept, Design): Tony Lee

Operations Engineer (d20 Modern Design): Steven Trustrum

Communications Director (Development, Design, Editing): Christina Stiles

Operations Technician (Additional Design): Jim Montgomery

Chief of Operations: M. Alexander Jurkat

Translation Engineer (UniSystem Conversion): Daniel Davis

Procedure Engineer (Unisystem Rules): C. J. Carella

Chief of Optical Logistics (Layout, Graphics): George Vasilakos

Visual Profile Specialists (Illustrations):

Insignia Engineer (Cover): William McAusland

Insignia Technician (Original Cover Design): David K. Wong

Odyssey Teams (Playtesting): Michael J. Brisbois, David Carroll, Todd Cash, Daniel Davis, Katrina Fairchild, Jeff Fournier, D.J., Jerome Ingall, Doug Kilmer, Jeff Kiser, Dan Lambert, Curtis Lanford, Brian Larbig, Tony Law, Stephen B. Lombardo, Colin McGaffrey, Jim Montgomery, Joe O'Brien, Jeremy Patterson, Andy Peregrine, John Polack, Tammey Reed, Wayne Shaw, Gaylene Sutton-Monk, Ryan Walsh

Support Staff (Tony's Special Thanks): Mario Lee "Little Mountain" Bansen, Gary & Mary Bernard, Tim Brown, Jamie Chambers, Sean Everette, Steve Lee, NGO (New Gamers' Order), Don Perrin, Jim Ward, Margaret Weis, Ken Whitman

### Table of Contents

Chapter One: The Sky is Falling!

Chapter Two: The Odyssey Begins

Chapter Three: Priming Up

Chapter Four: Outfitting a Team

Chapter Five: The Last Line of Survival

Chapter Six: The Journey of a Thousand Worlds

Chapter Seven: The Unisystem Odyssey

'D20 System' and the 'D20 System' logo are Trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast and are used according to the terms of the D20 System License version 3.0. A copy of this License can be found at [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20).

Dungeons & Dragons(R) and Wizards of the Coast(R) are Registered Trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, and are used with permission.

<<two-page spread of armed Od Team members in armored-vest-covered jumpsuits emerging from the gate into an ice-covered, mountainous world. One of their members is already being attacked by a four-armed yeti-like creature, upon which the group is firing.>>

## Chapter One: The Sky Is Falling! (14)

[begin fiction text]

About 50 asteroids are known to intersect Earth's orbit...

<<two-page spread graphics of mock articles and press clippings of information, stats, predictions and consequences for asteroids impacting Earth, interspersed with tidbits of dimensional travel, all superimposed on a collage of Doomsday Meteor-disasters/bombardments in background>>

[begin mock fiction press clippings]

“In this century, there is a great chance that the Earth will collide with an asteroid!”

“An Apollo asteroid, now known as Asclepius 4581, passed within 800,000 km (500,000 miles) of Earth in 1989-the closest approach of a large asteroid since Hermes in 1937...”

“Astronomers are carefully monitoring a newly discovered 1.2-mile-wide asteroid to determine whether it is on a collision course with Earth. Initial calculations indicate there is a chance the asteroid-known as 2002 NT7-will hit the Earth on Feb. 1, 2019. Astronomers have rated the object's threat level 0.06 on the so-called Palermo technical scale, making NT7 the first object given a positive value. From its brightness, astronomers estimate NT7 is about two kilometers wide, large enough to cause continent-wide devastation on Earth.”

“In June, 2002, an asteroid the size of a soccer field missed the Earth by 75,000 miles-less than one-third of the distance to the moon-in one of the closest known approaches by objects of its size. Scientists speculate that, had the asteroid hit a populated area, it would have released as much energy as a large nuclear weapon.”

“Approximately 65 million years ago, an asteroid with a 10-mile diameter crashed into the Tucatán Peninsula in Mexico, annihilating 95% of life on Earth. At sunrise on June 30, 1908, an asteroid with a ¼-mile diameter struck the area near the Tunguska River in Siberia with the equivalent force of a modern H-Bomb...”

“...Meteors up to 100 tons bore penetration funnels in the ground upon impact. Those larger than 100 tons generally explode upon impact. If a one-mile wide asteroid actually hits Earth, it would kill 30% of the population.”

“The impact of a 35-mile wide, 15-mile long asteroid would create a 10-mile high tidal wave, a crater the size of Europe, enough dust to block out the sun for years, and an

explosion which would level every city on our planet.”

“...Should an asteroid the size of XF11 hit the planet, it would be the equivalent to 2 million Hiroshima bombs or 320,000 megatons of dynamite. It would create a crater 20 miles in diameter, vaporize any living creature within a hundred-mile radius of the collision site, and propel molten rocks up to hundreds of miles away...”

“Wormholes, in contrast to black holes, do not have a ‘bottom’ to engulf their travelers whole. Instead, they have two ‘mouths’ connected by a ‘throat’ and can be used as a ‘cosmic shortcut’...”

“Using our Earth as a single starting point, think of every alternate timeline possible from that point. Now imagine every single one of these alternate timelines with even more alternate timelines breaking off from them... ad infinitum. What you end up with is an ever-expanding cosmic ball of possibilities...”

[end mock fiction press clippings]

An asteroid IS headed too close to Earth.

[begin fiction]

[begin boxed classified document]

Clearance: Umbra

Joint Special Advisory Committee  
NSC, NASA, FEMA

to: Eyes Only

re: Odyssey Prime

We regret to inform all that as of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the threat of asteroid RX338, a.k.a. Domsday, is confirmed, imminent, and possibly unavoidable.

While we fully intend to research and develop all means at our disposal to combat this crisis, the Committee is aware of technology in our possession that is capable of extradimensional transportation. This item in question was salvaged in near-perfect condition from an inoperable facsimile of alien origin. We have studied the viability of colonizing other worlds, and, in light of the aforementioned catastrophe, have decided to proceed with the operation, codename Project Odyssey, to relocate selected citizens and allies in the event all our other solutions fail.

It is our unreserved recommendation to commence Project Odyssey at the earliest opportunity. Time is of the essence.

[end boxed classified document text]  
[end fiction text]

[begin fiction text]

*“George” is a former astronaut-turned-top-brass at NASA. It’s rumored that he worked heavily with the CIA in his younger days, testing and developing secret surveillance technology from space-something to do with orbital mind control or some such, but that’s another story.*

*One of George’s dabblings is ancient astronomy and mathematics, in particular the Mayan Calendar. He’s often wondered why, for all their accuracy and ability to postulate, the Mayans ended their calendar at 2012 A.D.*

*On the job, George oversees a crew of professional stargazing geeks. The geeks fiddle with data from far-flung probes nobody’s seen for decades, some of which are not even documented in official records. “Celestial body” sightings come across their desks so often that they make a race out of nicknaming new finds.*

*Some years back, they located one body and dubbed it “John Doe #7.” When, a few years later, they thought it would sideswipe Jupiter, they renamed it “Knock-Knock.” A few seasons after that, its moniker became “Fat Messiah,” as projections calculating its trajectory course with Earth rushed in monthly, weekly, daily, and then hourly. By the time the geeks nervously handed the report of this asteroid upstairs to George, they had renamed it “Doomsday,” as the in-house scientists calculated its trajectory as 98.5% likely to collide with the Earth in 2012. Right then, George realized the Mayans must have known something...*

*Houston, we have a problem.*

\* \* \*

*Mia wasn’t sure she’d been in bigger trouble before in her life. She had certainly encountered weirdness aplenty in her former line of work, but then she’d at least been dealing with apparitions, homegrown, terrestrial weirdness. This was different.*

*If her “occult investigator” luck held up, the bubbling, fuming muck wouldn’t swallow her whole before she completed the ritual. Of course, it was the same luck that landed her with this group of world-hoppers who believed themselves Humankind’s Preservers. Who knew the fog stalker had escaped the Portal, and that professional curiosity would cause her path to cross that of the Dam Con boys? Thanks to some shrewd detective work, she had discovered Project Odyssey, the Doomsday Asteroid, and the plan to use the Portal for off-world evacuation-as well as black-clad commando types waving guns in her face. Get shot or help them find new worlds to save humanity were the options they had given her. Easy choice.*

*So far, Mia’s experience was hit-or-miss. Her Odyssey Team hadn’t stepped into too many truly esoteric environments, but on the occasions they did (like this one), her experience sure came in handy. Not that she slouched the rest of the time; she snooped for clues, played go-between, bandaged up G.I. Reggie, punchlined Tom’s crappy jokes for him, fought hostiles, and slayed bad mojos when she had to. She even thought it cute when the guys started calling her “Buffy.” On the other hand, knowing Earth was doomed did jade things a bit. The vampire politics, the arcane conspiracies, the*

*“invisible” cults’ hidden war for immortal ascension that she’d heard about and sometimes witnessed no longer carried the same weight when a world was in the balance. Heck, nothing would matter in nine years...*

*For now, though, she figured she had to hold the icky goblin-dark-god-thingie in the seal long enough for the team to make a rendezvous. This was definitely not a good place to evac people to.*

\* \* \*

*The silhouette leaned back, lit a pipe, and let a couple puffs escape into the faint lumination of the window behind. “You look like a man with many concerns.”*

*“Who am I working for, really, Mister...Smith?”*

*“Project Odyssey. On paper, you’re an agent of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency...”*

*“FEMA? You mean, the only government bureau empowered to suspend the Constitution during a national crisis?”*

*“Very good, you know your laws. You ought to know, then, this gives us quite a police power without having to pass ourselves off as cops or spooks. And if what we’re dealing with is not a ‘national’ crisis, I don’t know what is.”*

*“But wouldn’t the military find a way to destroy the asteroid by then?”*

*“Can you be absolutely sure? They thought they’d win Vietnam, too. It just means a decade of theories and no way to prove them till Doomsday,” Smith scoffed. “Survival leaves no margin for error. Odyssey lets us hedge our bet, so to speak, so we don’t all embrace Kingdom Come if the nuclear warheads or whatever else they try fail. Makes me sleep better at night.”*

*“Nine years is not enough time to evacuate EVERYBODY.”*

*“Nor, frankly, do we want to. I trust you can think of several undesirable... ‘elements’ yourself whom you wouldn’t mind seeing left behind. We’re currently sharing the technology with Great Britain, Canada, Israel, Japan, Australia, and other foreign allies to maximize the effort. Cells are sprinkled around the world to insure humankind’s survival. We have scouts prospecting for suitable colonies every day.”*

*“That’s great, Smith, but I don’t mingle well with aliens. I’m not one you want to hang an ‘Ambassador’ sign on.”*

*“Oh, you are right about that, my boy. Which is why you’re going to be working with Dam Con. Somebody has to stay home and plug the leaks!” Smith laughed as he pulled a manila packet from the shadows and slid it across the table. “Your first assignment is a journalist named Koontz in Philadelphia...”*

[end fiction text]

## Primed for Odyssey (14)

*Odyssey Prime* is a game of interdimensional/planetary adventures. At stake is the human race's very survival, as a distant giant meteor speeds on a course to collide with Earth in the year 2012—a cataclysm sure to obliterate all organisms and transform the planet into an eternal wasteland.

However, a discovery from decades past may turn out to be our salvation. In the 1920's, American historians looking for evidence of the Arthurian legend accidentally unearthed remnants of an alien artifact. The U.S. and British Intelligence Agencies quickly formed an alliance to jointly study the find in complete secrecy. As time progressed, the partners arduously reassembled the pieces, filled in the gaps with trial-and-error modifications, and gradually exacted the nature and nuances of this extraterrestrial wonder. Completed over a year ago, the artifact can bridge worlds that are galaxies and possibly dimensions apart, allowing for visitation from both sides of the bridge.

Now, in light of the Doomsday Asteroid's revelation, another clandestine project is created to prolong humankind's future. It calls for scouts to venture beyond the Portal to survey unknown frontiers and determine their compatibility to Earth for prospective new homes for the evacuees. Project Odyssey is born.

As a member of the Odyssey Team, you explore unfamiliar territories and brave the perils of strange lands, because every new habitat you uncover perhaps saves another hundred, thousand, or even million people.

The journey of a thousand worlds begins with a single step. This is that single step.

## IT'S NINE YEARS TILL DOOMSDAY

Whatcha gonna do about it?

### Chapter Summary (14)

**Chapter One: The Sky's Falling!** introduces the premise and theme.

**Chapter Two: The Odyssey Begins** details character creation information and new advanced classes.

**Chapter Three: Priming Up** provides skill and feat information.

**Chapter Four: Outfitting a Team** lists new weapons, equipment, and vehicles.

**Chapter Five: The Last Line of Survival** elaborates the storyline of *Odyssey Prime*.



**Chapter Six: The Journey of a Thousand Worlds** presents a dramatic roll system, an alternate award system, and adventure seeds.

**Chapter Seven: The Unisystem™ Odyssey** gives information on running *Odyssey Prime* as a Unisystem™ game.

About The Game (14)

*Odyssey Prime* uses the D20 Modern system under Wizards of the Coast's Open Gaming License. You'll need the *D20 Modern Roleplaying Game* in addition to this book to play. A chapter on using Unisystem™ as your base system for this game is included in the back of the book.

The most salient feature of this game is the freedom for the Game Master (GM) to devise practically any sort of encounters. The flexible premise allows for a limitless range of creative settings and genres. GMs are not always bound to one single specific milieu with a predefined set of laws, leaving them to freely sample virtually any fiction, tale, game, sourcebook, adventure, or other sparks of imagination as a "trial run" without committing to a long-term campaign.

Another feature of *Odyssey Prime* has each player playing TWO characters concurrently. You'll create an *Odyssey Team* character, as well as a *Damage Control Team* character. "Dam Con" characters are best described as "black ops," whose responsibility is to neutralize anything that could compromise Project *Odyssey's* objective. This enables the GM to run adventures of a different theme-that of exciting contemporary espionage/counterterrorism with meaningful consequences-and keep the campaign fresh with a conducive alternative at the same time.

It's our intention to make *Odyssey Prime* more cinematic and interactive than a conventional role-playing game. To that end, we have included several options, such as a *Dramatic Resolution Table*, to encourage dynamic actions, *Feats* enabling players to control minor story elements of an adventure, and an *Evaluation Log* to be filled out for bonus *Experience Points* after each mission, etc. As always, the GM may discard any and all rules to serve her preference, but we believe you'll find these extra touches motivating and conducive to a theatrical campaign.

Lastly, *Odyssey Prime* is an ambitious project. It is a real-time game in the sense that a definitive climax is planned for the year 2012. Meanwhile, NOTHING we introduce between now (this rulebook) and then (a special adventure pack) is canonical. Future sourcebooks will expand various rules and present new worlds and possibilities, but GMs can create freely without ever worrying about us throwing monkey wrenches into their campaign timeline. (We won't say much about the conclusion, except that your characters WILL have a chance to stop the *Doomsday Asteroid!*)

How to Use *Odyssey Prime* (14)

## Open Game Content (12)

Open Game Content may be found in this section and in specially indicated sidebars like that below.

[insert OGC sidebar]

Finally, all materials originating in, or derivative of, the d20 Modern System Reference Document are Open Game Content.

## Product Identity (12)

The *Odyssey Prime* name, Project Odyssey, Odyssey Team, the Eden Odyssey product line name, any logos and identifying marks including trade dress, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, and graphic and other visual representations are designated Product Identity, within the meaning of the Open Gaming License, reprinted at the end. The graphic features of this work, likenesses of such features, or any work derived from such features may not be used, absent express written consent of Bizzaro Games and Eden Studios.

## Gender (12)

Every roleplaying game struggles with the decision about third person pronouns and possessives. While the male reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female, there is no question that it is not entirely inclusive. On the other hand, the “he or she” structure is clumsy and unattractive. In an effort to “split the difference,” this book uses male designations for even chapters, and female designations for odd chapters.

## Support (12)

To learn more about *Odyssey Prime* products, please visit [www.odysseyprime.com](http://www.odysseyprime.com) <<http://www.odysseyprime.com>>, [www.bizzaro-games](http://www.bizzaro-games.com) <[http://www.bizzaro-games](http://www.bizzaro-games.com)>, or [www.edenstudios.net](http://www.edenstudios.net) <<http://www.edenstudios.net>>.

## About the Author (14)

Tony Lee is possibly the best role-playing game writer/editor ever to hail from the tiny island nation of Taiwan. Possibly, since the gaming industry is practically nonexistent there and the natives usually choose a more lucrative career, such as putting two fragile parts together or slapping glue on to sneaker bottoms inside crammed factories. He has worked with many publishers, from Wizards of the Coast to Ballantine Books to Z-Man Games, and endured five snowy winters in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where he was possibly the best Taiwanese RPG writer/editor living there. Possibly, since he represented about 20% of the Asian population in town and 80% of that population ran their own restaurants. After another year in Indiana's Fort Wayne (best known for being the biggest city with nothing to offer), he's transplanted back to Los Angeles, and is once again eyeing the title of Best Taiwanese RPG Writer/Editor Ever in the City of Smog

between thinking up bad bios. Go Lakers.

## Chapter Two: The Odyssey Begins (18)

### Character Creation (14)

Character creation for *Odyssey Prime* follows the process described in the *D20 Modern Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* (see Chapter @@ for rules on using Unisystem™ characters instead). Unless the GM approves otherwise, every starting character should be human.

Instead of creating one character per player as the norm, however, we recommend that you make TWO characters. They are both operatives of Project Odyssey but assigned to two separate “departments.” The first consists of explorers on the Odyssey Team, going through the portal and surveying the unknown. The latter is Damage Control, whose members are tasked with protecting the Project’s security.

Because the teams have their own unique goals, functions, and method of operation, the adventures are significantly different in style and so are their respective rosters. Game sessions for the Odyssey Team regularly feature alien settings, often themed toward exploration, survival, and diplomacy. Team members are not after any specific quarry except knowledge and trying to stay alive while gathering it. This is in great contrast to the Damage Control members’ relentless, nitty-gritty “shadow” assignments, which ranged from defending the Project to possibly assassination.

The GM is free to decide how to alternate the dual-campaign. Usually the scenario for one team is completed before moving on to a new mission for the other. Sometimes a GM may run adventures for one team exclusively due to players’ request. A creative GM may formulate simultaneous storylines where the action cuts back and forth between the two teams. And a daring GM may even ask the players to switch characters in the middle of a cliffhanger!

We suggest all players be present for character creation, so they can discuss the concepts and select a specialty or two for each character.

Just as crucial is how the characters came to the Project. This can be as simple as a recommended recruit from a military branch or government bureau, or as detailed as a curious run-in with Project Odyssey that ended in forced conscription. This provides a “hook” for future stories and colors how the characters view the Project.

### Odyssey Team Characters (14)

You are the wanderer trekking into the worlds beyond the portal. You have no idea what you will find each journey. It could be one vast barren stretch as far as the eyes can see, a civilization ripped from myths and storybooks, the deepest depth of hell itself... or it could just be the perfect, unspoiled paradise for humanity.

You could happen upon spectacular sorcery, primitive rituals, high tech, low, ultra tech,

no tech, anything and everything in between. You are to gather as much information about these alien environments, then report whether they would make a good future home for us. You are scout, frontiersman, researcher, evaluator, ambassador, and sometimes fighter all rolled into one.

#### Duties (12)

Your #1 priority is to conduct a preliminary survey of the new world's compatibility for human living, taking into account things like climate, ecology, geography, indigenous cultures, etc. You have about one week to accomplish all that, according to standard procedures. Fortunately, there are more of you and you may be sent back later to further study any promising discoveries.

First contact is a principal concern. Ideally, most such encounters will be with peaceful, intelligent natives, but that won't always be the case. Protocol dictates that you proceed with caution, but never provoke hostility in the parties contacted. After all, we might move into their world and become their neighbor.

(Expect initial difficulty when communicating. There is no such convenient device as a "universal translator" in Odyssey Prime yet! To make up for this is a lenient, cinematic based "language" system using gestures, "pig latins," even intuition and empathy. Oh, a team linguist would help out a lot, too.)

Even without a "prime directive" to worry about, you're advised to play Switzerland and leave all native affairs to the natives. You're there to observe, not participate. However, the Project usually tolerates it if "just cause" or "heat of passion" issues somehow become involved, if you get the drift...

#### Method of Operation (12)

How an Odyssey Team operates is not completely spelled out, since yours is likely an original team formed during the first months of the Project's history. You'll have a chance to refine the techniques and write the book on extradimensional explorations! Right now, this is what in the book so far:

Once the Project engineers have used the portal to open up a new space, a small, sophisticated mechanical probe is dispatched first. This little bug is remotely guided to conceal itself in the five minutes that communication signals may be exchanged while bridging the dimensional space, and records basic data of the world's atmosphere incognito. It is programmed to return in a couple days when the headquarters opens a new portal. Based on the data collected, the Project directors will then decide whether the environment is safe for humans.

Should it contain a suitable atmosphere, it's showtime for the Odyssey Team. You are expected to outfit yourself befitting your team function while retaining a semblance of mobility, i.e., no full metal jackets with twin rocket launchers strapped to the back. The Project will issue up to two compact, radio-controllable carriers, which look like

industrial platform on treads, to haul medium and heavy equipment for the team (loading up to 1,000 pounds each). Actual vehicles are permitted, but they are usually reserved for subsequent returns to a promising world. For ease of record keeping, a team is always assumed to have the basic tools for the exploration (radios, flashlights, gauges, etc.) with sufficient supplies to last ten days. You don't have to sweat the small stuff like how many matches you're carrying; just take notes of any special gear you have, and you should not be denied of any reasonable request. You're neither moving nor going to war, so you can't lug along a whole science lab or the entire arsenal of Edwards Air Force Base. Let common sense be the guide here.

Similar to the probe, you have a five-minute post-entrance communication window with Project headquarters before the Portal blinks out. This gives you time to retreat back had there been an erroneous probe reading or if an extreme and unforeseen danger suddenly springs up. The team is to locate a safe perimeter the moment you set foot on the new world, a place serving as your base and home for the stay. This can be indoor or outdoor, but as inconspicuous as possible.

After securing a "safehouse," the team sends advance scouts to scope out the general lay of the land. These scouts usually are the fastest members and proceed in tandems, since it's unwise to move along in strange territories. Meanwhile, the fighting types take up defensive positions back at the camp, watching over the scholars who are busy setting up instruments and as curious as a cat over every last bit of dirt and leaves in the immediate vicinity.

If nothing goes unexpectedly awry (don't bet on it), the team will reach farther out every day, charting and studying their new surroundings. Word of caution: be careful and selective when gathering samples. While plants and minerals are generally innocuous, specimens of live organisms may not be! The danger should be obvious. Researches on animals should be done on their natural habitat. The Project frowns on anybody coming back with a stray cub because it seems so cuddly a pet. Let the field scientists decide it's harmless before you do so.

You're on the new world for seven days, after which the Portal will have finished recharging and is ready to welcome you home. You must pack up and arrive at the rendezvous point-the same place the Portal deposited you a week ago. Punctuality is critical here, because if you don't catch the train, the next one won't come for another seven days, provided one comes at all! You're stranded till then.

When the team gets back, all members will go through debriefing and are required to file a post-mission report. Actually, it is more of an "evaluation log" than a report, in which you are to give your own personal findings and opinions on the world you just explored. A copy of a blank log is reproduced on page <<>>.

## Benefits (12)

To the rest of the world, you're an agent of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), with full documentation to support it. This is your cover whenever you

employment is questioned. Officially, FEMA is your boss and signs your paycheck. Any inquisitive party who bothers to verify will find just that-you work for a local office of the bureau.

As an Odyssey Team member, you're compensated well enough to afford intermittent pleasures like a cruise trip, nice car, plush furniture, etc., plus the usual benefit package that comes with a high-end "government" job. (Raise your Wealth Score to 15 if it's lower. Add +1 if it's 16-20. No change for 21+.)

The best incentive, though, is the automatic relocation status for you and your immediate family to any world of your choice-as long as you are with the Project.

On the flip side, you're under a strict order to never disclose details of you mission, and especially of the Project, to any non-personnel. The sensitive nature of the Project and the invaluable technology it holds means every word leaked endangers its existence. The punishment for offenders tends to severe, from suspension to immediate dismissal (which in turns rescinds the relocation perk), or worse...

### Screening (12)

Working for the Project is serious business. You're going on more than just a interdimensional field trip; you are mankind's insurance against extinction! Put it this way, if you are to choose someone to save humanity, what qualities would you look for?

Certainly not greed, homicidal tendencies, or any other anti-social psychopath behaviors.

And the Project knows that too. Which is why it carefully screens all prospective members prior to contacting them for the Odyssey Team. Their psychological profiles, especially, are given the thrice-over. The Project can hardly afford ill-tempered maniacs with a trigger finger shooting up everything they meet, or shifty scammers exploiting worlds all over the universe.

In other words, forget lonewolf killing machines and opportunistic profiteers. They won't even make it to the parking lot. The message is clear: only those with decent morals-"the good guy"-are welcome. Granted, a few bad apples may manage to slip by the directors' eyes on rare occasions, but they never stay in the barrel long...

### Team Composition (12)

An ideal Odyssey Team is composed of 6-10 experts in as many of these essential fields: linguistics, survey, survival, investigation, research, anthropology, various life and physical sciences, mechanical, medical, diplomacy, plus-just in case-combat.

*Odyssey Prime* is all about teamwork, about complementing each other, about everybody contributing his best attribute to the success of an important mission. And the infinite possible situations surpass any one character can possibly have the skills for, so figure out what you're best at and what can you bring to the table. Concentrate your effort around a

particular expertise or talent. Be a specialist in something so the team can rely on you to solve problems, as opposed to a jack-of-all-trades-but-master-of-none who's never the best prospect when asked to perform under pressure. Team diversity is the key to survival.

#### Typical Odyssey Team Characters (12)

**Strong Hero:** Burly bruiser types who bodyguard the rest of the team. Good: ex-military grunts. Even better: former Special Forces, for their training to fight and survive in different, hostile terrain. A strong hero is the first to arrive, last to leave, and provides muscle and firepower in between. Sure, those raging two-headed giants can try to hurt someone-right after they step over the strong hero's body!

**Fast Hero:** The more dexterous, sneakier characters tend to get nominated for advance scouting, especially if they got sharp eyes and good ears too. A fast hero's agility and speed enable her to case new grounds in less time than usual while staying undetected. Worst comes to worse, the fast hero should not only be able to outrun danger, but outride, outdrive, and outfly it.

**Tough Hero:** Perhaps a robust agent ex of law enforcement bureaus (SWAT, police), who aren't quite as loaded as a soldier but still capable of handling himself. This could also be a rugged outdoorsman who might have had a run-in with a kodiak bear or two. In any case, the tough hero knows how to survive anything and is hardy enough to take-even relish-any harshness man, machine, or Mother Nature can dish out.

**Smart Hero:** A no-brainer that she is the brain of the group. If she's not the absolute best in her expertise as to make her the absolute best choice available, she is at least promisingly brilliant. An adventurous spirit like that of Indiana Jones is a plus, but a total bookworm will do too, given sufficient physical protection around her. The smart hero's niche is obvious: research anything new, solve anything wrong, answer anything.

**Dedicated Hero:** One word: "Medic!" Every team needs one almost more than it needs a linguist. It's comforting to know a doc's there to fix you up from the toxin of an exotic plant or a spear wound to the side. Whereas the strong hero protects by fighting, the dedicated hero can protect by preventing, doing his part to stave off any ill effects of the environment.

**Charismatic Hero:** The diplomat, should the team ever runs across intelligent creatures or humanoids (and the odds of that are pretty good). The charismatic hero has the calming presence to minimize hostility and cultivate trust, meaning she is the person you want in front during first contact. Not just a mouthpiece, she's a liaison, a goodwill ambassador, and given time to charm the crowd, will elicit cooperation from all sides.

#### Damage Control Team Characters (14)

All the dirty work get shoved over to Damage Control. While their colleagues hopscotch through the multiverse, "Dam Con" members roll up their sleeves to ensure everything's



cool on this side and the home base stays intact, so the Odyssey guys can keep hopping into alien places and have something to come back to.

#### Duties (12)

You're responsible for any operation necessary to maintain the Project's invisibility to the public, and safeguard its security concerns. Yes, the "black ops."

These Mission: Impossible's may take you from censoring an inquiry into Project Odyssey at Major City, U.S.A. one week, to rescuing a kidnapped fellow member in a South American jungle the next week, then to a remote sleeping town to retrieve an alien creature that managed to hitch a ride back with an Odyssey Team the week after.

Most Dam Con assignments involve hush-hush. There is always someone somewhere sniffing a little too close to the Project. Nosy journalists thinking they got the next Pulitzer exposé; hackers or uninformed government workers stumbling across sensitive data; not to mention the usual lot of backyard astronomers, conspiracy theorists, paranormal investigators, etc. Sure, that's quite a few mouths to shut, people to intimidate, and trails to cover, but it's not time to break the news yet. The higher-ups will decide when to let the cat out of the bag. Meanwhile it's your job to keep headlines screaming things like "DOOMSDAY ASTEROID TO HIT EARTH" off the papers.

Your other main task is protecting the Odyssey base and its staff. The portal technology is too precious to let fall into the wrong hands, and the Project too important to be sabotaged. If it means grabbing a gun to repel intruders or terminating a rouge agent, you do it. You monitor all possible threats constantly, anticipate new ones, and neutralize it quickly when one comes up.

#### Method of Operation (12)

Dam Con tip-toes between utmost subtlety and all guns blazing-sometime both in the same mission!

When a threat surfaces, it is rated on a scale of 1 to 5: Dam Con-1 is low-level problem, akin to a pimply teenage hacker. Dam Con-3 indicates a serious matter, such as missing operatives. Dam Con-5 is the equivalent of a "red alert!", troubles on the par of a full Project breach, that demand immediate response (often with extreme prejudice). A case can upgrade or downgrade as the situation changes and complications arise (or dissolve). For instance, if the teen intruder happens to be the son of a hostile foreign dictator, it can shoot straight up to Dam Con-5!

Once the problem is identified, the Project dispatches a Dam Con squad (you) to it. There is normally a squad leader who formulates and organizes the plan. In addition to reporting directly to the Project heads, he is the sole person authorized to request special equipment for the team. The success in their acquisition, naturally, depends largely on the assignment's rating. Don't try to get nifty, one-of-a-kind gizmos for Dam Con-1 jobs.

The book on Dam Con is considerably fuller than the one for Odyssey Team. That is because it doesn't have to invent things from scratch; it could just steal the m.o. for every type of job from espionage services, counterterrorism agencies, even terrorist cells all around the world.

This is not to say, of course, that Dam Con hasn't come up with a few tricks of its own. One favorite tactic, used discriminately to discredit whistle-blowers, is to actually leave them unharmed. Let their own existence be the biggest argument against their claim. ("How can they still be alive if they know the truth that would get them killed?")

A minor detail to look out for while you're on a job is prospects for recruitment. Why fight someone if you can convert her, especially if she has skills helpful to the Project? This takes an eye for talent and a good judge of character, though, typically left for the leader to recommend.

All members are mandated to give a post-mission report, to account for their actions and decisions. A copy of this can be found on page <<xx>>.

## Benefits (12)

Dam Con operatives, as the entire Project, also get by using FEMA for their cover.

Why FEMA? The choice has more pertinence to Dam Con. For one, it doesn't carry the stigma of your average intelligence agencies like the CIA. The popular perception has FEMA primarily dealing with health or disaster issues. As a result, people don't show nearly as much contempt toward it, thereby eliminating a lot of untrust and skepticism you would meet otherwise. Whereas the Odyssey Team rarely has to rely on that in their interactions, for Dam Con that routinely handle cover-ups, the less resistance encountered, the better.

Moreover, FEMA enjoys a greater freedom, unlike CIA or FBI, either of which is constantly under scrutiny from within and without the government. In contrast, Dam Con acts almost like an independent rogue unit inside FEMA. This frees it from most prying eyes to do its work in the shadow, usually with minimal repercussion since it's seldom expected, and the agents tend to be good enough not to get caught.

Lastly, FEMA lends the same authority as any other intelligence or police bureaus-and more! It is the only office allowed to suspend The Constitution in a national crisis. (And as 'Mr. Smith' said, "If this isn't a national crisis, I don't know what is!") So aside from playing the "national security" card, you can conceivably bypass all civil rights if absolutely necessary.

Other than the more frequent use (abuse?) of FEMA's power, Dam Con operatives receive the exact perks (with the same gag order to boot) as Odyssey Team members. (Raise your Wealth Score to 15 if it's lower. Add +1 if it's 16-20. No change for 21+.)

## Screening (12)

The standard for Dam Con recruitment is lax compared to that for the Odyssey Team. Yes, the character has to be trustworthy still, but little personality flaws like violent outbursts or vigilante mentality are easier to overlook when you're in this line of work.

### Team Composition (12)

Technically, everybody on security details belongs to Dam Con, from Portal room sentries to the guards by the front gate. For game purpose, you the player characters make up the core squad. You are the ones taking the assignments, with NPC armed grunts backing you up for heavy combat if necessary.

A solid core should comprise of 4-8 operatives. Anything more, it becomes harder to coordinate efficiently for most operations. Anything less, the squad probably lacks the versatility to cover all the possible scenarios. Dam Con adventures do offer one advantage over Odyssey adventures, however. A mission can be designed for any number of characters, even solo, enabling the GM to tailor a session beforehand to fit the number of players expected.

Unless the GM insists on a particular theme, i.e., all-Army Rangers, all-reformed criminals, all-techies, etc., you should try to include one character from each of the six basic classes. That will give you a decent mix to cover the basis. At minimum, you'll need an investigator for the detective work, a bruiser for muscles, and a slick or a sneak to get into places normal people can't.

### Typical Dam Con Characters (12)

**Strong Hero:** On Dam Con, the strong hero is a take-no-prisoners runaway bull. He can be an aggressive military man just as easily as a brawling thug or a calculating assassin. His role is to rough up, beat down, and possibly end the life of someone his leader points him to. He is a walking, talking mound of power who can halt an army on a good day.

**Fast Hero:** Break in, break out. That basically sums up the fast hero's part as the squad's infiltrator. The Project has no qualm about plucking the stealthiest off the street for this role, so she could very well be a thief. Or, she could be the one trusted with the squad's lives behind the wheel. Drive in, drive out.

**Tough Hero:** A hardy fellow who never hesitates to risk his body. The tough hero is usually side by side with the strong hero when the things get physical-but even a strong hero would have trouble surviving the wrecks a tough hero lived through. His knack for emerging from disasters relatively intact makes him the ideal person for hazardous jobs.

**Smart Hero:** The smart hero is likely adept with technology instead of book knowledge on a Dam Con squad. She knows all the off roads, side streets, and dark alleys on the information highway, and her most dangerous weapon is probably a computer terminal. Fiddling with gadgets is her life. Reconfigure the paramagnetic modulator? Done. Electronic countermeasures? No Sweat. Wiretap? Child's play. She is handy to have

around and always has a tool for the occasion.

**Dedicated Hero:** Someone has to put the plans together. The dedicated hero often heads a Dam Con assignment because he's been through similar situations before, plus he has the deductive skills and the wills to lead. He could be a veteran cop, a savvy former "company man," a retired judge, a hard-boiled private eye. Now he's putting his experience to good use, finding clues before anyone figures out where to look.

**Charismatic Hero:** You should resort to brutality only when subterfuge fails, and nobody personifies subterfuge better than the charismatic hero. With the right words she can open any door or slam it shut for her enemies with equal aplomb. Her arsenals ranged from the wile of a temptress to the eloquence of a courtroom lawyer, to the forcefulness of a master merchant. When employed properly, they can pry out guarded secrets where brute force cannot, sparing the team of needless physical effort.

### Advanced Classes (14)

The following are new advanced classes available for use in *Odyssey Prime*. Most of these classes have a pronounced slant toward the cinematic style and exploration flavor of an Odyssey Prime campaign, though they are still suitable for a regular D20 Modern setting with little or no alteration.

The advanced classes are presented in the order given below. It also shows the basic class that provides the fastest path to the associated advanced class.

<b>Basic Class</b>	<b>Advanced Class</b>
Strong	Competitor, Operator
Fast	Outrider, Wetboy
Tough	Enforcer, Survivor
Smart	Explorer, Field Scientist (revised), Scavenger, Techie (revised)
Dedicated	Conspiracy Hunter, Crusader
Charismatic	Emissary, Spook

## **COMPETITOR**

Football linemen, weightlifters, professional bodybuilders, contact-sport athletes, to oddities like rodeo riders and alligator wrestlers fall under this advanced class. A competitor's body is a relentless machine forged from hard training and competitive fire, that hammers away and eventually wears down the opponent. This bruiser's biggest asset is his raw physical power, of which he often has surplus to hold most trouble at bay.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Competitor, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +2.

**Skills:** Any combination of 10 ranks in Climb, Handle Animal, Jump, Ride, or Swim.

### **Hit Die**

The Competitor gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Competitor gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Competitor's class skills are as follows:

Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (mechanical, pharmaceutical, structural) (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

All of the following are class features of the Competitor.

**Pushing the Limit:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Competitor can exert to push himself beyond his current capability. By spending 1 action point, he can increase his carrying/lifting capacity and running speed by 50% (i.e., 1.5x normal). This ability lasts for his Str bonus in rounds.

**Eye of the Tiger:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a Competitor's fierce determination to win enables him to re-roll one failed saving throw per every two class levels (round up) each adventure, i.e., once at level 1 and 2, twice at level 3 and 4, etc. No more than two attempts can be made for the same saving throw, however.

**Bonus Feats:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Competitor gets a bonus feat, which must be selected from the following list, and the Competitor must meet all prerequisites: Brawl, Cleave, Endurance, Improved Brawl, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Trip, Power Attack, Rugged, Toughness.

**Second Wind:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level the Competitor may as a full action recover 1d6 nonlethal damage instantly. He may use this ability a number of times equaling 1+Str bonus per adventure, but is limited to no more than twice in one encounter.

**Block Out Pain:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level the Competitor can ignore debilitating injuries and illness for a short stint, whether it be a broken bone, poison, or disease. His Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution are temporarily restored to their original score for 1+Str bonus rounds, plus the freedom to perform reasonably nonstrenuous activities during the interim. He may use this ability twice per adventure.

**Pin:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level the Competitor can attempt to pin one target up to one size bigger, or multiple targets of same or smaller size at same time. Pinning a target requires a normal to-hit roll, with a -2 penalty if it is bigger than the Competitor. As a full-round action, a pinned target may attempt to escape with an opposed Str roll, but the Competitor also adds class level/2 (round up) to his roll. Target is immobilized for up to the Competitor's Str bonus+1 rounds, after which another break-out roll can be attempted. The Competitor can inflict hand-to-hand damage without rolling on a pinned target, though he loses Dexterity bonus against all attacks and can do very little else while retaining the pin.

The Competitor can try to pin multiple targets with a large item, commonly a

furniture such as table or bench. He makes a to-hit roll against each target individually, with a -2 progressive penalty for each target after the first, i.e., -0 vs. first target, -2 vs. second, -4 vs. third, etc. All pinned targets add their Str bonus together for break-out rolls. Otherwise, this maneuver's effects are identical to pinning a single target.

All misses to pin result in an immediate attack of opportunity against the Competitor.

**Improved Second Wind:** Same as the 4<sup>th</sup> level ability, except the Competitor now rolls 2d6.

**Sizing Up Opposition:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level the Competitor can estimate another person's physical abilities with fair accuracy. On a successful check using class level/2 as bonus, he will be able to place the target's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution within 1 point either way of the true score, plus identifying most, if not all physical feats that the target may "potentially" possess—even ones that haven't been exhibited yet. On a critical success he will also spot physical weakness such as previous injuries, and may double his Str damage bonus against the target in melee. The DC depends on how much time the Competitor has to observe the target:

<i>Time</i>	<i>DC</i>
Extensive study (10+ minutes)	10
Casual observation (5+ minutes)	15
Quick look (2+ rounds)	20
Cursory glance (1 round)	25

The Competitor must observe the target for the listed amount of time uninterrupted before rolling.

<i>Circumstances</i>	<i>DC Modifier</i>
Contact Distance (less than 5' from target)	-5
Short Distance (6'-10' from target)	+0
Average Distance (10'-30' from target)	-5
Far Distance (30'+ from target)	-10
Target inactive (stationary, unconscious)	-5
Target obscured (heavy clothing, in darkness)	+5 to +10
Target is active (fighting, practicing, showing off)	-5
Physical contact with target (attacking, defending)	-5 to -10

**TABLE 2-6: THE COMPETITOR**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will		Defense	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+2	+0	+0	Pushing the Limit	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+3	+1	+1	Eye of the Tiger	+1	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+3	+1	+1	Bonus Feat	+1	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+4	+1	+2	Second Wind	+1	+1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+4	+2	+2	Block Out Pain	+2	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+5	+2	+3	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+5	+2	+3	Pin	+3	+1
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+6	+3	+3	Improved Second Wind	+3	+2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+7	+3	+4	Bonus Feat	+4	+2

10<sup>th</sup> +6

+8

+3

+4 Sizing Up Opposition

+5

+2

## OPERATOR

“Operator” is what the elite Special Forces troops call themselves (well, the most polite thing, least ways.) They are the best at what they do and are always getting better. Having cut their teeth in the regular military, Operators have since undergone further training that makes them some of the smartest, most skilled, and (by far) deadliest people alive. They would likely be considered national heroes if so much of what they do wasn’t heavily classified for its moral ambiguity and legal haziness.

An Operator is a good choice if you want your character to be heavily combat-oriented. Your abilities and skills focus on getting close to the enemy and looking him in the eyes with a grin on your face as you end his life. This isn’t to say that Operators are merely dumb, brainwashed killing machines. Far from it. Part of the criteria for becoming an Operator is the ability to think quickly and act with decisiveness when cut off from the chain of command. Dumb Operators become dead Operators.

Note: The Operator is purposely more difficult to qualify for than a typical advanced class. It takes lots of forethought, goal-oriented advancement, and dedication to become one of these elite warriors.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Operator, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5

**Skills:** Climb 3 ranks, Demolitions 3 ranks, Knowledge (tactics) 6 ranks, Survival 3 ranks, Swim 3 ranks.

**Feats:** Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency

**Ability Scores:** Three or more ability scores (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, Char) of 14 or higher. Operators are the best of the best and the weak rarely survive the training, let alone the job.

### Hit Die

The Operator gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Operator gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Operator’s class skills are as follows:

Climb (Str), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Parachuting (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Read Lips (Int), Scuba Diving (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str.)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 3 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

**Specialist:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Operator selects one of the following specialties to follow, thus gaining its abilities:

- *Amphibious:* You can hold your breath for twice the usual duration (triple with the Frogman feat), gain a +2 to all swim checks, and you may make attack actions without reducing the number of rounds you may hold your breath for. Frogman and Surface Vehicle Operation (powerboat, sailboat, or ship) are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Close Quarters Battle:* You gain a +1 competence bonus to attack in hand-to-hand, with melee weapons, and with firearms against opponents within the weapon's first range increment. Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Martial Arts, and Point Blank Shot are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Demolitions:* You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Demolition and Disable Device checks, and with Craft (chemical) checks for the purpose of making or modifying explosives, no matter the conditions or situation. You may also take 20 on your Demolition checks (given that you can still beat the timer) and can place explosives in half the usual time. Cautious, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, and Toughness are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Heavy Weapons:* You gain a +1 competence bonus to attack with heavy weapons, explosives, and splash weapons. You are also able to carry and use cumbersome weapons with greater ease than is normal. You treat the size of all longarms and heavy weapons as one size category smaller for the purpose of determining how many hands are used to wield it and whether it is considered a light weapon, so long as you can lift and carry a weapon without the combined weight of your gear equaling a heavy load (see the main book, "Carrying Capacity"). This means that Huge weapons are treated as Large, Large as Medium-Size, and so on. Armor Proficiency (medium), Athletic, Cleave, and Great Cleave are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Mechanic:* You gain a +3 competence bonus to all Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), and Repair checks. You are also able to take 20 on such checks, no matter the conditions. Builder, Gearhead, and Great Fortitude are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Pilot:* Choose one of the following pilot packages. Both packages gain a +1 competence bonus to attack when using weapons mounted on their pilot package's chosen vehicle type.
  - *Driver Package:* Gain the Surface Vehicle Operation feat for either heavy wheeled, powerboat, or tracked, and gains +2 competence bonus on Drive checks with that vehicle type. Surface Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Dodge, and Vehicle Expert are available to you as bonus feats
  - *Pilot Package:* Gain the Aircraft Operation feat for either heavy aircraft or helicopters, and gains a +2 competence bonus when making Pilot checks with that aircraft type. Aircraft Operation and Vehicle Expert are available to you as bonus feats.
- *Recon:* You gain a +2 competence bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Survival checks. You may also take 20 with Hide checks. Elusive Target, Guide, Lightning Reflexes, Low Profile, Stealthy, and Track are available to you as bonus feats.



- **Rifleman:** You gain a +1 competence bonus to attacks with longarms (rifles, submachine guns, assault rifles, etc.) You are also more skilled at controlling your shots, allowing you to carry out autofire attacks using half the usual amount of bullets; if there are more targets within the 10-foot by 10-foot area affected by the autofire than bullets fired, it merely means that some of the bullets passed through to wound additional targets. Quick Reload, Strafe, and Shot on the Run are available to you as bonus feats.
- **Sharpshooter:** You gain the Dead Aim feat, even if you don't meet the feat's prerequisites. If the feat is already possessed, increase the competence bonus to attack to +3. Furthermore, while making an attack with the Dead Aim feat you increase the critical threat range of any longarm weapon used by 1 so long as it is a single shot or semiautomatic weapon firing a single shot. Far Shot, Marksman, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, and Sniper are available to you as bonus feats.

**Bonus Feat:** At 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Operator gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Airborne, Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Blind Fight, Brawl, Bust Fire, Combat Expertise, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Endurance, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Run, Weapon Focus.

Additional bonus feats are also made available to you based on the specialist type you chose.

**One Tough Ape:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the Operator increases his massive damage threshold by 4 points.

**Gung Ho!:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, an Operator gains the Heroic Surge feat. If the feat is already possessed, the Operator increases the number of times he may use Heroic Surge per day by his Strength bonus (minimum of +1/day.)

**Shooter n' Looter:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, an Operator's instincts are so tightly wired that he can no longer be caught flat-footed.

**Silent Kill:** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, an Operator who successfully Moves Silently to stand directly behind an opponent (any of the three 5-foot squares behind him) without making the latter aware of his presence may make a Coup de Grace attack against that opponent by spending 1 action point. Unlike a normal coupe de grace maneuver a Silent Kill attack may be used on a target that is not helpless, so long as the target is unaware of the attacker, and only requires an attack action to perform.

**TABLE -: THE OPERATOR**

Class Level	Base	Att. Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
Special	Defense Bonus			Reputation Bonus			
1 <sup>st</sup>	+1	+2	+1	+0	Specialist	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+2	+3	+2	+0	Bonus Feat	+2	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+3	+3	+2	+1	One Tough Ape	+2	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	+3	+0
5 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+4	+3	+1	Gung Ho!	+4	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+5	+3	+2	Bonus Feat	+4	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+5	+4	+2	Shooter n' Looter	+5	+1

8 <sup>th</sup>	+8	+6	+4	+2	Bonus Feat	+6	+1
9 <sup>th</sup>	+9	+6	+4	+3	Silent Kill	+6	+2
10 <sup>th</sup>	+10	+7	+5	+3	Bonus Feat	+7	+2

## OUTRIDER

The Outrider is adept at getting around. He is as comfortable flying through the air in a jet and behind the wheel of car darting about crowded streets as he is on the back of a camel in the desert. The Outrider has no qualms about pulling maneuvers others would call risky to reach a destination-or he may just simply be showing off. He is a transportation specialist who can double as a recon scout, since he can get there and back in the shortest time.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Outrider, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Drive 6 ranks, 6 total ranks between Pilot and Ride in any combination (minimum 1 each).

**Feats:** Surface Vehicle Operations.

### Hit Die

The Outrider gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Outrider gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Outrider's class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (electronic, mechanical) (Int), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise, technology) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Transportation Focus:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Outrider gains a +3 bonus to distribute in any combination for up to three specific vehicle types. He can split it evenly between three vehicles, put +3 in a single vehicle, or +1 in one and +2 in the other. Examples of vehicle types include race cars, camels, helicopters, submarines, hovercrafts, llamas, 18-wheel semis, etc. The bonus kicks in when the Outrider is operating a vehicle of the specified type.

**Full Throttle:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, an Outrider understands how to push the limits of a vehicle. He may increase the transportation's performance (speed, durability, etc.) from 5% to 25%. He must specify the increment (always in 5%) when applying this feat. However, the vehicle/beast is automatically disabled/exhausted if the Outrider rolls a natural 1 on any relevant check. Every 5% pushed adds +1 to the chance of a complete breakdown, i.e., natural roll of 1-2 for 10% improvement, 1-3 for 15%, etc., up to 1-5 for

the max 25%. The GM may increase the chance depending on the condition and reliability of the transportation.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Outrider gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Animal Affinity, Aircraft Operation, Drive-By Attack, Exotic Vehicle Operation, Fast, Expert Vehicle Operation, Force Stop, Improved Initiative, Run, Surface Vehicle Operations, Vehicle Dodge.

**Convenient Getaway:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Outrider may spend 1 action point to have a transportation miraculously available to him for escapes and chases! The getaway vehicle must be congruent to the current setting/genre; a Mercedes-Benz normally do not pop up in midst of a deep African jungle, for example, but wild zebras or even swinging vines do. The GM determines the exact transportation, from cropdusters to hang gliders, messenger bikes, skateboards, stilts, the back of dolphins... anything is game.

**Vehicle Evasion:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, whenever the Outrider has to make a Reflex save in order to cut the damage to his transportation by half, it will take no damage instead if he makes the save. At GM's discretion, a transportation can shield its operator (and passengers) from damage, so he is unharmed if it is not damaged.

**Improved Vehicle Evasion:** The Outrider's transportation suffers only half damage on failed Reflex checks.

**Jaw-Dropping Stunt:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, an Outrider may perform one outrageous transportation stunt per adventure automatically, no rolls necessary! He can leap between horsebacks, outrun avalanche on a snowboard, racing a Volkswagen up the side of a tunnel, and so on. As long as it's not implausible (you can't jump a car across an ocean), it can and will be done.

**One With the Wheel:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Outrider has perfected his aptitude so superbly that any vehicle he operates instantly becomes an extension of himself, even those he's operating for the first time. He may substitute the transportation's saving throw bonus, attack bonus, defense bonus, etc. with his own, and use certain feats with the transportation as if it possessed that feat (for example, his mount may perform a Whirlwind Attack, or he may add the Stealthy feat bonus when tailing someone in a small car, providing the Outrider himself has the feat).

**TABLE 2-2: THE OUTRIDER**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will		Defense	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+1	+1	Transportation Focus	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+1	+2	+1	Full Throttle	+1	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+1	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+2	+3	+2	Convenient Getaway	+2	+1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+2	+3	+3	Vehicle Evasion	+2	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+4	+3	Improved Vehicle Evas.	+3	+2
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+4	+4	Jaw-Dropping Stunt	+4	+2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+4	+4	+4	Bonus Feat	+5	+2
10 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+4	+5	+4	One With the Wheels	+6	+3

## WETBOY

Anonymity is your identity and silence your best friend. You are the one who gets

the call whenever the government (or corporation, mob, what-have-you) needs a “wetwork” (untraceable, deniable murder, in other words) performed.

It is the Wetboy’s job to eliminate your assigned target, no matter the cost, no matter the location. This means that the Wetboy must be a master of infiltrating, by wit, muscle, or charm, areas that would normally be denied him. Once there, the methods used to kill the target may be as simple as a bullet to the head or a car trapped with explosives to send a message, or as creative and subtle as poisoned food to make it appear as though the target died of a heart attack. A wise Wetboy will attempt to be proficient at all such methods - all the better to keep the work rolling in.

Wetboys are a good choice for players looking for a character that isn’t afraid to step into the thick of things, but doesn’t want to play something as blunt as a Soldier. A Wetboy isn’t the loud hammer to bang the nail home; he is the silent knife cutting the strings. He is subtlety, intelligence and deadliness all wrapped up in one slick package, a fact that grants him a fair degree of skills and abilities that may also be applied in non-combat situations.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Wetboy, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +2

**Skills:** Hide 4 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks

**Feat:** Personal Firearms Proficiency

### **Hit Die**

The Wetboy gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Weboy gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Wetboy’s class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Communications Scrambling (Int), Craft (chemical, electronic) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), Speak Language (none), and Tumble (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 7 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

**Personal Arsenal:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Wetboy has an uncanny ability for sneaking weapons past security. Any weapon, be it ranged, melee, explosives, archaic, a firearm, etc., is treated as one size smaller whenever the Wetboy makes a Sleight of Hand check to conceal the weapon in his clothes (or in other, less savory, places on his person.) Also, anyone who is not himself a Wetboy or does not have at least 8 ranks of Spot does not receive the usual +4 “hands on” bonus for patting down a Wetboy for weapons.

**Silent and Deadly:** A 2<sup>nd</sup>-level, a Wetboy gains a +1d6 damage bonus to any attack made against a foe that he catches flat-footed or has managed to flank. This bonus

increases to +2d6 at level 8. This damage bonus also applies to ranged weapons, so long as the necessary conditions are met.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Wetboy gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Acrobatic, Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Agile Riposte, Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Martial Arts, Dead Aim, Double Tap, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Fast, Frightful Presence, Improved Initiative, Nimble, Point Blank Shot, Quick, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy, Track, Weapon Finesse.

**Signature Weapon:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Wetboy has learned a single type of weapon intimately and is thus able to deliver death with far greater efficiency while wielding it. The Wetboy must choose a specific type of weapon, such as a Walther PPK, knife, throwing knife, longsword, or MP5. The choice does not apply to weapon groups such as grenade launchers, handguns, personal firearms, etc., though the GM may rule that it applies to closely related versions of the same weapon, such as the varied types of MP5. When using his signature weapon, the Wetboy gains a +1 competence bonus to attack and a +2 competence bonus to damage.

While it is entirely possible for a Wetboy to select a conspicuous weapon like the M60 machinegun or M79 grenade launcher as their signature weapon, most of their operations require more subtlety, so a Wetboy is far more likely to choose something compact and easily concealed, or at least quieter.

**Impromptu Weapon:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Wetboy learns to make do with what he has at hand. By spending 1 action point, he can pick up just about any object, be it a flagpole, toothpick, or playing card, and turn it into a weapon. While attacking with the impromptu weapon, he does not suffer the usual penalties for using a weapon with which he is not proficient for as many rounds as he has levels of Wetboy. After that, the usual penalties apply or another action point must be spent.

Item Size	Typical Damage
Fine	1 point
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium-size	1d6
Large	1d8

The GM must decide if the damage is bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing in nature.

**Kill Shot:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the critical threat range of a Wetboy's attack increases by 1 while using his signature weapon. If a multiplier in any way increases the Weboy's critical threat range, add this ability's bonus after the multiplier has been accounted for.

**Death Comes:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, a Wetboy has become the walking, talking, breathing embodiment of death. By spending 1 action point and a full-round action, you are allowed a single attack against every target that could possibly be hit by your currently chosen method of attack. This applies to firearms, unarmed attacks, melee weapons, thrown melee weapons, and so on, to the maximum extent of the weapon's ammunition (if any.) Each attack is rolled with your current highest attack value for that attack type.

**TABLE -: THE WETBOY**

Class Level	Base Att. Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus		

1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+2	+0	Personal Arsenal	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+3	+0	Silent and Deadly +1d6	+2	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+1	+3	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+4	+1	Signature Weapon	+3	+0
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+4	+1	Impromptu Weapon	+4	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+5	+2	Bonus Feat	+4	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+2	+5	+2	Kill Shot	+5	+1
8 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+2	+6	+2	Silent and Deadly +2d6	+6	+1
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+3	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	+6	+2
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+3	+7	+3	Death Comes	+7	+2

## ENFORCER

The enforcer specializes in “strong-arm services,” imposing his employer’s will upon his unfortunate quarry. He may be found as a muscle in the alleys shaking down deadbeats for gambling debt, as a bouncer in a ghetto joint launching rowdy customers through the window, as a bounty hunter in a crumbling apartment complex chasing after wanted felons, or as a hit man behind tombstones with a target in the crosshair. He loves busting heads, and if he can be paid for it, hey, so much the better.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Enforcer, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +2.

**Skills:** Intimidation 6 ranks, Knowledge (streetwise) 6 ranks

**Feat:** Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

### Hit Die

The Enforcer gains 1d12 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Enforcer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Enforcer’s class skills are as follows:

Climb (Str), Craft (mechanical, structural) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Jump (Str), Gamble (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, law, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Speak Language (none), Spot (Int).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Power Attack:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, an enforcer gains the Power Attack feat, even if he doesn’t have the prerequisite Strength score.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Enforcer gains a bonus feat. This feat

must be selected from the following list, and the Enforcer must meet all prerequisites: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Fast Healer, Frightful Presence, Great Cleave, Headstrong, Improved Brawl, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Streetfighting, Weapon Focus, Whirlwind Attack.

**Staredown:** At 3rd level, the Enforcer starts to master “The Look”: the harsh stare, the gruff voice, the threatening posture... the whole package. He adds class level/2 (round up) to all intimidation checks.

**Tough Enough:** At 4th level, whenever the Enforcer has an opportunity to make a Fortitude save for half damage and/or effect (versus poison or disease, for instance), he reduces it to no damage and no effect on a successful check instead.

**Thick-Skinned:** At 5th level, the Enforcer can shrug off damage from each blow he suffers. Subtract 1 damage from each attack when he is hit. This ability stacks with the Damage Reduction and Improved Damage Reduction feat.

**Dirty Tactics:** At 7th level the Enforcer knows how to neglect his opponent’s advantage by employing dirty tactics (throwing dirt in the eyes is a popular one). The target must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + Enforcer’s class level/2 and Dex bonus) or falls victim to the trick, losing all natural defense and attack bonuses for 1d6 rounds.

**Extra Tough:** At 8th level, the Enforcer cuts all damages/effects from a failed Fortitude check by half.

**Stand My Ground:** At 10th level, the Enforcer develops a nerve of steel. He may become immune to morale, fear, or charm (i.e., seduction, bluff) effects for whatever length of time that he chooses to forego his Charisma bonus. Moreover, he cannot be shaken or intimidated by anybody of equal or lesser character level. He may also intimidate a general audience rather than just a single target. This affects all those of lower character level than the Enforcer within sight or hearing distance, who must make a Will check (DC is 10 + Enforcer’s character level) or become intimidated without the Enforcer having to roll.

**TABLE 2-6: THE ENFORCER**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will		Defense	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+1	+1	+1	+0	Power Attack	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+2	+2	+1	+1	Staredown	+1	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+2	+2	Tough Enough	+2	+1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+3	+2	Thick-Skinned	+3	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+3	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+4	+3	Dirty Tactics	+4	+2
8 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+5	+4	+4	Extra Tough	+4	+2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+5	+5	+4	Bonus Feat	+5	+2
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+6	+5	+4	Stand My Ground	+5	+2

## SURVIVOR

A Survivor is someone who expects big trouble - we’re talking the “oh look, the end of the world is coming,” kind of trouble, and has prepared himself appropriately. Survivors have pushed their bodies to the limits of what is likely to be needed to survive just about any disaster, be it manmade or natural in design. What’s more, they’ll also have

supplies stockpiled here and there so they'll be better prepared for the end of civilization when it comes, no matter where they may be.

If you have any reservations about being vulnerable to the various types of exotic damage that exist in the game, such as poisons and fire, or if you just want a character who can soak up a lot of punishment, then the Survivor is the choice for you. Sure, they don't have the best skill selection, and they don't make the best combatants or tacticians, but they are likely to survive situations that could very well wipe out everyone else.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Survivor, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Concentration 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks

**Feats:** Fast Healer

### **Hit Die**

The Survivor gains 1d12 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Survivor gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Survivor's class skills are as follows:

Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (chemical, mechanical, electronic, structural) (Int), Drive (Dex), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (current events, earth and life sciences, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Skiing (Dex), Spot (Wis), Speak Language (none), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Treat Injury (Wis.)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

**Body Over Mind:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Survivor's impressive resilience allows him to last longer on what meager resources he is able to find. The character adds his Con bonus to any Survival checks.

**Will to Survive:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Survivor's tenacity and toughness permits him to resist succumbing to certain circumstances. By spending 1 action point, the character may substitute a Fortitude save for either a Will or Reflex save roll.

**Bonus Feats:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Survivor gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Damage Reduction, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Endurance, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Great Fortitude, Improved Damage Reduction, Improved Damage Threshold, Iron Will, Nerves of Steel, Scavenge, Stubborn Death, Run, Track.

**For a Rainy Day:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, it is assumed that the Survivor would have spent a long time, and lots of money, putting together caches of equipment, vehicles, and weapons all around the country (or even the world, if he is a globe trotter.) Once per game session, the Survivor is allowed to make a Survival check (DC 25) and spend 1 action point to see if any such cache is within roughly an hour's traveling time.



If this check is successful, consider the cache to contain equipment that could be purchased with a Wealth equal to the Survivor's current Wealth bonus plus his level of Survivor. The GM should feel free to exclude any gear that is too alien or unlikely.

**To the Limit:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Survivor is able to survive attacks that would kill most other people by increasing his massive damage threshold by his levels of Survivor.

**Preferred Terrain:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the Survivor becomes especially familiar with a particular type of terrain. Chose one of the following terrains: Aquatic, Desert, Forest, Hill, Marsh/Swamp, Mountains, Plains, Subterranean, or Urban. Next add one of the following climates to the terrain, except for Urban and Subterranean, which are not modified by climate: Cold, Temperate, or Warm (tropical.) While within that terrain (e.g., Cold Forest), the survivor gains a +2 bonus to all Listen, Hide, Move Silently, and Survival checks.

**Poison Resistance:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, the onset time of any poison affecting the Survivor is extended to 5 minutes rather than just 1. What's more, spending an action point reduces the effect/damage/duration of a poison by half.

**What Pain?:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Survivor gains a Resistance to Energy of 1 + his Constitution bonus against either fire or cold. This stacks with any similar ability, such as the Tough Hero's energy resistance talent tree.

**TABLE -: THE SURVIVOR**

Class	Level	Base	Att. Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	
	Special	Defense Bonus		Reputation Bonus			
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+2	+0	+1	Body Over Mind	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+3	+0	+2	Will to Survive	+1	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+3	+1	+2	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+4	+1	+2	For a Rainy Day	+2	+1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+4	+1	+3	To the Limit	+3	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+5	+2	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+5	+2	+4	Preferred Terrain	+4	+2
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+6	+2	+4	Poison Resistance	+4	+2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+6	+3	+4	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+7	+3	+5	What Pain?	+5	+3

## EXPLORER

The Explorer lives for visiting new places, meeting new people, and doing new things. She is not necessarily the scholarly type but a surveyor, cartographer, or just a worldly individual who enjoys traveling, someone with a taste for exotic adventures... in other words, a perfect candidate for the Odyssey Team.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Explorer, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Decipher Script 6 ranks, Knowledge (history) 6 ranks, Read/Write Language, Speak Language.

### Hit Die

The Explorer gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Explorer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Explorer's class skills are as follows:

Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (pharmaceutical, structural, visual art, writing) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, current events, earth sciences, history, life sciences, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

**Empathic Communication, Linguist:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level the Explorer gains the Empathic Communication and Linguist feats.

**Well-Traveled:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Explorer receives +2 bonus to Survival and all cultural knowledge-related checks. She may use her Int bonus instead of Cha bonus when interacting with new cultures.

**Cross-Training:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer trains herself in expertises outside of her field to better prepare herself against unexpected surprises. She may designate one cross-class skill to be a class skill while she remains an Explorer.

**Quick Study:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer grasps foreign languages and customs quicker than usual. Given at least 8 hours of interaction, she can communicate basic ideas via simple words, enough to express thoughts like "there's food over the next hill," "much danger from the north," "we need medical help," etc. She will also learn the more conspicuous nuisances and most taboos of the society in the interim. She can master the language at her Int-5 level if it shares a similar pattern or is a derivative to one she already knows/speaks after the 8 hours ("Hmm, the writing is curiously close to Hebrew..."), though such "crammed" knowledge atrophies quickly when contact ceases. She still must buy the Speak/Write and/or Read Language skill to become fully fluent.

**Brilliant Foresight:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer is sufficiently experienced to anticipate needs on an expedition. Any time she needs a tool, instrument, item... anything that isn't listed among her equipment, she may attempt a Wis check to "retrospectively" have brought it along after all! And if by chance it was written down but became lost or useless, she can use this ability to have "remembered" to carry a spare (except for one-of-a-kind items that cannot be duplicated exactly). The item will be on her person, unless she's been stripped of all her belongings somehow. The DC depends on the size of the possession and its practicality. Therefore, things that are impossible or plain ridiculous to be lugged on a mission, such as a nuclear warhead and landscape painting, are disallowed outright.

<i>Item</i>	<i>DC</i>
Small item/trinket (screwdriver, binoculars, flashlight, duct tape, alarm clock, leather glove, dice, lighter)	10

Regular item/trinket (tool kit, portable power generator, umbrella, telescope, English textbook, bungee cord, basic chemistry set)	15
Odd item/trinket (small hydraulic jack, hourglass, patch of animal skin, stuffed teddy bear, aviator's manual, crockpot)	20
<i>Modifier</i>	<i>DC</i>
Each large/complex item after the first	+10
If it is recorded on the character sheet previously	-5
If the item is consistent with the character's background	-5

**Close Call:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer has survived enough perils and predicaments that she can instinctively get out of them-barely. She can spend two action points to make an automatic narrow escape from traps, disasters, predatory animals, etc. She must narrate how she gets away and the coincidental circumstances that contributed to escape. This ability functions for her only, though she is certainly free to aid her allies in her safety.

**Intuition:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer's perception is sharpened to the point of being "sixth sense." In situations that offer a number of alternatives without an apparent logical solution, she may attempt a Wis check at DC 10 + the number of choices available to guess the correct one. For example, if there are three identical passageways and only one is a safe exit, it's a DC 13 Wis check. She can attempt Intuition checks up to 1 + her Wis bonus times per adventure, but under no circumstance can it be used to end a scenario prematurely.

**Adaptable:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Explorer is a master survivalist. If she is not unconscious or immobile at the time of a natural disaster (e.g., hurricane, earthquake) or environmental hazard (e.g., marsh gas, volcano eruption), she learns to reduce all damage to herself when facing the same event in the future. She must still take some precautions or measures in order to prevent the damage, not just running out into the open expecting to be unharmed because of this ability. Additionally, she can extend the same protection to any one person with a successful Survival check (usually DC 15-20). She may do this for as many persons as successful checks and the time allows.

**TABLE 2-6: THE EXPLORER**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will	Defense	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+1	+1	+0	+1	Empathic Commun., Linguist	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+2	+1	+0	+2	Well-Traveled	+1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+2	+1	+2	Cross-Training	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+1	+3	Quick Study	+2
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+2	+3	Brilliant Foresight	+2
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+2	+3	Cross-Training	+3
7 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+3	+4	Close Call	+3
8 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+4	+3	+4	Intuition	+4
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+4	+4	+5	Cross-Training	+4
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+5	+4	+5	Adaptable	+5

**FIELD SCIENTIST (Revised)**

The following changes have been made to this core advanced class to make it

more in line with the Odyssey Prime concept.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Field Scientist, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** 6 ranks in either Craft (chemical) or Craft (electronic), plus 6 ranks in Knowledge (earth and life sciences), Knowledge (physical sciences), or Knowledge (technology), plus 6 ranks in Research.

### **Hit Die**

The Field Scientist gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Field Scientist gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Field Scientist's class skills are as follows:

Computer Use (Int), Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical, pharmaceutical), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, technology) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 7 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

**Smart Defense:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Field Scientist applies his Intelligence bonus and his Dexterity bonus to his Defense. Any situation that would deny the Field Scientist his Dexterity bonus to Defense also denies the Intelligence bonus.

**Adaptive Science:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a Field Scientist is able to study and adapt foreign (or even alien) science to suit his needs. This means that the Field Scientist ignores any penalties or DC increases that the GM may apply specifically because of the alien and/or unfamiliar nature of any tools, equipment, weapons, etc.

**Bonus Feats:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Field Scientist gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Adapted Skill, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Attentive, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Educated, Gearhead, Intuitive Communications, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Portal Operation, Programmer, Renown, Studious.

**Skill Mastery:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, a Field Scientist selects a number of skills from his class list equal to 3 + his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check using one of these skills, the Field Scientist may take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent him or her from doing so.

**Minor Breakthrough:** Upon attaining 5<sup>th</sup> level, a Field Scientist receives credit for a minor scientific breakthrough that earns him or her the recognition of her peers. The Field Scientist chooses one of the following Knowledge skills: behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, or technology. When dealing with others with at least 1 rank in the same Knowledge skill, the Field Scientist gains a +2 bonus on Reputation

checks.

This minor breakthrough also provides the Field Scientist with a +3 Wealth bonus increase.

**Note:** In Odyssey Prime, the breakthrough may be a bit of technology or scientific genius brought back from another world and released (in a controlled manner, of course), as a means to explain to the public the huge covert expenditures used to fund the project.

**Epiphany:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, a Field Scientist may spend 1 action point to gain an automatic success versus any Int skill or ability check with a DC of 20 or less. 2 action points are required versus a DC of 21 to 30, and 3 action points are needed versus a DC of 31 or more. The Field Scientist may have as many epiphanies per game session as his Int bonus (minimum of once per session.)

**Smart Survival:** A Field Scientist of 8th level or higher can spend 1 action point to reduce the damage dealt by a single attack or effect by 5 points.

**Major Breakthrough:** At 10th level, the Field Scientist gains a +2 bonus on Reputation checks when dealing with individuals who have at least 1 rank in any of the following Knowledge skills: behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, or technology. This bonus stacks with the bonus provided by the minor breakthrough ability.

This major breakthrough also provides the Field Scientist with a +3 Wealth bonus increase.

**Table-: THE FIELD SCIENTIST**

Class	Level	Base Att. Bonus			Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
		Special Defense Bonus			Reputation Bonus		
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Smart Defense	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Adaptive Science	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+1	+1
4th	+2	+2	+2	+1	Skill Mastery	+1	+1
5th	+2	+3	+3	+1	Minor Breakthrough +2	+2	+1
6th	+3	+3	+3	+2	Bonus Feat	+2	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+2	Epiphany	+2	+2
8th	+4	+4	+4	+2	Smart Survival	+3	+2
9th	+4	+4	+4	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+3
10th	+5	+5	+5	+3	Major Breakthrough +3	+3	+3

**SCAVENGER**

A Scavenger is someone who has learned to make the best of a bad situation. They are able to more easily find and purchase what others cannot, they can make repairs using junk, and they are able to cobble together effective gear using scrap, and bits and pieces of this and that.

Your skills, though invaluable, are also likely to make you a pariah; you’ll be seen as an outsider and possibly even as nuts at worst or eccentric at best. Few people understand your talent for breathing life into other people’s garbage, and so even fewer people will see the true magic in what it is that you are able to do. As such, you usually get along better with the seedier elements of society than you do with its elite.

A Scavenger is an ideal choice for an Odyssey Team agent because they will be able to keep the group’s gear running even if you are light years away from any

manufacturer approved parts. Your skills are centered upon finding the things that you or your teammates need and then putting them all together into a working solution.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Scavenger, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Craft (mechanical) 3 ranks, Gather Information 3 ranks, Repair 6 ranks

**Feats:** Builder, Scavenge

### **Hit Die**

The Scavenger gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Scavenger gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Scavenger's class skills are as follows:

Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical, structural) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gamble (Wis), Knowledge (business, current events, physical sciences, streetwise, technology) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 7 + Int modifier.

### **Class Features**

**Scrounging:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Scavenger is able to find equipment, weapons, and other items that might not otherwise be available. By increasing the time required to find an item by one-third, the Scavenger is able to lower its purchase DC by 1 + half his Scavenger levels, rounded down.

**Scavenging:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Scavenger is able to pull apart one piece of equipment for its components in order to repair another piece of equipment without having to purchase new parts. Thus means that repairs may be carried out without an applicable purchase DC, as normal for a Repair check, but at the cost of an increased DC.

Several factors determine the increase to the Repair check DC. These include the similarities and compatibility between the parts, the amount of time spent looking, and the condition of the machinery from which the parts are scavenged. Trying to effect repairs using scavenged parts also makes repairs longer.

GMs should feel free to elaborate on the given modifiers to suit the specific circumstances of each repair. It is also left to the GM to decide if the scavenged parts are as good as the proper parts or if the parts are only temporary and still need to be replaced. If the latter, the time that the scavenged parts shall last is left to the GM to determine, though the amount by which the Scavenger succeeds at his scavenging Repair check should be a large determining factor in this decision.

### **Scavenging Table**

Modifier	Example	Repair DC Modifier	
	<b>Time</b>		
Compatibility, Exact	Using parts from one car to repair another car of the same model	-	-
Compatibility, Close	Parts from one car to fix a car of the same make but of an earlier model.	+1	+10%
Compatibility, Moderately Close	jet to repair a Russian jet	+3	+25%
Compatibility, Far Removed	a jet	+5	+50%
Compatibility, Wishful Thinking	lawnmowers to repair a jet or more	+8	+100%
Few machines to scavenge	piece or pile of scrap	+5	+25%
Several machines to scavenge	junkyard	+2	+10%
Many machines to scavenge	the state	-	-
Condition, Excellent	Scavenging a brand new car	-	-
Condition, Okay	Scavenging a helicopter that is only a few years old and well maintained	+1	+10%
Condition, Passable	Scavenging a van that isn't well taken care of but is new enough not to have too many problems	+3	+25%
Condition, Poor	Scavenging a old, beat up motorcycle in need of repairs	+5	+50%
Condition, Last Legs	Scavenging a wreck from an auto yard	+8	+100%
Is Totally Alien	A crashed flying saucer	+2 to +6	+100%
	to +900%		

Failing to effect repairs with scavenged parts can cause several problems. There is a 5% chance per point that the Repair check failed to meet the DC by that the equipment being repaired will be broken and rendered totally functionless until proper repairs with parts can be applied. Such repairs must be done using the Repair skill as normal, but the Repair DC is +3 and the purchase DC is increased by 1d6. Rolling above this percentile means that nothing untoward happens and either a normal Repair check or an additional Scavenge check may be attempted. What's worse, if the percentile rolled is 10% or less, the equipment has been broken beyond any hope of repair.

**Rig It:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, a Scavenger knows enough about pulling things apart and putting them back together to be able to rig weapons, gear, and equipment from the parts that he scavenges.

To attempt to construct an item, the character attempts the appropriate Craft check using the DC from the Rig It Equipment Size Table as the base. This base DC is then modified by the available parts from the previous Scavenging Table and those from the Rig It Modifiers Table. Using this ability costs 1 action point for devices with a DC of 30 or less, or 2 action points for device's with a DC of 31 or more.

Keep in mind that the character's roll shall still be modified if he isn't equipped with tools that are up for the task.

### Rig It Equipment Size Table

Equipment Size <sup>1</sup>	Base DC	Time	Base Hit Points
Fine	DC 20	15 hours	1
Diminutive	DC 17	10 hours	2
Tiny	DC 15	6 hours	3
Small	DC 12	4 hours	5
Medium-size	DC 10	2 hours	10
Large	DC 7	4 hours	20
Huge	DC 5	6 hours	40
Gargantuan	DC 3	10 hours	80
Colossal	DC 1	15 hours	120

<sup>1</sup> Do not forget to consider in any combat or skill modifiers

### Rig It Modifiers Table

Modifier Type	DC Modifier <sup>1</sup>	Time
<b>Weapons</b>		
Damage Maximum:		
4 or less points	+1	+15 min.
5 to 8 points	+2	+30 min.
9 to 12 points	+3	+45 min.
13 to 20 points	+4	+1 hour
21 to 30 points	+5	+2 hours
Per +10 points	+1	+1 hour
Per die to reach damage total	+1	-
Damage Type:		
Acid	+1	+1 hour
Ballistic	-	-
Cold	+2	+1 hour
Concussion	+1	+30 min.
Electricity	+2	+30 min.
Fire	+1	+30 min.
Piercing	-	-
Slashing	-	-
Sonic	+3	+2 hours
Critical		
None	-	-
20	+1	+30 min.
19-20	+3	+45 min.
18-20	+5	+1 hour
Per additional +1	+2	+30 min
Range Increment:		
5 ft.	+1	+15 min.
10 ft.	+2	+30 min.



25 ft.	+3	+45 min.
50 ft.	+4	+1 hour
Per +25 ft.	+1	+1 hour
Only has a single range increment	Half Range Inc. DC	Half Range Inc. Time
<b>Rate of Fire:</b>		
Single	-	-
Semiautomatic	+1	+30 min.
Automatic	+3	+1.5 hours
<b>Magazine Type</b>		
Internal	+1	+15 min.
Linked	+2	+30 min.
Magazine	+2	+1 hour
<b>Magazine Capacity</b>		
1	-	-
2 to 12	+1	+15 min.
13 to 25	+2	+30 min.
26 to 50	+3	+1 hour
51 to 100	+4	+2 hours
Per +25	+1	+1 hour
<b>Vehicles</b>		
<b>Locomotion Type:</b>		
Wheeled (ground)	+1	+1 hour
Tracked (ground)	+2	+2 hours
Walker (ground)	+4	+10 hours
Winged (flight)	+1	+5 hours
Rotary (flight)	+2	+15 hours
Oared (water)	-	+1 hour
Propeller (water)	+1	+2 hours
Jet (water)	+2	+5 hours
Range, per 10 miles	+0.10	+5 min.
Speed, per Character 5/Chase 0.5	+0.10	+5 min.
<b>Initiative</b>		
-4 (base)	-	-
-3	+0.5	+30 min.
-2	+1	+1 hour
-1	+1.5	+2 hours
+0	+2	+3 hours
<b>Maneuver</b>		
-4 (base)	-	-
-3	+1	+30 min.
-2	+2	+1 hour
-1	+3	+2 hours
+0	+4	+3 hours
+1	+5	+4 hours
+2	+6	+5 hours
+3	+7	+6 hours

<b>Defense</b>		
4 (base)	-	-
5	+1	+30 min.
6	+2	+1 hour
7	+3	+1.5 hours
8	+5	+2 hours
9	+7	+2.5 hours
10	+9	+3 hours
Hardness Increase, per +1 <sup>2</sup>	+1	+30 min.
Hit Point Increase, per +1 <sup>2</sup>	+0.10	+5 min.
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
<b>Combat/Skill Bonus:</b>		
+1 equipment	+1	+1 hour
+2 equipment	+3	+3 hours
+3 equipment	+5	+6 hours
+4 equipment	+10	+10 hours
+5 equipment	+15	+15 hours
Skill emulation, per rank	+0.5	+15 min.
Air/Water Tight	+2	+2 hours
Broadcast/Detection Range, per mile	+1	+30 min.
Oxygen Supply	+1 per 10 min.	+15 min.
Resistant to Energy (1 type), per 1 point	+2	+30 min.

<sup>1</sup> Round off any fractions

<sup>2</sup> To a maximum of double the original value

The Scavenger can take 10 on any check to rig a new piece of equipment by doubling the required time, or he can take 20 by tripling the time.

A player is likely to think up a piece of equipment not entirely covered by the previous tables, as they are far from exhaustive, in which case the GM should use the tables as a guideline and come up with his own DC and time modifiers.

The GM is also free to put a cap on any single modifier to suit common sense. For example, he may rule that a vehicle made from heavy, cumbersome battleship parts can't have a speed higher than 50 (5) or that a homemade laser sight is still restricted to a +1 equipment bonus.

### Rig It Examples

A 3<sup>rd</sup>-level Scavenger with Craft (mechanical) is trying to make an assault vehicle out of old parts at a scrapyard. The GM rules that there are plenty of parts available, all of which have a close compatibility with what the character intends (+1 DC, +10% time from the Scavenging Table), and that they are in okay condition (+1 DC, +10% time from the Scavenging Table.)

The assault vehicle is going to be Huge (base DC 5, 6 hours, 40 hit points), wheeled (+1 DC, +1 hour), have a range of 300 miles (+3 DC, +2.5 hours), and a maximum speed of 150 (15) (+3 DC, +2.5 hours.)

The character is making the vehicle out of steel (hardness 10), but he wants to thicken it up a bit. He increases the hardness to 15 (+5 DC, +2.5 hours), the defense to 7

(+3 DC, +1.5 hours), and the hit points to 60 (+2 DC, +1 hour, 40 minutes.) He also wants it to be slightly more agile, so he pushes the Initiative up to -2 (+1 DC, +1 hour) and the Maneuver to -2 (+2 DC, +1 hour.) Just to be sure, he also makes it somewhat Resistant to Fire (2 points; +4 DC, +1 hour.)

The final information on building his assault vehicle is: Craft (mechanical) (DC 31), costing 2 action points, and requiring 24 hours and 48 minutes. The GM rules that it has a crew of 1 (the driver), but may hold up to 7 passengers or 4,000 lb. of cargo. The vehicle's statistics are *Init.*: -2, *Maneuver*: -2, *Top Speed*: 150 (15), *Defense*: 7, *Hardness*: 15, *Hit Points*: 60, Huge.

The character then decides he wants to make a flamethrower to mount in a turret on his assault vehicle. The GM says that there are some old oxyacetylene torches and tanks lying around the scrapyard (close compatibility; +1 DC, +10% time), but they are all in passable condition (+3 DC, +25% time.)

The flamethrower will be Large (base DC 7, 4 hours, 20 hit points), and cause 4d6 (+5 DC, +2 hours for 24 point damage maximum; +4 DC for using 4 dice to reach the damage maximum) of Fire damage (+1 DC, +30 minutes) with no chance of critical. It only fires single shots (no DC or time modifiers) and shall be fed from a tank (internal magazine; +1 DC, +15 minutes) good for 25 shots (+2 DC, +30 minutes.) The flamethrower has a single range increment of 50 ft. (+2 DC, +30 minutes.)

The final information on building the flamethrower is: Craft (mechanical) (DC 26), costing 1 action point, and taking 10 hours and 46 minutes. The flamethrower's statistics are *Damage*: 4d6, *Critical*: -, *Damage Type*: Fire, *Range Increment*: 50 ft. (special), *Rate of Fire*: Single, *Magazine*: 25 int., Large. The GM rules the flamethrower weighs 80 lb.

**Scavenging & Rig It Bonus:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level and every level thereafter, a Scavenger's ability to rig new pieces of equipment from old parts, and to scavenge those parts in the first place, continue to improve. The character gains a +2 competence bonus to all Scavenging and Rig It checks at 4<sup>th</sup> level and the time needed is reduced by 10%. This bonus increases by +1 per every two levels thereafter while the time needed decreases by 5% per level.

**Bonus Feat:** At 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Scavenger gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Aircraft Operation, Alertness, Cautious, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Educated, Elusive Target, Low Profile, Stealthy, Surface Vehicle Operation, Toughness, Vehicle Dodge.

**TABLE -: THE SCAVENGER**

Class Level	Base Att. Bonus				Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
Special	Defense Bonus			Reputation Bonus			
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+1	+1	Scrounging	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+2	+2	Scavenging	+1	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+1	+2	+2	Rig It	+2	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+3	+3	+2/-10% Bonus, Bonus Feat		+2 +1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+3	+3	+2/-15% Bonus	+3	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+3	+3	+3/-20% Bonus	+3	+2

7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+4	+4	+3/-25% Bonus, Bonus Feat	+4 +2
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+4	+4	+4/-30% Bonus	+4 +2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+4	+4	+4/-35% Bonus	+5 +3
10 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+3	+5	+5	+5/-40% Bonus, Bonus Feat	+5 +3

### TECHIE (Revised)

The following changes have been made to this core advanced class to make it more in line with the Odyssey Prime concept.

#### Requirements

To qualify to become a Techie, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Computer Use 6 ranks, either Craft (electronic) 6 ranks or Craft (mechanical) 6 ranks, and Disable Device 6 ranks.

#### Hit Die

The Techie gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

#### Action Points

The Techie gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

#### Class Skills

The Techie's class skills are as follows:

Communications Scrambling (Int), Computer Use (Int), Craft (electronic, mechanical) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, physical sciences, popular culture, technology) (Int), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 7 + Int modifier.

#### Class Features

**Jury-Rig:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Techie gains a +2 competence bonus on Repair skill checks made to attempt temporary or jury-rigged repairs. See the Repair skill for details on jury-rigging.

At 7<sup>th</sup> level, this competence bonus increases to +4.

**Primary Area of Expertise:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a Techie must choose a skill of expertise from Craft (electronics), Computer Use, Craft (mechanical: vehicles), Craft (mechanical: weapons), or Craft (mechanical: armor.)

#### Computer Use

A Techie pursuing this area of expertise is able to temporarily improve a program's performance by making quick, impromptu changes and supplements to its code, though this risks causing damage to the program down the road. By spending 1 action point and making a Computer Use check (DC 10+5 per +1 improvement), the Techie can increase the program's ranks, bonus, and/or DC by +1 increments.

Programs with multiple aspects that may be improved (e.g., a predator virus has both a Computer Use skill and a detection DC) can have more than one of those aspects

improved, though each requires a separate roll with an additional +3 per aspect being improved applied to each DC.

The Techie performs the modifications in 1 hour per improvement. The Techie can't take 10 or take 20 on this check. If the check succeeds, the effects of the improvement lasts for a number of minutes equal to his Techie class level plus his Int bonus (if any), beginning when the program is first put into use. After the duration of the effect ends, the program reverts to its previous state and a repair chance percentile roll is made. This chance is equal to the combined DCs of any improvements that were made. The result of this roll indicates whether the program requires repairs before it can be used again; roll a Computer Use check versus the original DC to write the program, with success meaning the repair was successful. For example, improving two aspects of the same virus, one by +3 and the other by +1, would incur DCs of 28 and 18, respectively. This means that the repair chance percentile for this program would be 46%.

Failure to conduct an improvement means that the program has been damaged and requires repairs to become functional again.

### ***All Other Areas of Expertise***

Techies pursuing an area of expertise other than Computer Use are able to tweak devices related to that area so that they perform better. By spending 1 action point and making an appropriate Craft check, the Techie can temporarily improve a device's performance-at the risk of causing the machine to need repairs later. The DC for the Craft check depends on the type of improvement being made, as shown on the appropriate table below.

Adding more than one improvement, such as an equipment bonus and a range increase, compounds the machines' repair chances (see the following), with no improvements with a combined chance of repair of greater than 01-99% being allowed.

The Techie performs the modifications in 1 hour per improvement. The Techie can't take 10 or take 20 on this check. If the check succeeds, the effects of the improvement lasts for a number of minutes equal to his Techie class level plus his Int bonus (if any), beginning when the object is first put into use. After the duration of the effect ends, the machine reverts to its previous state and a repair chance percentile roll is made. The result of this roll indicates whether the machine requires repairs before it can be used again.

Failure to conduct an improvement means that the device has been damaged and requires repairs to become functional again.

### ***Craft (electronics)***

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Craft DC</b>	<b>Repair Chance (d%)</b>
Equipment Bonus		
+1	15	01-25
+2	20	01-50
+3	25	01-75
+4	30	01-99
Range Increase		
+25%	15	01-15
+50%	20	01-30
+75%	25	01-45

+100%	30	01-60
+125%	35	01-75
+150%	40	01-90
+175%	45	01-99

***Craft (mechanical: armor)***

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Craft DC</b>	<b>Repair Chance (d%)</b>
<i>Defense Bonus</i>		
<i>(equip./nonprof.)</i> <sup>1</sup>		
+1/-	15	01-25
+2/+1	20	01-50
+3/+1	25	01-75
+4/+2	30	01-99
<i>Maximum Dex Bonus</i>		
+1	15	01-25
+2	20	01-50
+3	25	01-75
+4	30	01-99
<i>Armor Penalty</i> <sup>2</sup>		
+1	10	01-20
+2	15	01-40
+3	20	01-60
+4	25	01-80
+5	30	01-99
<i>Speed</i> <sup>3</sup>		
+5 ft.	20	01-25
+10 ft.	30	01-50

<sup>1</sup> Increase the Armor Penalty by -1 per +1 equipment bonus

<sup>2</sup> To a maximum benefit of a -0 Armor Penalty

<sup>3</sup> To a maximum speed of 30 ft.

***Craft (mechanical: vehicles)***

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Craft DC</b>	<b>Repair Chance (d%)</b>
<i>Initiative Checks</i> <sup>1</sup>		
+1	20	01-25
+2	25	01-50
+3	30	01-75
+4	35	01-99
<i>Maneuver</i>		
+1	25	01-50
+2	30	01-75
+3	35	01-99
<i>Top Speed</i>		
+25%	20	01-50
+50%	25	01-75
+75%	30	01-99

<i>Defense</i> <sup>2</sup>		
+1	20	01-25
+2	25	01-50
+3	30	01-75
+4	35	01-99
<i>Hardness</i> <sup>2</sup>		
+1	15	01-20
+2	20	01-40
+3	25	01-60
+4	30	01-80
+5	35	01-99

<sup>1</sup> To a maximum modifier of +0

<sup>2</sup> Each increase lower's the vehicle's top speed by 5%

### ***Craft (mechanical: weapons)***

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Craft DC</b>	<b>Repair Chance (d%)</b>
<i>Ranged Weapons</i>		
<i>Damage Bonus</i>		
+1	15	01-25
+2	20	01-50
+3	25	01-75
+4	30	01-99
<i>Range Increment</i>		
+5 ft.	15	01-25
+10 ft.	20	01-50
+15 ft.	25	01-75
+20 ft.	30	01-99
<i>Melee Weapons</i>		
<i>Damage Bonus</i>		
+1	10	01-20
+2	15	01-40
+3	20	01-60
+4	25	01-80
+5	30	01-99
<i>All Weapons</i>		
<i>Threat Range</i>		
+1	25	01-35
+2	30	01-70
+3	35	01-99

**Bonus Feats:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Techie gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Builder, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Educated, Gearhead, Hacking, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Portal Operation, Programmer, Scavenge, Studious.

**Secondary Area of Expertise:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, a Techie is allowed to choose another area of expertise.

The Techie can also opt to take his primary area of expertise again rather than selecting a secondary area of expertise. Doing so grants a +2 bonus to all checks involving making an improvement (or writing a program in the case of Computer Use) for his primary area of expertise. Furthermore, the repair chance of any improvements is decreased by 10% and the duration of the improvement is doubled.

**Mastercraft:** At 5th level, the Techie becomes adept at creating mastercraft objects. He or she applies the mastercraft ability to one of his Craft skills (electronic or mechanical). From this point on, he or she can build mastercraft objects using that skill.

With Craft (electronic), the Techie can build electronic devices. With Craft (mechanical), the Techie can build mechanical devices, including weapons.

On average, it takes twice as long to build a mastercraft object as it does to build an ordinary object of the same type. The cost to build a mastercraft object is equal to the purchase DC for the components (see the appropriate Craft skill description) + the bonus provided by the mastercraft feature. A Techie can add the mastercraft feature to an existing ordinary object by making the Wealth check and then making the Craft check as though he or she were constructing the object from scratch.

In addition to the Wealth check, the Techie must also pay a cost in experience points equal to 25 x his Techie level x the bonus provided by the mastercraft feature. The XP must be paid before making the Craft check. If the expenditure of these XP would drop the Techie to below the minimum needed for his current level, then the XP can't be paid and the Techie can't use the mastercraft ability until he or she gains enough additional XP to remain at his current level after the expenditure is made.

When successfully completed, a mastercraft object provides a +1 bonus to its quality compared to an ordinary object of the same type. All weapons and armor, and certain other types of equipment, such as computers and electronic devices, can be constructed as mastercraft objects.

At 8th level, the Techie can add the mastercraft ability to another Craft skill, or he or she can improve his ability in the skill selected at 5th level, so that his mastercraft objects provide a +2 bonus.

At 10th level, the Techie adds another +1 bonus to his mastercraft ability. If the Techie focuses his ability on one Craft skill, his mastercraft objects now provide a +3 bonus. If the Techie already has the ability for both Craft skills, he or she chooses which one to improve to a +2 bonus.

The Craft DC for a mastercraft object is the same as for a normal object of the same type, as described in the Craft skill, with the following modification: For a +1 object, add +3 to the Craft DC; for a +2 object, add +5 to the Craft DC; and for a +3 object, add +10 to the Craft DC.

**Table:- THE TECHIE**

Class Level	Base	Att. Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		
Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus					
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+0	+2	Jury-Rig +2	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+0	+3	Primary Area of Expertise		+1 +0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+1	+4	Secondary Area of Expertise		+2 +1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+1	+4	Mastercraft	+3	+1



6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+2	+2	+5	Jury-Rig +4	+4	+2
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+2	+6	Mastercraft	+4	+2
9 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+3	+3	+7	Mastercraft	+5	+3

## CONSPIRACY HUNTER

You cannot be silenced because you know the truth, and the truth is, like, someplace out ... well, someplace where it can't be silenced forever.

A Conspiracy Theorist is certain that half of what the government propaganda machines known as the media spoon feeds the public is pure filtered opiate for the masses and half of what remains are outright lies. The façade of democratic government and the industrial machine that runs it has been selling out the truth for years, as anyone can see if they know how to read between the lines.

Whether the cover-up is protecting how the government puts mind control drugs in the water, the fact that corporations are secretly growing clones to fill their private armies, how little blue men in flying cigars are coming down from Alpha Centauri to buy our babies for food, or the existence of a giant asteroid traveling a collision course for Earth, you can bet the Conspiracy Hunter has investigated the matter and has himself convinced that it all true. And who knows maybe it is? Well, even if the Conspiracy Hunter uncovers proof that there was no cover-up, who is to say “They” didn't plant the “proof” to keep people off the right track?

Conspiracy Hunters are good members for any Odyssey Prime group because they second-guess everything, a paranoia that is eventually going to pay off. Their senses are also highly attuned, so it is difficult to slip something under their radar.

### Requirements

To qualify to become a Conspiracy Hunter, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Investigate 3 ranks, Sense Motives 6 ranks, Gather Information 3 ranks, Spot 6 ranks

### Hit Die

The Conspiracy Hunter gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Conspiracy Hunter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Conspiracy Hunter's class skills are as follows:

Computer Use (Int), Craft (electronic, pharmaceutical, visual art, writing) (Int), Cryptography (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Speak Language (none), and Survival (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Conspiracy Lore:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, a Conspiracy Hunter has gathered an unbelievable amount of information on all kinds of facts because one never knows when something will prove to be the missing piece in the puzzle that is an unraveling conspiracy.

This ability works like a Knowledge (conspiracy) skill except that it is based on Wis rather than Int. A 1<sup>st</sup>-level Conspiracy Hunter is considered to have 1 rank in this skill and afterwards must improve this ability with skill points, as per a regular class skill. The skill covers everything from theories on the abominable snowman to UFOs to the “magic bullet.”

What’s more, this ability can be used to try and summon a bit of information on any other Knowledge skill subject. This is done by rolling a Conspiracy Lore check, but with half the usual skill modifier (half ranks, half Wis modifier.)

You cannot take 10 or 20 with the Conspiracy Lore ability.

**Resist “Them”:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Conspiracy Hunter has become so sure of the lies that surge and swirl about him, corrupting the truth, that he is able to better resist the will of others who fly in the face of his beliefs. You gain a +4 bonus to resist Intimidate checks made against you and are +2 to save versus *fear* effects.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Conspiracy Hunter gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Alertness, Attentive, Dodge, Educated, Hacking, Improved Luck, Iron Will, Low Profile, Luck, Meticulous, Nerves of Steel, Nimble, Observant, Persuasive, Studious, Trustworthy.

**Seek the Truth:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Conspiracy Hunter is able to better wade through all the lies, dissimulation, and subterfuge. You gain a + competence bonus to your Sense Motive roll to oppose a Bluff attempt and a +3 competence bonus to Spot checks to see through a disguise. Both bonuses increase to +6 at 8<sup>th</sup>-level.

**Reveal the Truth:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, lies and deception have less of a hold over the Conspiracy Hunter’s mind. You gain a +3 competence bonus to saving throws versus Enchantment and Illusion effects.

**Spread the Word:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the Conspiracy Hunter’s convictions are so strong that he is now able to pass along his strength of will to others. As many times per day as the character’s levels of Conspiracy Hunter + his Wis modifier, the character may spend 1 action point per person affected in order to use his own Will save (be it a success or failure) in place of someone else’s, so long as the beneficiary has line of sight to the Conspiracy Hunter. This ability may benefit as many people simultaneously, all using the same result, as the Conspiracy Hunter has points of Wisdom bonus (to a minimum of one person at a time), though each person affected costs one of the uses per day. This counts as a full-round action.

**Abolish Lie:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Conspiracy Hunter is able to dissemble falsehoods. Anytime the character makes a successful saving throw against an Enchantment of Illusion and then spends 1 action point (the declaration to use an action point need not be made until after the saving throw), the entire spell or effect is dispelled.

**TABLE -: THE CONSPIRACY HUNTER**

Class Level	Base Att. Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus		

1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+0	+2	Conspiracy Lore	+1	+1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+0	+3	Resist "Them"	+1	+1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+1	+4	Seek the Truth +3	+2	+2
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+1	+4	Reveal the Truth	+3	+2
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+2	+5	Spread the Word	+4	+3
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+2	+6	Seek the Truth +6	+4	+3
9 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
10 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+3	+3	+7	Abolish Lie	+5	+4

## CRUSADER

The Crusader has dedicated his life a personal mission or belief. Devout priests of a religion, staunch civil rights activists, persistent environmentalists bucking pollutions, righteous politicians advocating reforms, social workers fighting to improve lives of the underprivileged, mysterious vigilantes protecting the neighborhood, and even fanatical attorneys defending their clients in the courtroom are all Crusaders. They are guided by a single vision from which they derived their strength and determination.

### Requirements

To qualify to become a Crusader, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +2.

**Skills:** Investigate 6 ranks, any combination of Knowledge adding up to 6 total ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Iron Will.

### Hit Die

The Crusader gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Crusader gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Crusader's class skills are as follows:

Bluff (Cha), Craft (visual art, writing), Computer Use (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, bureaucracy, current events, law, political sciences, popular culture, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spot (Int), Treat Injury (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Righteous Fervor:** To receive this ability, the Crusader must first select a

“cause.” This is something he truly believes in, is fervant about, and will fight and die for if necessary. Religions and theological beliefs make for good, common causes, as would nationalistic ideals (“liberty, freedom, justice”) and meaningful crusade (“feed the hungry,” “save the environment”), but not quirks or delusions (“eradicate all sewer rats,” “I am Napoleon out to conquer Europe!”). The GM has the final word on whether the Crusader’s choice carries enough significance to qualify.

The Crusader may add a bonus equaling his class level/2, round up, to all competency, combat, and saving throw checks for actions directly related to his cause. For example, if a 3<sup>rd</sup> level Crusader looking into an illegal toxic dump operation happens to have environmentalism for his cause, he gets +2 bonus to all investigate, gather information, law, and research rolls regarding that case. The same bonus will also apply if he is, say, trying to bluff his way past the guards of the suspect corporation.

**Commanding Insight:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, a Crusader begins to develop a keen insight into maximizing group efforts. One encounter or combat per adventure, he may set up a “pool” of bonuses for competence checks. The max bonus in this pool matches the Crusader’s class level, and it may be used by any allies within 30’, who may draw bonuses from it for their competence checks until the pool is exhausted or the encounter is over. There’s no maximum for how much bonus can be drawn at one time, but the more bonuses the team uses, the quicker the pool expires.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Crusader gains a bonus feat. This feat must be selected from the following list, and the Crusader must meet all prerequisites: Alertness, Attention to Detail, Cautious, Deceptive, Fame, Inconspicuous, Infamy, Influence, Observant, Persuasive, Spy.

**Dedication:** At 4<sup>th</sup> level the Crusader may roll one additional action dice when spending an action point for actions directly related to his cause.

**Helping Hand:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level the Crusader can spend action points for allies. He may use it to let the target activate talents, although the amount of bonus dice is determined by the target’s level, not the Crusader’s. The ally must remain in his line of sight or some means of direct communication (including over the phone, radio, or screen) throughout the action.

**Preserverance:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level the Crusader doesn’t give up easily. He may re-roll a failed skill check or retry a task again immediately, even for those requiring a time lapse between attempts. A Crusader can use this ability a number of times equal to his WIS bonus per adventure, but he may not roll more than twice for the same action.

**Resistance:** At 9<sup>th</sup> level the Crusader becomes very difficult to persuade. -4 to all attempts to sway the Crusader (i.e., bluff, diplomacy, intimidate).

**For the Cause:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Crusader can rally others around his cause, using it to inspire them and mount a comeback (“God Almighty will not want you to fail!” “Do it for the Red, White and Blue!”). As a half-round action, he can remove all effects of negative morale or fear with a Cha check at DC 10 + number of targets within 30’ radius, providing he himself isn’t suffering the same effect. He can also inspire them with another Cha check of same DC as a half-round action. Inspired characters are at +2 initiative and +2 to saving throws for Crusader’s Wis bonus in rounds.

**TABLE 2-6: THE CRUSADER**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will	Defense
-------	-------------------------	------	-----	------	---------

Level	Bonus Bonus	Save	Save	Save		Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+1	+0	+1	Righteous Fervor	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+1	+1	+1	Commanding Insight	+1	+1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+1	+1	+2	Bonus Feat	+2	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+2	+1	+2	Dedication	+2	+2
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+3	+2	+3	Helping Hand	+2	+2
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+2	+4	Bonus Feat	+3	+2
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+3	+3	+5	Preserverance	+3	+3
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+3	+6	Resistance	+4	+3
9 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+4	+3	+7	Bonus Feat	+4	+3
10 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+4	+3	+8	Rally	+5	+3

## EMISSARY

The Emissary is the embodiment of goodwill. Her disarming charm and air of gentleness leave nothing but a peaceful, pleasant impression, which easily places her at the forefront of any first contact. She is the stuff that legendary ambassadors, courtiers, and “Welcome Wagon” hostesses are made of. An Emissary’s presence puts others at ease and they are naturally more inclined to trust her and accept her message of peace.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Emissary, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Diplomacy 6 ranks, 2 Read/Write Language, 2 Speak Language.

### Hit Die

The Emissary gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character’s Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Emissary gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Emissary’s class skills are as follows:

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (visual art, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, bureaucracy, business, current events, history, law, political science, popular culture, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 6 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

**Social Grace:** Even at 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Emissary is sensitive enough to realize instantly when she commits a faux pas and, more importantly, knows how to recover. In social situations and for Charisma-based checks except intimidate, she may roll again if it’s a natural roll of 1 + her Cha modifier or less, though she must take the new roll regardless of outcome. This can be done a number of times equaling her class level/2, round up, per game session.

**Soothing Influence:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Emissary can exude such tranquility as to

cause her associates to act civil too. She may substitute one ally's Cha modifier with her own for that ally's Charisma checks, as long as the ally shows no overt hostility (so this ability will not work for intimidation). She may switch to another ally every two rounds, but must remain in that ally's line of sight for the duration.

**Bonus Feat:** At 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Emissary gains a bonus feat. This feat must be selected from the following list, and the Emissary must meet all prerequisites: Educated, Influence, Luck, Mimic, Multi-lingual, Scavenge, Seductive, Sharp-Eyed, Spy, Trustworthy.

**Calming Presence:** Starting at 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Emissary's diplomacy DC to improve a target's initial attitude from hostile is reduced by her class level. She may also use this ability on creatures of at least animal intelligence (i.e., taming a berserk beast).

**Inspire Trust:** Starting at 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Emissary's diplomacy DC to improve a target's initial attitude from unfriendly is reduced by her class level. Characters who are already helpful now accept the Emissary into their circles, according her preferential treatment and special access as if she is one of them.

**Diplomatic Immunity:** Through her natural goodwill (and general harmlessness), the Emissary can change an NPC's intention to kill her outright to something else less permanent, such as hostage or imprisonment, by spending one action point. This ability works against even nonintelligent creatures (they *always* have other plans for the Emissary) and when the character is incapacitated (the attacker spares her instead of delivering the coupe de grace)-or just about any time before the fatal blow. This ability's effect is neglected the instant she attacks the target, and may not be used again in the same encounter.

**Intuitive Communication:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level the Emissary gets this feat even without the prerequisite.

**Master Orator:** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Emissary can now target a whole group rather than individually with bluff, diplomacy, and all otherwise-one-on-one social actions (e.g., seduction). She makes one roll and applies the result to everyone within the target group. The group's size does not alter the DC, since it is treated like it's all one person (use the highest ability modifier for any opposing rolls). Player characters and certain key NPCs are excluded and make their own opposing rolls normally if necessary.

**TABLE 2-1: THE EMISSARY**

Class	Base Att. Reputation	Fort	Ref	Will		Defense	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		Special	Bonus
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+1	+2	Social Grace	+0	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+2	+3	Soothing Influence	+1	+1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+1	+1	+2	+3	Bonus Feat	+1	+1
4 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+2	+4	Calming Presence	+1	+1
5 <sup>th</sup>	+2	+1	+3	+4	Inspire Trust	+2	+2
6 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+3	+5	Bonus Feat	+2	+2
7 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+2	+3	+5	Diplomatic Immunity	+2	+3
8 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+4	+6	Intuitive Communication	+3	+3
9 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+3	+4	+6	Bonus Feat	+3	+4
10 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+3	+5	+7	Master Orator	+3	+4

## SPOOK

Beneath the false veneer of the layman's world is another reality, a world of shadow and intrigue, a world of secrets and heroic death that must forever be kept from the public eye. This is the world of the Spook.

"Spook" is the affectionate nom de guerre used to describe covert operatives existing in the realms of gray that reside between the blind purity of the law and the monstrous devotion of patriotism. Many thought that the era of the spy had ended with the conclusion of the Cold War, but such was not to be. New nations were born from the death throes of communism, nations of unstable certainty and inherited nuclear arsenals. Icing the cake was the continuation of economic globalization, creating corporations whose wealth and influence rivaled that of many countries. And so it was that the world's many Spooks saw their mission orientations shifting to accommodate these new conditions. The Cold War may have been buried but the seeds of countless new revolutions that would struggle to upset the patriotic ideal had been sewn. The world of gray lived on.

A Spook is an expert at getting information from sources that would be denied to even the best Investigator because they are proactive in creating situations to make the information come to them. Spooks infiltrate, seek out, and coerce what they require from others and don't hesitate to use whatever means are necessary.

Although the Spook's primary means to achieve their goals are charm and wits, that doesn't mean a Spook necessarily has to be a poor combatant as well. Certainly, the Spook will avoid the front lines, preferring to work from cover and disguise, but that doesn't make him necessarily any less capable. Spooks always prepare for the worst-case scenario, and in their line of work the you-know-what hitting the fan usually means the bullets will start flying.

### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Spook, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Bluff 3 ranks, Disguise 4 ranks, Gather Information 4 ranks, Search 4 ranks, Sleight of Hand 3 ranks

### **Hit Die**

The Spook gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### **Action Points**

The Spook gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### **Class Skills**

The Spook's class skills are as follows:

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Bugging (Int), Computer Use (Int), Craft (electronic, visual art, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, history, popular culture, streetwise, tactics, technology) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (act, dance) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), and Speak Language (none).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 5 + Int modifier.

## Class Features

**Master of Disguise:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Spook is especially skilled at creating a believable false identity. You don't suffer from lack of a disguise kit, instead gaining a +4 bonus to all Disguise checks when so equipped, and the Spot bonuses based on familiarity for others to see through your disguises are halved.

**Bonus Feat:** At 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Spook gets a bonus feat from the following list, and he must meet all prerequisites: Alertness, Attentive, Combat Expertise, Confident, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Focused, Heroic Surge, Impersonator, Improved Disarm, Linguist, Low Profile, Meticulous, Observant, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Persuasive, Renown, Seductive, Stealthy, Trustworthy, Weapon Finesse, Windfall.

**Seducer:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the Spook excels at manipulating others using his charm in a sexual or sensual manner. The character gains a +4 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive checks against anyone who is sexually attracted to the character's gender.

**Always Be Prepared:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, a Spook always seems to have something on hand when it is needed most. Once per game session the character is allowed, on the spot, to purchase any item that he would normally be able to carry and hide on his person (in other words, no cars or bazookas.) Doing so requires the character to make a roll against the item's purchase DC, though at half the character's normal Wealth bonus, and also make a Sleight of Hand check. He must also spend 1 action point.

If both checks succeed, consider the item to have been hidden on the person in advance (even if the character is now entirely naked - it's best not to ask where it was hidden in this case), and he may now remove it from concealment and use it as he wishes. Failing either roll means that the character has nothing special hidden on him.

**Persuasive:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, a Spook is so used to and skilled at manipulating others that once per day per level of Spook, the character can re-roll any failed Charisma or Charisma-based skill check.

**Connected:** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, a Spook's time in the field has allowed him to build a significant web of contacts throughout the world. By making a Reputation check against the DC appropriate to what is desired, once per game session the character is able to see if he has an appropriate contact within the region, though the character may have to seek him out (few people in the spy game like to remain in the public eye.) Using this ability costs 1 action point per contact successfully found.

The GM should restrict the use of this ability to reasonable moments only. For instance, the GM would likely consider it unreasonable for a Spook to see if he has a contact around while he is shackled in a freezing cell in Antarctica and surrounded by armed guards.

Contact and Degree of Help	Reputation check DC
Information Contact	
Public Knowledge	9 + 1d3
Little Known	14 + 1d4
Restricted	19 + 1d6
Top Secret	24 + 1d6
Expert Contact	8 +2 per rank of Skill
Resource Contact	9 +1 per +1 Wealth bonus



Once the contact has been found, it is up to the Spook to call in the favor to get the contact's assistance.

**TABLE -: THE SPOOK**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Att. Bonus</b>	<b>Fort Save</b>	<b>Ref Save</b>	<b>Will Save</b>	
	<b>Special</b>	<b>Defense Bonus</b>		<b>Reputation Bonus</b>			
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+1	+1	Master of Disguise	+1	+0
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+2	+2	Bonus Feat	+2	+0
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+1	+2	+2	Seducer	+2	+0
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+3	+3	Bonus Feat	+3	+0
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+3	+3	Always Be Prepared	+4	+1
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+3	+3	Bonus Feat	+4	+1
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+2	+4	+4	Persuasive	+5	+1
8 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+2	+4	+4	Bonus Feat	+6	+1
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+3	+4	+4	Connected	+6	+2
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7/+2	+3	+5	+5	Bonus Feat	+7	+2

## Chapter Three: Priming Up (18)

### Skills (14)

#### New Skill Uses for Existing Skills (12)

##### BLUFF (Cha)

*Conversation:* You can draw unwilling or uninterested persons into idle chitchat by faking some knowledge or common ground with the conversant. The attempt requires at least one round of conversation to succeed. If successful, you can occupy the person's attention for 1 minute per Charisma modifier, minimum of 1 minute, allowing others to sneak past the conversant, hide, or retreat. Holding the person's attention longer requires another successful check. Failure indicates that the other conversant finds your attempts at conversation boring and a waste of time, and he or she seeks the earliest opportunity to leave.

##### COMPUTER USE (Int)

*New Use - Writing Specific Programs:* This aspect of the skill is used when writing programs to carry out automated tasks or assist the user in their own skill checks. Some software may only be *automated* or *assist* programs, as indicated.

An automated program operates solely on the basis of its own program and lacks a user to direct its actions. In such cases, the software makes its Computer Use checks solely using its own ranks or it provides a DC that must be defeated by a Computer Use check, as is the case with encryption. The use of the program's Computer Use skill is limited to the program's purpose, however. For example, a hunter infiltrator cannot be used to perform in the same manner as a predator virus.

Assistant software is that which is directed by a user, who thus gains a +1 bonus to his own Computer Use checks per 3 ranks of Computer Use possessed by the program. This bonus may only be used for any Computer Use checks involving the software's purpose.

Writing most programs requires a Computer Use check against a DC of 18 +1 per rank of the program. The time needed is 30 minutes per +1 rank. A programmer may not add more ranks to a program's skill/bonus than his own ranks in Computer Use +1 + his Intelligence bonus (if any.)

##### Combining Programs

A character may write a program that has more than one function, such as a predator virus/relay infiltrator that finds information, passes a copy along and then deletes the original, but doing so requires the programmer to succeed against each program's write DC or fail entirely. Combination programs are more difficult to write, increasing the DC of each program to be included by 3 per program beyond the first.

##### Detection DC

Sometimes a programmer wants his software to be able to avoid detection. Such programs have a detection DC, against which certain programs, such as anti-virus software, or an operator must make a successful Computer Use check in order to find it (see the Software section for more details.)

Programs without a detection DC are only “concealed” by the length of time that is required to find them, based upon the size of the system they are on (see the *Find File* aspect of the Computer Use skill.) An operator may attempt to “ghost” a program without a detection DC by actively giving that program his attention, making opposed Computer Use checks against any software or user bent on trying to find the software. Success indicates that the user has successfully ghosted the program or file, thus keeping it hidden.

***New Use - Fighting Viruses Manually:*** Rather than relying upon anti-virus software, an operator can choose to attack a virus himself. Doing so first requires that the virus be found; roll a Computer Use check using the virus’ detection DC as the number that must be beaten. Once (if) the virus has been found, the operator makes an opposed Computer Use check to attack the virus, as per the *Degrade Programming* aspect of the Computer Use skill. Success indicates that the virus has been defeated.

## NAVIGATE

***New Use - Forward Observing:*** When a map or similar means of accurately determining one’s location is available, you may make a Navigate check (DC 20) to determine the coordinates of a target. The forward observer then passes along the information to another person, typically an artilleryist or pilot, who doesn’t have line of sight to the target. This second person must then also make a Navigate check (DC 20) to ensure that the coordinates are properly received.

If either check fails, the coordinates are not accurate, with possibly disastrous results. In such instances, the GM should randomly determine where the attack is made, with the attack being further off the intended target the more the Navigate check(s) failed by.

**Attack Bonus:** The person receiving the location information from the forward observer gains a +1 bonus to attack per 2 points that the forward observer succeeded at his Navigate check by.

## PERFORM (Cha)

***Mimic:*** You are gifted at mimicking others’ voice patterns. You suffer a -3 circumstance penalty when trying to imitate someone of the opposite gender. When you impersonate an individual’s voice over the phone, those who know the individual automatically receive Listen checks at +4. When trying to impersonate someone else in public, a successful mimic adds a +2 circumstance to Disguise.

***Ventriloquism:*** You are gifted at throwing your voice.

## SENSE MOTIVE (Wis)

***Sense Allegiance:*** With a successful check (DC 25), you can get a feeling for what motivates the character in terms of allegiances (if used). A successful check reveals the character’s two most important allegiances (in general terms). For example, you might learn that law and love for nation are of uppermost importance to an individual. When dealing with a law enforcement officer, such a sense check may reveal the character’s bribability.

## New Skills (12)

### BUGGING (Int)

**Check:** You can plant listening and visual devices accurately and inconspicuously, or you may “sweep” for them. A successful check ensures that the sound or visual reception from the device is clear. Failure means that a device is not hidden well or that the reception is impaired and, therefore, practically useless. Bugging takes roughly 2 minutes per device, and each must be rolled for separately. A DC of 15 is required to successfully receive data from the planted device. This DC rises to 20 if trying to receive specific data from a listening device planted in a noisy room (over the radio or tv or a loud party).

**Opposed Check:** When sweeping for bugs, an opposed Search check or Bugging check is needed to find surveillance devices. Using a bug detector adds +3 to the roll.

**Retry:** Not allowable on the same object.

**Special:** If not hurried, you can take 10 or 20 on this check.

### COMMUNICATIONS SCRAMBLING (Int; Trained Only)

**Check:** This skill allows for the scrambling or unscrambling radio signals. Failure means the unscrambled communication was misinterpreted and/or the sent one was unsuccessfully scrambled.

**Opposed Check:** If someone is actively trying to scramble or unscramble your messages, an opposed Communications Scrambling check is needed.

**Retry:** No retries are possible for the same communication.

**Special:** Requires communications and scrambling equipment.

### CRYPTOGRAPHY (Int; Trained only)

**Check:** This skill allows for recognition, design, and the breaking of secret codes. Failing the roll means the encrypter failed to decode the message or translated it incorrectly. In the case of encoding, it means the encrypter failed to encode correctly and may have mangled the original message.

**Opposed Check:** Decoding requires an opposed Cryptography check.

**Special:** A character with 5 or more ranks in Computer Use gains a +2 bonus to this check.

**Time:** Breaking codes often takes hours, days, weeks, or more-the GM needs to decide how much time a particular code takes to break.

### PARACHUTING (Dex; Trained Only)

#### *Armor Penalty*

Use this skill when using a parachute to jump from an extreme height, be it a BASE, HALO (High Altitude, Low Opening), or standard jump. The skill also includes knowledge of emergency procedures, steering (when possible), and landing techniques.

**Class Skill:** Daredevil, Fast, Infiltrator, Operator, Soldier, Strong, Tough

**Packing a Parachute:** Most jumpers prefer to pack their own parachutes, a task that takes about 15 minutes and requires a Parachuting check (DC 10.) This check can be rushed to 10 minutes, but it is more hazardous to do so (DC 15.) To keep things interesting, the GM should make this roll for the player in secret. Still, even a parachute that isn't packed perfectly has a chance of opening - not a really good chance, but a chance, nonetheless.

**Jump Check:** A “standard” parachute jump is one taken from an aircraft flying at

a high altitude and that ends with the jumper opening his chute above 1,000 feet while falling at a speed no faster than 110 mph. This is a fairly easy task (DC 10) and requires a move action. Increase this DC by +2 per point that the check to pack the parachute failed by (if at all) and by +2 per 15 mph faster than 110 mph the jumper is falling at.

A HALO jump is one made from a standard height but involves opening the parachute at lower than 1,000 ft. This is typically done by Special Forces while inserting into a target as it makes them more difficult to spot and doesn't leave them hanging as easy targets for as long. Such jumps are the most difficult to make (DC 15 + 2 per 50 ft. below 1,000 ft. that the parachute is opened.) Increase this DC by +2 per point that the check to pack the parachute failed by (if at all.)

A BASE jump is more difficult (DC 15 + 1 per 50 ft. below 1,000 ft. that the parachute is opened), as it requires jumping from a structure, such as a bridge or building, that is 1,000 feet or less in height. This provides the jumper with less time to fix a problem, correct for conditions, and open his parachute. It is also more difficult to judge the distance to the ground. Increase this DC by +2 per point that the check to pack the parachute failed by (if at all.)

Failing the jump check to open one's parachute during a standard, HALO, or BASE jump indicates that the parachute has become entangled, or has collapsed if traveling too fast. See the section on untying for more details on how this may be rectified, though in the case of most HALO jumps there is not enough time to do anything (other than smack into the ground) once the problem has been revealed.

Important Note: A parachute takes one full-round to unfurl and fill with air, during which time the jumper is still falling at the faster speed, meaning that if a parachute is opened at a point when the jumper is a full-round or less away from the ground, opening the parachute is a wasted effort and the jumper will impact as though his parachute had not opened.

Opening a parachute from a height of less than 150 ft. doesn't give the parachute enough time to fill with air, meaning the character will hit the ground as though his parachute hadn't opened, regardless of whether or not he made a successful jump check.

**Untangling and Cutting Away:** If a parachute becomes entangled from missing the jump DC, the jumper may attempt another Parachuting check against the original jump check DC (plus any increase due to the additional distance fallen, if applicable) to see if the jumper is able to release the primary parachute and open the secondary parachute. This counts as a move action.

However, if the original jump check failed by 10 or more, the parachute has become too entangled to release and must be cut away. This requires a knife (obviously), and 1d3 rounds to cut the parachute's ropes. Only then may the reserve parachute be opened, as normal

Each full-round of cutting requires a Concentration check (DC 15) with a failed roll indicating that no progress was made that round due to panic and that another attempt may not be made until the next round. The jumper continues to fall with an entangled parachute until the indicated number of rounds of successful cutting has passed. Of course, by that time it may be too late.

**The Backup Parachute:** Almost all parachutes come with a ram-air backup to be used if there is a problem with the main parachute.

**Hitting the Target:** Landing within a specific target area while using a steerable parachute depends upon the size of the area aimed for. If the jumper fails to meet the desired DC, he lands somewhere (determine randomly) within the area designated by the next most difficult DC that his check would have defeated. For example, a jumper aiming for a 5-foot square needs to beat a DC of 30, but rolls a 22. He has missed the desired square but lands somewhere within a 25-foot radius around it.

Target Area	DC
A single 5-foot square	30
10-foot radius or less	25
25-foot radius	20
50-foot radius	15
75-foot radius	10
Greater than 75-foot radius	5

**Speed:** The rate of a jumper's descent depends upon several things, though the form of the jumper's body is the most important, as it is used to increase or decrease the jumper's air resistance. Given enough height to fall from, the parachutist, with arms and legs extended for better control and increased air resistance, will quickly accelerate to reach a speed of up to 125 mph (terminal velocity), but angling to make his body more aerodynamic can allow him to attain speeds of up to 320 mph

Slowing down or accelerating requires a Parachuting check (DC 10 + 1 per 15 mph of speed beyond 125 mph) and a move action. A successful check means you decelerate 15 mph, requiring another check and move action per additional 15 mph you wish to change your speed by.

Following is a table showing the rate of descent based on the jumper's freefall speed. The slowest that a typical person can descend by altering his wind resistance and using gear other than a parachute is roughly 80 mph.

*Table -: Freefall Descent Speeds*

Speed (mph)	Character Speed	Chase Speed	Ft. per Round
80	14	700	
95	17	835	
110	19	970	
125	22	1,100	
140	25	1,230	
155	27	1,365	
170	30	1,495	
185	33	1,625	
200	35	1,760	
215	38	1,890	
230	40	2,025	
245	43	2,155	
260	46	2,285	
275	48	2,420	
290	51	2,550	
305	54	2,685	

320	560	56	2,815
-----	-----	----	-------

Once the parachute is opened, the jumper descends at a rate of 15 mph (char. 30/chase 3), meaning he falls 65 ft. every move action or 130 ft. per round. This slow rate of descent is why the military prefers HALO jumps for insertion - the jumper's chute is open for as little time as possible, leaving less time for him to dangle in the air where he may be more easily spotted, even at night.

Physics Note: These speeds have been extremely simplified for the sake of gameplay. Anyone who wishes to figure out the time until impact, rates of acceleration, and so on is more than welcome to, just make sure your players have a nice film to watch while you do the math every round.

**Landing a Jump:** Landing from a jump is when most injuries occur. A standard jump has a DC of 10 to land. A BASE jump has a DC of 10 +1 per 50 feet that the parachute is opened below 1,000 feet, to a minimum of 150 ft. A HALO jump has a DC of 10 +2 per 50 feet that the parachute is opened below 1,000 feet, to a minimum of 300 ft.

GMs should feel free to increase the DC if the terrain is hazardous, such as from lots of loose sand, mud, rocks, or interspersed with trees (the latter being a situation that could result in a lot worse than a few bruises or a sprained ankle.) Weather could also worsen the DC, as could nighttime conditions (DC +5)

Failing a landing roll causes 1d4 of damage per 1 point that the landing DC was missed by, +1 point of damage per 50 feet that the parachute was opened below 1,000 feet.

**Hitting the Ground:** The jumper would like to land on the ground rather than smack into it, but that isn't always the case. If the parachute and its backup both fail to open, the jumper suffers 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6 points. This damage may be increased based on the terrain the jumper hits; trees are especially deadly, even if the jumper's parachute opens.

If the character succeeds on a Reflex saving throw (DC 10, +1 for each 10 feet fallen), this damage is halved. If the saving throw fails, full damage is applied. A Tumble check may reduce the effective distance of the jump, as it would in the case of a fall.

**Special:** You can take 10 or when packing a parachute, requiring 15 minutes and minutes, respectively. You cannot take 10 or 20 when trying to untangle a parachute, cut away a parachute, or land from a jump.

Tumble can provide a +2 synergy bonus for landing checks.

#### READ LIPS (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

**Check:** You must be within 30 feet of the speaker and be able to see her speak, and you must be able to understand the speaker's language. (Use of this skill is language-dependent.) The base DC is 15, and it is higher for complex speech or an inarticulate speaker. The character has to concentrate on reading lips for a full minute before making the skill check, and the character can't perform some other action during this minute. The character can move at half speed but not any faster, and the character must maintain a line of sight to the lips being read. If the check succeeds, the character can understand the general content of a minute's worth of speaking, but the character usually still misses certain details.

If the check fails, the character can't read the speaker's lips. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character draws some incorrect conclusion about the speech.

The GM rolls the character's check so the character don't know whether the character succeeded or missed by 5.

**Retry:** The skill can be used once per minute.

### SKIING (Dex)

**Check:** You are adept at skiing. A standard skill check is DC 10. Skiing in dangerous terrain, inclement weather, or while being attacked requires a skill check at DC 15. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the character suffers a fall in which a limb is broken. Failure by 10 or more means that several limbs were broken and/or the character may be on the brink of death, if not dead.

**Special:** Untrained characters suffer a -4 penalty to their roll.

### Feats (14)

Table 3-@@: Feats

Adapted Skill

Airborne

Damage Reduction

Empathic Communication

Exotic Firearms Proficiency (mortar)

Fast

Fast Healer

Frogman

Hacking

Impersonator

Improved Damage Reduction

Improved Luck

Inconspicuous

Intuitive Communication

Intuitive Shot

Linguist

Luck

Marksman

Multi-Lingual

Nerves of Steel

Observant

Persuasive

Portal Operation

Programmer

Quick

Scavenge

Scuba Diving

Seductive

Sniper

Stubborn Death



## Two-Weapon Fighting Expert Wing Shot

### ADAPTED SKILL

Your learning style adapts easily, and you pick up skills that should be difficult for you to learn.

**Benefit:** The character can learn 1 cross-classed skill as if it were a class skill.

**Special:** A character may take this feat several times. If Adapted Skill is applied to a skill already learned, the skill points previously spent on the skill's purchase are available to be used elsewhere.

### AIRBORNE

You have received extraordinary training, most likely from the military, in parachuting and skydiving techniques.

**Bonus Feat:** Soldier

**Prerequisites:** Balance 4 ranks, Parachuting 8 ranks

**Benefit:** You receive a +2 bonus to all Parachuting skill checks (+4 when checking to land on a specific target area.) What's more, you are not required to make a Concentration check to cut away an entangled parachute, and the DC for opening your parachute during a HALO jump is only 15 +1 per 50 ft. below 1,000 ft.

**Normal:** Cutting away an entangled parachute requires a Concentration check (DC 15) per round of cutting, otherwise no progress was made. A HALO jump has a DC of 15 +2 per 50 ft. below 1,000 ft.

### DAMAGE REDUCTION

You have thick skin that naturally repels damage.

**Prerequisite:** Toughness

**Benefit:** The character ignores 1 point of damage from melee or ranged attacks.

### EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION

A character may exchange basic thoughts with another sentient being without speaking a mutual language.

**Prerequisite:** Wisdom 12

**Benefit:** The character can communicate with sentient (Intelligence of 6 or higher) beings through gestures, drawing, reading reactions, empathy, and guessing on both parties' part. This is limited to relatively simple words ("We friends," "Need food," "I am \_\_\_\_"). The character can convey longer and more advanced ideas if he can establish a "point of reference," linking the target to a human equivalent he's familiar with and can relate to. For example, an Egyptologist would have an easier time communicating with people showing characteristics of an Egyptian culture. He would be able to put together longer words and comprehend better.

### EXOTIC FIREARMS PROFICIENCY (MORTAR)

This is merely the Exotic Firearms Proficiency extended to represent the operation of mortars. See the accompanying notes for quick and easy rules for mortar use. GMs may also wish to use these same rules for grenade launchers firing in indirect arcs.

## Mortars & Indirect Fire

Mortars, being indirect fire weapons, are more difficult to aim, thus suffering a -3 penalty to attack per range increment instead of the usual -2. What's more, mortars are unable to fire against targets within their first range increment.

However, because a mortar rains its payload onto a target from above it drastically reduces the effects of cover. Instead of determining the target's cover based upon its exposure to the mortar's position, determine it from above.

For example, a soldier hiding in a trench may gain nine-tenths cover against the sniper standing beside his enemy's mortar, but against the mortar itself the open top of his trench provides no cover (or one-quarter cover if the GM is feeling generous. Now consider the same soldier in the same situation except that he is hiding within a ruined building with few intact walls, though the roof is still complete and solid. Against the sniper the hiding soldier only has one-quarter cover but he has total cover protecting him against the mortar fire from above.

## FAST

You cover more distance than normal.

**Prerequisite:** Dexterity 13.

**Benefit:** Add +5 to your movement rate.

## FAST HEALER

You recover from damage quicker than most.

**Prerequisite:** Constitution 13.

**Benefit:** You recover 2 hit points per level per day of rest.

**Normal:** Normal recovery without healing assistance is 1 hit point per level per day of rest.

**Special:** Complete bed rest for a day allows healing at a rate of 1.5 times the character's recovery rate.

## FROGMAN

You've been trained for advanced amphibious movement.

**Bonus Feat:** Infiltrator, Operator, Soldier

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13, Swim 6 ranks,

**Benefit:** You are able to hold your breath for double the usual duration, and may swim one half your speed as a move action or three-quarters your speed as a full-round action with a successful Swim check.

**Normal:** A successful Swim check allows you to swim one-quarter your speed as a move action and one half your speed as a full-round action. You can hold your breath for as many rounds as is equal to your Constitution.

## HACKING

You are especially talented at breaking computer codes and similar activities.

**Prerequisite:** Computer Use 6 ranks

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus while attempting to use the *Defeat Security* or *Degrade Programming* aspects of the Computer Use skill.

## IMPERSONATOR

You are skilled at studying and impersonating others.

**Prerequisite:** Wisdom 13, Disguise 6 ranks

**Benefit:** You gain a bonus to your Disguise checks while trying to pass yourself off as a person, though just what the bonus is depends upon how many of the four resources on the subject you have to research (appearance, mannerisms, speech, and background) and how long you spend studying.

The maximum Impersonator bonus, regardless of the number of resources available and time spent, is twice your Wisdom modifier.

**Time Studying** *Bonus*

*By Amount of Available Personal Resources*

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1 full round	-	-	+1	+1
5 minute	-	+1	+1	+2
30 minutes	+1	+1	+2	+3
One hour	+1	+1	+2	+4
Several hours	+1	+2	+3	+5
1 day	+2	+2	+3	+6
4 days	+2	+2	+4	+7
1 week	+2	+3	+4	+8
1 month	+3	+3	+5	+9

With enough time studying one's subject, an impersonator could possibly even fool the subject's closest friends and relatives.

### IMPROVED DAMAGE REDUCTION

You have a thick skin that naturally repels damage.

**Prerequisite:** Toughness and Damage Reduction.

**Benefit:** You ignore 2 points of damage from melee and ranged attacks.

### IMPROVED LUCK

You have a knack for escaping difficult situations or performing difficult tasks.

**Prerequisite:** Luck.

**Benefit:** You gain 1 additional Action Point per level; Improved Luck stacks with Luck, thus giving the character 2 extra Action Points per level.

### INCONSPICUOUS

You have an ability to blend into crowds or walk about without being noticed.

**Benefit:** You get a +2 bonus to Hide and Disguise checks.

**Special:** The +2 bonus does not affect Disguise checks that are made to impersonate others. Also, when others use Gather Information or Investigation checks to discover information about you from a witness, a successful Disguise check on your part ensures that the person fails to remember anything of significance about you.

### INTUITIVE COMMUNICATION

**Prerequisite:** Empathic Communication

**Benefit:** The character need not learn languages to converse effectively. By making a Intelligence check, she can understand the gist of a conversation (“We would have had a good dinner last night if the other tribe didn’t steal the animals from our traps”) through body movements, experience, and her own intuition. She can also convey ideas in return. A new roll is required for every new topic, even in the same conversation. She may add ranks from any knowledge skills complement to the situation or topic to the roll. For example, arcane lore when communicating with an occult-heavy culture, and theology for discussing religious issues.

Circumstances	DC
Simple Idea (“Let’s start a fire before it gets too dark”)	10
Average Idea (“You must not war with them because they are stronger and have better weapons.”)	15
Detailed Idea (“So there’s this one god to whom you sacrifice virgins on the second full moon of every month?”)	20
Complex Idea (“We came here in a portal that lets us travel between worlds and dimensions.”)	25
Profound Idea (“I think the portal works like this...”)	35
Target’s culture/background exhibits a point of reference (“Hmm, their community is similar to that of the Alaskan Eskimos...”)	-5
Completely alien culture, no discernible human equivalent	+10

#### INTUITIVE SHOT

Even when caught by surprise your training and reflexes may allow you to make one “Hail Mary” attack.

**Prerequisites:** Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw

**Benefit:** When caught unawares you are allowed a Reflex save to attempt an intuitive shot against an opponent within point blank range (30 ft.) during the surprise round. The saving throw’s DC is equal to your opponents’ highest initiative roll, even if that person is not the target of the attack. Success allows you one attack (no bursts or autofire) with a readily available handgun or Small-size or smaller thrown weapon against the chosen target, but the attack roll is only made with the benefit of your Dex modifier (if any) - all other bonuses, including the base attack bonus and Point Blank Shot bonus, are ignored. You are still considered flat-footed for the purpose of defending against an attack. Failure means that you act as normal for someone caught unaware during a surprise round.

**Normal:** Anyone caught unaware does not roll initiative or act in the surprise round. They are flat-footed until their first action in the round following the surprise round.

#### LINGUIST

The character is a natural linguist.

**Benefit:** By expending 1 skill point, the character gains the ability to both Speak and Read/Write a specific language.

#### LUCK

You have a knack for succeeding at difficult tasks.

**Benefit:** You gain 1 additional Action Point per level.

#### MARKSMAN

You are skilled at hitting targets with ranged weapons at a distance.

**Prerequisite:** Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

**Benefit:** You do not suffer the -2 cumulative penalty for the weapon's second or third full increment (the increments following the initial, penalty-free increment). For example: You would not suffer any penalties to hit a target with a Colt Python (range increment 40) at 110 feet. Taking Far Shot extends the increments affected.

#### MULTI-LINGUAL

You speak and write several languages fluently.

**Benefit:** You start the game being able to speak and write at least one additional language. If you have an Intelligence modifier greater than 1, you may begin with an additional number of languages up to that modifier bonus.

#### NERVES OF STEEL

You remain calm under stress and don't easily scare.

**Benefit:** You receive a +2 competence bonus to save against all *fear* effects. The results of *fear* effects are also downgraded: if the character should be *cowering* he shall instead only be *shaken*.

**Special:** This feat may be taken multiple times with each instance after the first increasing the bonus by +2.

#### OBSERVANT

You are very perceptive.

**Benefit:** +2 to Search and Spot checks.

#### PERSUASIVE

You have a very convincing, forceful personality.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks.

#### PORTAL OPERATION

You are trained in operating portals.

**Prerequisite:** Computer Use 4 ranks.

**Benefit:** You take no penalty when operating portals.

**Normal:** Characters who do not take this feat suffer a -4 penalty on Computer Use checks to open portals.

#### PROGRAMMER

You are an expert at untangling program codes.

**Prerequisites:** Computer Use 6 ranks

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 bonus to any Computer Use check for writing or degrading a program.

#### QUICK

You are very adept at dodging, almost having a sixth sense about where an attack

will come from.

**Prerequisite:** Dexterity 15, Dodge

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 to dodge bonus to Defense against attacks from any seen opponents.

**Special:** A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes you lose bonuses from this feat. This bonus does not stack with Dodge.

## SCAVENGE

You are adept at finding needed items quickly and for a good price.

**Prerequisite:** Knowledge (streetwise) 4 ranks

**Benefit:** When making Wealth or Knowledge (streetwise) checks to purchase items, you have “contacts” that are always willing to get you what you need quicker and cheaper. Subtract 1 from the total Purchase DC (which includes the Black Market Purchase DC), and subtract 1 day from Time Required.

## SCUBA DIVING

You are skilled in using scuba equipment, and you practice safe diving techniques.

**Prerequisite:** Swim 4 ranks.

**Benefit:**

**Normal:** Characters not trained with this feat suffer a -4 penalty to Swim checks when using scuba equipment.

## SEDUCTIVE

You have a certain sex appeal about you that persons interested in your sex find hard to ignore.

**Prerequisite:** Charisma 15.

**Benefit:** You gain +2 to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Perform checks when dealing with persons who may be attracted to you.

## SNIPER

You can kill at a distance with ranged weapons.

**Prerequisite:** Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Marksman.

**Benefit:** You do not suffer the -2 cumulative penalty for the weapon’s fourth or fifth full increment. For example: You would not suffer any penalties to hit a target with a Colt Python (range increment 40) at 200 feet.

## STUBBORN DEATH

You refuse to die by force of will alone.

**Prerequisites:** Wisdom 13

**Benefit:** You add your Wisdom modifier to your massive damage threshold

**Normal:** Your massive damage threshold is equal to your Constitution score.

## TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING EXPERT

You are quite deadly when fighting with two weapons.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +6.

**Benefit:** The character’s penalties for fighting with two weapons are lessened by

2. The weapons used must both be melee weapons or both be ranged weapons (the character can't mix the types). Combined with Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting, the character's fighting penalties for two-handed fighting should be +0.

### WING SHOT

Your luck with a weapon allows you to graze an opponent with an attack that should have rightfully missed.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 15

**Benefit:** By spending 1 action point per 4 points that a ranged attack roll missed the defense DC by, you can instead make an automatic hit. However, the damage caused is half the normal damage and does not gain any additional benefits, including that of any abilities, feats, special abilities, spells, combat maneuvers, critical range, etc. This feat may be used a number of times per day depending upon your character level (as shown below.)

Character Level	Times per Day
1st-4 <sup>th</sup>	1
5th-8 <sup>th</sup>	2
9th-12 <sup>th</sup>	3
13th-16 <sup>th</sup>	4
17th-20 <sup>th</sup>	5

## Chapter Four: Outfitting a Team (18)

### Equipping a Team (14)

One of the most important aspects of an Odyssey Prime team's preparation, be it a group of explorers sent to make first contact with an extraterrestrial civilization or a Dam Con team on a mission at home, is choosing the right gear for the job. Just what type of equipment a team of operatives shall be afforded depends chiefly upon the assignment's goals and the degree and nature of any expected (and unexpected) opposition.

#### Exploration (Odyssey Team) (12)

The most common mission assigned the Odyssey Teams while off world is that of exploration. Once the initial probe has determined that the world on the other side of the portal can sustain human life, the explorers are cleared to arrive.

Such a team will be outfitted with an abundance of scientific and recording gear, so as to make progressive reports of what they encounter for later analysis.

Armaments: Typically every team member will carry a sidearm at the very least, though submachine guns are also likely. The team's "muscle" will probably be cleared to carry precision rifles, assault rifles, and maybe some heavier ordnance, such as grenades and squad support weapons, if the probe's data raises sufficient reason to suspect that the indigenous flora or fauna might pose a problem.

Still, armaments are, as a rule, kept light. This makes any first contact situations less likely to go awry due to a misunderstanding, and it also leaves the team more room to carry equipment necessary for their survey.

Gear: Each team has to carry equipment for taking soil, rock, air, water, plant, and, if possible, animal samples (usually in the form of small animals, insects, and droppings.) Such samples will allow the labs back home to get a good idea of the alien world's ecology and environmental development, including anything that might pose a danger to human life.

Several high-end laptops are a necessity, as are plenty of spare batteries. The computers are used to store recorded data, and run and coordinate several of the peripheral surveying devices employed. These preliminary data sorts will let the team know what areas require more samples than others, allowing the team to better plan its time before returning.

Sometimes a team may be called upon to visit a hazardous world. In such cases NBC gear is also provided.

Transportation: Depending upon the terrain, transportation is typically light if any is assigned at all. Small all-terrain vehicles and durable motorcycles are the preferred choice. If trouble is expected, a light vehicle capable of mounting a support weapon may also be assigned.

While traveling to hazardous environments, a M93A1 Fox is usually assigned, though whether it is armed or weaponless depends upon the degree of personal armaments assigned to the team's personnel.

#### Diplomatic (Odyssey Team) (12)

Diplomatic Odyssey Teams are, by necessity, usually comprised of the same people who are first sent to explore the new worlds probed by Odyssey Prime. A diplomatic team's purpose is to return to a world and develop relations with any civilizations encountered by the exploration teams.

Armaments: Unless dealing with a society that has shown some reason for concern, a diplomatic team will be very lightly armed. At most, a sidearm will be present, though a pair of "honor guards" for any additional diplomats may be permitted to carry something as heavy as a machine pistol, submachine gun, or even an assault rifle.

However, there are situations where even the diplomats have to be loaded for bear. Should a civilization of



warriors or paranoid xenophobes be encountered, for instance, they might expect a strong show of force and would be insulted (or suspicious) of anything else. It is also possible that the diplomats are being sent to smooth over a misunderstanding or similarly unfortunate situation that resulted in conflict. Under such circumstances, the diplomatic team will be armed as per an explorer team, or possibly even more heavily.

Gear: Very little in the way of this scientific equipment will be necessary. A diplomatic team may have certain secondary, scientific objectives, and so may be equipped with a minimum of surveying gear, but their primary concern is developing relations with the locals.

Recording and compact computer equipment shall be in abundance, of course, so long as the locals allow for it (and sometimes even if they don't, so long as the Odyssey Team thinks they can get away with it.) The data recorded by the diplomats will not only help in later developments with that particular society, but it will also aid in training other Odyssey Teams on what to expect while conducting similar operations.

Transportation: The type of vehicles assigned to the team, if any, shall be determined by the terrain and by the alien society's behavior. Some civilizations may be frightened if the foreigners were to show up in massive, hard-scaled beasts, while primitive vehicles that produce such vast amounts of pollutants may simply offend others.

If the situation and environment allows for it, though, the diplomatic team will likely be sent in vehicles more befitting their mission. Stylish vans, luxury cars, or even limousines may be provided, depending upon the impression that is intended and the expected reaction by the locals. It should be noted that the logistics officers always expect the unexpected, so even these "civilian" vehicles will likely be bullet resistant with a few added "special" features.

#### Infiltration (Odyssey Team and/or Dam Con) (12)

Sometimes an Odyssey Team of explorers encounters a civilization that, for one reason or another, defies easy classification. Perhaps there is a war going on and the explorers were unable to determine which side would be the best to approach, or maybe the explorers found reasons not to make the initial probe themselves. In such instances, when further information is needed on a civilization without them knowing it, an infiltration team is sent in.

It is also possible that infiltrators may be required to follow up on a diplomatic mission. This could be necessitated for any number of reasons. The diplomats may have inadvertently stumbled upon something that they weren't meant to know and need more information before they continue with their own mission, or the diplomats could have been unsuccessful in their mission and Odyssey Prime wants to gather more information before making a second attempt.

Whatever the reason, an infiltration team is created from a team of specialists from amongst the Odyssey Teams. But because Odyssey Team operatives tend to be "bookish" and science types, with a dab of criminal, military, and other strong-arm elements thrown in for good measure, Dam Con personnel may also be added to keep everyone else safe. If things have progressed to the point where full out, Special Ops-style covert action is required, the infiltration team may even be comprised entirely of Dam Con agents.

Armaments: Infiltrators are meant to be silent and unseen, but they also have to be prepared in case things take a turn for the worse. After all, the very necessity of an infiltration team specifies that the group shall be going where it isn't meant to and conducting clandestine activities that the locals most likely wouldn't appreciate.

To this end, the infiltrators will be armed with compact weapons such as automatic pistols, submachine guns, and machine pistols. Carbines are also preferred, though something as large as an assault weapon is to be avoided as too bulky and clumsy. Almost certainly all weapons will be equipped with sound suppressors.

Explosives may also be required, depending upon what the infiltrators are being called on to do, though usually these are limited to small amounts for breaching doors, safes, and similar obstructions. Any combat explosives or loud weapons, such as shotguns, are carried solely as backup weapons.

Gear: Intelligence gathering equipment, such as audio and video recorders, laser microphones, and communications taps are the most common type of equipment. Scientific gear is rarely carried unless the mission's goal specifically requires it. Even notebook computers will be avoided.

Transportation: If the mission's parameters and environment allows for it, Special Operations vehicles may be provided. This could be anything from a FAV to a powered parachute.

#### Black Op (Dam Con) (12)

Primarily deployed on Earth to contain and restrict (or worse) the activities of anyone who puts the secrecy of Odyssey Prime in jeopardy, such teams are necessarily comprised of Dam Con agents. In fact, this sort of mission is the main reason that Dam Con exists. Few such missions are ever directed against citizens of other worlds, though some have had to be employed against rogue Odyssey agents.

The most common mission types include coercion and blackmail, though "wetworks" (assassinations and other brutal solutions) are not uncommon if the situation escalates enough to warrant it.

Armaments: A black op team could be armed with as little as sidearms, or nothing at all, for operations involving scare tactics or blackmail, or it could require a coordinated team of assassins decked out with remote explosives, high-powered rifles, and silenced submachine guns. Even missions of intimidation sometimes require some impressive firepower; after all, few things scare someone into cooperating as quickly as staring down the business end of a weapon as large as you are.

Still, black op teams usually prefer to travel lightly, thereby increasing their ability to quietly slip in and out of the target zone without arousing any more attention to a situation that they are supposed to diffuse.

Gear: Black ops are tricky in that no operation is exactly like another. One setup may involve complex disguises and false identities, the next lots of hidden listening and recording devices, while yet another involves breaching charges, rappelling ropes, and parachutes. No set equipment list exists for black ops, and operatives often have to make the best of what they have on hand in the target zone.

Transportation: Vehicles are defined by the parameters of the operation. A blackmail operation may require surveillance vehicles disguised as commercial trucks and vans, or luxury autos may be needed to reinforce the opulence of a false identity. For the seedier operations, inconspicuous vehicles that may easily be lost in the bustle of traffic are preferred.

Military vehicles may also be used, from time to time, though these are usually restricted to insertion- and stealth-type vehicles. Only in the most severe circumstances will anything heavier be used, as to do so would likely draw far more attention than the circumstances that the mission was supposed to make disappear in the first place.

#### Assault (Dam Con) (12)

This is by far the least common of the mission types employed by Odyssey Prime for a very simple reason: nothing about them is quiet or covert. An assault team of Dam Con agents is usually assembled to deal with something that was randomly transported to Earth through a portal, though there have been instances where they've been sent other worlds to handle a situation requiring a firmer hand than the assigned Odyssey Team could handle. Such situations are usually because the latter have been taken hostage or otherwise detained against their will and all diplomatic attempts to retrieve them have failed.

An assault team has but one purpose: kill its assigned target and smash everything around it into dust, just to be sure. Sometimes such operations can be covered up as terrorist attacks, military maneuvers gone awry, or as a terrible accident or disaster, but they are almost always loud and messy, and quite often public.

Though always necessary, the deployment of an assault team is never to be taken lightly as they represent one of the greatest risks of exposing Odyssey Prime and the existence of Doomsday.

**Armaments:** Whatever is needed, be it heavy machineguns, rocket launchers, C4, or mortars. You name it, and whatever is deemed necessary to terminate the target shall be used. There has even been one instance of a tactical nuke being required, thought that incomparable situation luckily took place in such a remote area that its use was passed off as a weapon's test.

**Gear:** Assault teams have no interest in science or gathering information. They know what their target is (usually), and they only carry what they need to kill it. This may include protective gear, such as NBC suits, or special sensors to track the target if it is, for instance, invisible to the naked eye (hey, it's happened.) For the most part, though, assault operatives like to reserve all the space they can afford for spare ammunition and things that explode, leaving big, smoking holes in the ground.

**Transportation:** Unmarked vehicles, including those of the military variety, are most common. If things get bad enough, battle tanks, gunships, or even bombers may accompany the assault team! Such situations are rare, but they do happen

### Restricted Objects (Revised) (14)

While the scope of restrictions provided in the corebook are certainly a good place to start, they leave much to be desired in a setting such as Odyssey Prime. Here then are the expanded and revised Restricted Objects descriptions and table.

**Military:** The object is sold primarily to legitimate police and military organizations. A military rating is essentially the same as restricted except that manufacturers and dealers are generally under tight government scrutiny and are therefore especially wary of selling to private individuals. Examples include grenade launchers and active status vehicles, such as a M2 Bradley.

**Secure/Illegal:** The object is illegal in all but specific, highly regulated circumstances. This means that only certain agencies and organizations, almost certainly a part of, or affiliated with, the government may rightfully possess such objects. Examples include prototype military hardware and most gadgets that are best described as "spy wear."

**Classified:** Such objects are often suspected to exist but the truth remains a secret, or their existence has been confirmed but most everything about them has been kept out of the public eye and is even tightly controlled with the upper echelons of power. Stealth technology, plutonium, and nuclear weapons are both ideal examples of classified objects.

**Odyssey:** Objects restricted at this level are the utmost difficult to come by. For the most part the world doesn't even realize that these items exist - they remain, to the public mind, anyway, articles of fantasy and science fiction. At this level of restriction, it is possible that even the leaders of the world's most powerful nations remain in the dark. The entire Odyssey project and the existence of "Doomsday" fall under the rating of Odyssey restrictions, as would almost everything brought back from other worlds by the Odyssey Prime teams.

**Table 4 -@@: Restricted Objects (Revised)**

Restriction Rating		License or Fee	Purchase DC <sup>1</sup>	Black Market Purchase DC <sup>2</sup>
Time Required				
Licensed	10	+1	1 day	
Restricted	15	+2	2 days	
Military	20	+3	3 days	
Secure/Illegal	25	+4	6 days	
Classified	-	+5	12 days	
Odyssey	-	+6 or more	24+ days	

<sup>1</sup> "Classified and Odyssey restricted items do not, by their very nature, have licenses available. When trying to acquire such items, the black market DC is always added unless purchasing them under special permission directly from the organization or government authorized to use them."

<sup>2</sup> Add to the object's purchase DC if the character tries to buy it on the black market without first obtaining a license.

## Weapons (14)

**Table 4 -@@ : New Weapons**

Weapon	Damage Size	Critical Weight	Damage Purchase	Type DC	Range	Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine		
<b>Handguns (require the Personal Firearms feat)</b>										
Browning Mk3 (9mm autoloader) <sup>1</sup>	Small	2 lb.	16	Lic (+1)	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S	13 box
Dart Pistol (pneumatic breechloader)	Small	1.5 lb.	12	Lic (+1)	1d2 <sup>2</sup>	20	Piercing	20 ft.	1	1 Int.
Flare Gun (26.5mm breechloader)	Small	1.5 lb.	12	Lic (+1)	1d6	20	Fire	35 ft.	1	1 int.
Glock 18 (9mm machine pistol)	Small	2 lb.	18	Res (+2)	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S, A	19 box
Gyurza P-9 (9mm Gyurza autoloader) <sup>1</sup>	Small	2 lb. 3 oz.	19	S/III (+4)	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	18 box
Liberator (.45 breechloader)	Tiny	1 lb.	6	Lic (+1)	2d6	20	Ballistic	5 ft.	1	1 Int.
Mark 23 Mod 0 SOCOM (.45 autoloader) <sup>1</sup>	Small	2 lb. 10 oz.	18	Res (+2)	2d6	20	Ballistic	40 ft.	S	12 box
PSS (7.62mm SP-4 autoloader)	Small	1 lb. 9 oz.	19	Mil (+3)	2d4	20	Ballistic	15 ft.	S	6
SPP-1 Underwater Pistol (4.5mm SPS) <sup>3</sup>	Small	2 lb. 2 oz.	19	Mil (+3)	2d4	19-20	Ballistic	Special		S
Steyr TMP (9mm machine pistol) <sup>1</sup>	Med	2 lb. 14 oz.	18	Res (+2)	2d6	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S, A	15 box
Zip Gun (.22 breechloader)	Tiny	4 oz.	1	-	1d6	20	Ballistic	10 ft.	1	1 Int.
<b>Longarms (require the Personal Firearms Proficiency feat)</b>										
APS Underwater Assault Rifle (5.66mm SPS) <sup>3</sup>	S, A	26 box	Med	5 lb. 7 oz.	2d6	19-20	Ballistic	Special		
Colt Commando (5.56mm assault rifle) <sup>3</sup>	Med	5 lb. 10 oz.	15	Res (+2)	2d8	20	Ballistic	50 ft.	S, A	30 box
Colt Model 635 (9mm submachine gun)	Med	5 lb. 11 oz.	15	Res (+2)	2d6	20	Ballistic	50 ft.	S, A	20 box
Dart Rifle (pneumatic bolt-action)	Large	7 lb.	14	Lic (+1)	1d3 <sup>2</sup>	20	Piercing	70 ft.	1	1 Int.
LSS (12-gauge shotgun)	17		17	S/III (+4)	2d8	20	Ballistic	20 ft.	S	5 box
M4A1 (5.56mm assault rifle) <sup>3</sup>	Large	7 lb.	16	Mil (+3)	2d8	20	Ballistic	60 ft.	S, A	30 box
MAG-7 (12-gauge shotgun)	Med	8 lb.	17	Res (+2)	2d8	20	Ballistic	15 ft.	S	5 box
OICW (5.56mm assault rifle) <sup>3</sup>	Large	17 lb.	26	S/III (+4)	2d8	20	Ballistic	80 ft.	S, A	30 box
Remington 870 Marine Magnum (12 gauge shotgun)	Single	6 Int.	Large	7.5 lb.	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft.		
Shrike (5.56mm assault rifle) <sup>3</sup>	Large	7 lb. 2 oz.	21	Mil (+3)	2d8	20	Ballistic	60 ft.	S, A	Linked
Steyr IWS2000 (15.2mm AMR) <sup>1</sup>	Huge	40 lb.	27	Mil (+3)	3d10	20	Ballistic	200 ft.	S	5 box
Steyr Scout (7.62mm hunting rifle) <sup>1</sup>	Large	7 lb., 5 oz.	21	Lic (+1)	2d10	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	Single	5 box
Steyr Tactical (5.56mm sniper rifle) <sup>1</sup>					2d8	20	Ballistic	80 ft.	Single	10 box

Striker (12-gauge shotgun)	Large 7 lb.	21	Res (+1)							
		2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft.	S	12 box			
VAL AS 6P30 Silent (9mm SP-6 assault rifle)	Large 9 lb.	16	Res (+2)							
	S, A	20 box	Large 5 lb. 8 oz.	22	2/III (+4)					
<b>Heavy Weapons (each requires a specific Exotic Firearms Proficiency feat)</b>										
FIM-92A Stinger (missile launcher)			-	-	-	-	1	1		
M203 (40mm grenade launcher) <sup>3</sup>	Large 12.5 lb.	48	Mil (+3)							
	lb.	16	Mil (+3)			50 ft.	1	1	Med	3
M224 60mm LWCMC (mortar)		Varies <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-		1	1	Large	
	44 lb.	25	Mil (+3)							
M240 (medium machine gun)		2d8	20	Ballistic	125 ft.	A	Linked			
	Huge 25 lb. 13 oz.	23	Mil (+3)							
MK-19 (40mm grenade launcher)		Varies <sup>2</sup>	-	-	100 ft.	S, A	Linked	Huge		
	72.5 lb.	26	Mil (+3)							
MM-1 (40mm grenade launcher)		Varies <sup>2</sup>	-	-	50 ft.	S	12 cyl.	Large		
	19 lb. 2 oz.	17	Res (+2)							
OCSW (25mm heavy machine gun) <sup>1</sup>		2d12 <sup>2</sup>	20	Ballistic	125 ft.	A	75 box			
	Huge 71 lb. 10 oz.	29	S/ILL (+4)							
OICW (20mm grenade launcher) <sup>3</sup>		Varies <sup>2</sup>	-	-	100 ft.	Single	6 box	Large	-	
	-	-								
TOW 2 Launcher		-	-	-	1	1	Huge	204 lb.	10	
	oz.	30	Mil (+3)							
<b>Other Ranged Weapons</b>										
Throwing Dart		1d3	20	Piercing	5 ft.	1	-	Dim	4 oz.	4
Throwing Knife, Combat		1d6	19-20	Piercing	10 ft.	1	-			
	Small 1 lb.	9	-							
Throwing Knife, Concealed		1d3	19-20	Piercing	10 ft.	1	-			
	Dim 6 oz.	3	-							

<sup>1</sup> This mastercraft weapon grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls.

<sup>2</sup> This weapon has special damage. See the weapon description.

<sup>3</sup> See the description of this weapon for special rules.

## Handguns (12)

### Browning Mk 3S

Manufactured by Browning SA, the computer-controlled, laser-machined Mk 3S is a favorite amongst the European police and Special Forces units the world over. The most popular feature of the Mk 3S is the automatic safety feature which won't allow the weapon to be fired by any action except the final pressure of the trigger being pulled.

### Dart Pistol

Manufactured by a multitude of companies and used primarily in laboratory and animal research and tracking conditions, this CO2 weapon is commonly referred to as a tranquilizer or tranq gun, thought it may fire any of the following darts:

- **Tranquilizer:** Injects a living creature with a knockout agent. Type: Injury, Save DC: 18, Initial Damage: Unconscious 1d4 hours, purchase DC 10, Restriction: Res (+2), Time: 4 hours.
- **Tracer:** A small homing tracer is injected just below the skin. Its signal can be picked up and followed or triangulated by any properly equipped UHF receiver within two miles. A tasked satellite can track the signal almost anywhere on the planet. The tracer has enough power to transmit for 8 hours.
- **Poison:** Any injury type poison may be injected be carried in a dart.  
The dart, which is typically three to four inches long, is commonly loaded through a breech

mechanism, and inserts or injects its contents on impact. A four-pack of CO2 cartridges has a purchase DC of 3 and each cartridge is good for roughly 10 shots while the darts have a purchase DC of 2 each, plus the cost of the substance within them.

### **Flare Gun**

Though technically an article of survival gear, a flare gun may be used as a weapon in dire situations. However, because the flare gun is not intended as a weapon it suffers a -2 penalty to attack. When fired into the air, the flare explodes at its apex, roughly 200 ft. up, lighting a four square acre area for roughly 15 seconds as it falls to earth and is extinguished. The flare may be seen up to a mile away in daylight and 10 miles at night.

Flares have a purchase DC of 3 each.

Flares come in many colors, allowing them to be used to signal different meanings, and may also be fitted with a parachute to allow them to illuminate an area longer, roughly 45 seconds, though they have a purchase DC of 4 each.

### **Glock 18**

Built upon the Glock 17, the Glock 18 has selective fire capabilities to allow for fully automatic operation and is equipped with an extended magazine. Most Glock 17 and 18 parts are not interchangeable, however, in order to keep civilians from doing conversions.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

### **Gyurza P-9**

Designed for the Russian military and Special Forces, units have been appearing in the West since 1995 due to the instability in the former Soviet Union. Firing the special 9mm Gyurza round, the P-9 can punch through most body armor, and even exposed munitions and lightly armored vehicles.

The P-9 can fire standard 9mm ammunition at a range of 40 ft., but only causes 2d6 damage and is without the pistol's mastercraft bonus to attack.

### **Liberator**

Tracing its origins back to WWII, the Liberator was designed by the OSS to be dropped behind enemy lines, along with assembly and use instructions, so that they could be picked up and used by partisans and resistance fighters. It also became very popular among saboteurs and assassins because of the ease with which it may be concealed (additional +1 sleight of hand modifier to conceal.)

Reloading is performed by means to the simple pull-twist breachload mechanism in the gun's rear.

### **Mark 23 Mod 0 SOCOM**

An accurate .45 pistol designed by Heckler & Kock specifically for use by the US Special Operations Command (SOCOM), the Mark 23 is capable of being fitted with a laser sight and suppressor. The weapon's action, right down the ejection of a spent cartridge, has also been designed with silence in mind, keeping mechanical noise to a minimum. The weapon is so well suited for "wetworks" that all Listen DCs to notice the weapon's firing are DC 18 instead of 15 when a suppressor is used. It also operates very well under extreme weather and temperature conditions, enabling it to operate after generous exposure to water, mud, sand, and so on.

### **PSS Silenced Pistol**

Created for use by Russian Special Forces, the PSS has since become a staple of Special Forces and intelligence units around the world. Built with an integral flash suppressor, the PSS' design, in cooperation with the special SP-4 round, allows this weapon to operate as though it had a sound suppressor on it, though without the extra weight and length. What's more, the PSS is far more silent than a weapon with an external suppressor (Listen DC 18 instead of 15; DC 23 with the SP-4 round).

### **SPP-1 Underwater Pistol**

Though of Russian design and manufacture, Special Forces units the world over have adopted the use of this weapon for clandestine, underwater missions. Fed by a breech-inserted box that places a single

dart into each of its four smoothbore barrels, the self-cocking Tznitochmash SPP-1 fires each barrel in turn with relatively good sound suppression (Listen DC 13.)

The SPP-1's range varies, depending upon the depth at which it is fired, though none would be considered long.

Condition	Range Increment
Surface	15 ft.
Submerged to 15 ft.	5 ft.
Submerged to 35 ft.	5 ft. (counts as 2 increments)
Submerged to 130 ft.	5 ft. (counts as 3 increments)

### Steyr TMP (Tactical Machine Pistol)

Requiring little maintenance due to its simple mechanics (+2 to all Repair checks) and offering impressive performance, the TMP is also made of a sturdy synthetic that boasts a strength and durability that rivals steel. An optional shoulder sling and folding forward handgrip are standard.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

### Zip Gun

A "zip gun" is a homemade, underpowered, small caliber weapon (usually .22) that is constructed from everyday objects, such as pens, copper tubing, and so on. The trigger is normally just a spring-loaded firing pin on the end of the weapon. A zip gun requires a Craft (mechanical) check (DC 15) to construct.

Zip guns are notoriously unreliable, typically possessing a 75% chance of not firing per pull of the trigger. This chance of misfire is lowered by 5% per 1 point that the DC to construct the zip gun was surpassed by. For example, rolling a 23 on the Craft (mechanical) check to build a zip gun would create a weapon with a 35% chance of misfiring. If the weapon misfires it may be fired again during the user's next attack action, though the chance of misfiring remains.

## Longarms (12)

### APS Underwater Assault Rifle

Much like the SPP-1, the APS is of Russian design and has been adopted by the Special Forces of other nations. Fed from an oddly shaped magazine, the APS fires 4.7 inch long, fin-stabilized darts with relatively good sound suppression (Listen DC 13.)

The APS's range varies, depending upon the depth at which it is fired, though none would be considered long.

Condition	Range Increment
Surface	30 ft.
Submerged to 15 ft.	15 ft.
Submerged to 35 ft.	10 ft.
Submerged to 70 ft.	5 ft.
Submerged to 130 ft.	5 ft. (counts as 2 increments)

### Colt Commando

Built upon the time-tested M16 assault rifle, the Commando has been shortened down for use by Special Forces and allied military units, though the stock may be pulled to its full extension to give the weapon a more familiar length. The Commando's small size makes it ideal for jungle operations, though the barrel's short length makes the weapon's relatively large 5.56mm rounds less accurate over greater distances (it suffers an additional -1 range penalty per two range increments.) This weapon is equipped with a RIS.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

### Colt Model 635

Modeled after the time-proven M16 design, most of the 635's modifications involve making it smaller and converting it to use 9mm ammunition instead of the larger 5.56mm. Many police and Special Forces units around the world heavily favored this short weapon for close quarters situations, though most have since been phased out in favor of the MP5. There is also a 635S version, which is roughly 3 inches shorter, though the stocks of both models may be pulled out to their full extension to give them a more familiar length.

#### **Dart Rifle**

Used primarily by animal control and wildlife and gaming officials, this CO2 rifle uses the same ammunition as the dart pistol. The CO2 cartridges are larger than those of the pistol and have a purchase DC of 2 each. A canister is good for roughly 10 shots.

#### **LSS (Lightweight Shotgun System)**

A shotgun system designed to be mounted upon any RIS-capable weapon, the LSS is still being field tested but has already proven to be a favorite among US Special Forces for close quarters and urban battle.

#### **M4A1 SOPMOD (Special Operations Peculiar Modification)**

The M4A1 carbine is a favorite of many US Special Forces units due to its reliability, size, and ease of use under combat conditions. To reflect this, the military developed the SOPMOD kit, a number of interchangeable modules that could be added to the M4 by replacing the sights (top and fore), handle, and RIS (Rail Interface System, a.k.a. the front hand guard) with a number of possible "blocks" of extra gear.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

The possible locations for a SOPMOD block are the stock, top, RIS, barrel side, or barrel (over the tip.) Only one block may be mounted per location at a time except for the barrel side, which may accommodate two blocks (one per side.) The available blocks are:

- Carrying handle (stock.) Purchase DC 4.
- Folding stock (stock.) -2 Sleight of Hand DC to hide. Purchase DC 4.
- Carrying handle (top.) This comes standard with the M4A1.
- Any type of scope or sight may replace the top handle (top.)
- Laser Sight (barrel side.)
- Illuminator (barrel side.)
- Any RIS-capable weapons (RIS.)
- Modified Remington 870 Shotgun (RIS.)
- Suppressor (barrel)
- Bipod (RIS.)
- Flash Suppressor (barrel)
- Forward handgrip (RIS.) The added stability adds 10 ft. to the weapon's range increment. Purchase DC 5.

#### **MAG-7**

Manufactured by Techno Arms of South Africa, the MAG-7 is an incredibly short, pump-action shotgun intended for use in hostage rescue and close-quarters combat. However, because the MAG-7's ammunition is fed through the pistol grip, it requires shorter than standard shells (as normal shells, but purchase DC is +1.) The MAG-7 can fire buckshot, slugs, APDS, and FSF shells. A metal stock that folds up over the top of the weapon is standard.

#### **OICW (Objective Individual Combat Weapon)**

Designed to replace the M-16 series as the U.S.' standard assault rifle, the Alliant Technosystems' OICW mounts an assault rifle and grenade launcher in an integrated over-under configuration. Though still in its trial stages, the OICW has already been field tested by numerous Special Forces units in various conflicts around the globe (and beyond); it should start seeing full use in 2005 (or before then, in the case of Odyssey Prime agents.)



Made extensively from composite materials, the OICW is lightweight and extremely versatile. It comes standard with an electro-optical capable scope, laser sight, digital video camera and relay, laser rangefinder, and laser detection module (detects laser sights and laser designators pointing within 5 ft. of the weapon), all of which display their related information on the weapon's top-mounted HUD (Heads Up Display) unit. The HUD is designed to be seamlessly integrated with the Land Warrior system (see elsewhere.)

The forward magazine contains the 5.56mm rounds, which are fired from the lower barrel, and the bullpup magazine contains the 20mm HE grenades, which are propelled through the upper barrel. Treat the 20mm launcher as a M-79 for the purpose of how it is used. Only one barrel may be used at a time, though each uses the same trigger for firing.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

**Bonuses:** +2 bonus to attack (laser sight & mastercraft); increase range increments by 50% when using scope (any setting.)

**Airburst Grenade Firing:** The OICW's grenade launcher is specially designed to work with its laser rangefinder to attack an enemy protected by cover. By spending a full-round action to aim the rangefinder and program the grenade launcher's fire control, the grenade can be made to airburst directly above the target rather than by impacting against it. If successful, all targets in the burst radius are considered to have cover from the direction of the airburst (from above, in other words), rather than versus the direction from which the grenade was fired.

### **Remington 870 Marine Magnum**

A military version of the 870 pump-action shotgun, the Marine Magnum comes in black, stainless steel, or camouflage versions. The 870 can be fitted with a bayonet, laser sight, illuminator, folding stock, or pistol grip, and its barrel is easily removed and replaced in the field while its tubular magazine may be replaced with an extended version.

Using its extended barrel (purchase DC 7) adds 10 inches to the weapon's length but increases the shotgun's range to 50 ft. The 870 is also capable of firing the APDS and FSF "special" shotgun rounds and comes in a reduced form, with the grip and stock are removed, for mounting upon a RIS (weighs 4.5 lb., purchase DC 14.)

### **Shrike**

Though it appears to be (and functions as) a miniature machinegun, the Ares Defense Systems' Shrike is actually a belt fed M16 conversion assault rifle that is also able to fire a standard M16 box magazine. Though it has not (officially) gone into production yet, the Shrike has already made an appearance amongst US Special Forces units, especially those who prefer its lightweight and small size for urban operations. The Shrike is also being considered by the Air Force as a backup weapon for aircrews.

This weapon features a three-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only three bullets instead of five and can be used with only three bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if a character uses the setting without the feat, he or she makes a normal attack, and the extra two bullets are wasted.

### **Steyr IWS2000**

One of the world's most powerful AMR (Anti-Material Rifle), the smoothbore IWS2000 operates equally well as a sniper weapon or in its intended role as a weapon to attack lightly armored targets, such as radar stations and APCs, at range. The IWS2000 comes standard with a scope and bipod.

### **Steyr Scout & Tactical**

Short and light, yet still able to provide a powerful kick, the scout is ideal for long patrol and sniper duty. A spare magazine may be kept within the buttstock and a strip of five additional rounds may also be affixed to the buttstock's side.

The "tactical" conversion used by the military allows the weapon to fire 5.56mm ammo instead of 7.62mm and the 10-round extended magazine comes standard.

### **Striker**

Built by Armsel of South Africa, but manufactured in the US as the “Streetsweeper,” this shotgun is favored by police tactical teams and Special Forces units. Once fired, the shells are ejected. A spent drum may be replaced or new shells inserted into the drum one at a time, as per a revolver cylinder.

### **VAL AS 6P30 Silent Assault Rifle**

Yet another procurement by the Special Forces from Russia, the AS Silent makes use of an integrated suppressor and flash suppressor down the length of its barrel. This allows the weapon greater silence than normal for a suppressor (Listen DC 20 instead of 15; DC 25 with the SP-6 round) and conceals most of the muzzle flash. The weapon also has a folding stock for close in “wetworks.”

## **Heavy Weapons (12)**

### **FIM-92A Stinger**

A man-portable launcher for the Stinger missile, the FIM-92A can sight and track a target up to 5 miles away using regular or passive infrared (meaning it gives off no infrared signal to be tracked back to the launcher.) The launcher has night vision capabilities, as per night vision goggles.

A full-round or more is required to get a solid lock on the target before the missile may be fired. Reloading also requires a full-round.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (rocket launcher) to use properly.

### **M203 Grenade Launcher**

Built to be attached to any weapon with a RIS (Rail Integrated System), the M203 cannot be fitted to any custom or manufactured weapon that is smaller than Large size.

The M203 also comes in an alternate arrangement, with a pistol grip and elevating sight so that it can be used independently. This modified version has a purchase DC 17 and may still be fitted to any RIS-capable weapon that would normally accommodate it.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (grenade launcher) to use properly.

### **M224 60mm LWCMS (Lightweight Company Mortar System)**

A smoothbore mortar, the M224 may be drop fed like a conventional mortar or trigger fired while held aloft by its handles. Due to its weight, the M224 is ideal for Special Forces units, especially mountaineers and paratroopers. The mortar’s components are normally split between a crew of two or three men, requiring two full-rounds to assemble the cannon assembly (14.4 lb.), bipod (15.2 lb.), and baseplate (14.4 lb.)

The M224 can fire any of the 60mm mortar shells (See “Grenades and Explosives.”)

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (mortar) to use properly.

### **M240**

Originally intended to be mounted as a coaxial weapon in the M60 and M1 Abrams tanks, the M240 was so well received that its role quickly expanded to tripod and bipod mounts for squad and defense use, and it has also been replacing the M60 as the standard commander’s weapon on most armored vehicles and tanks. The M240 weathers battlefield conditions with impressive reliability, far more so than the M60.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (heavy machine guns) to use properly.

### **MK19 Mod3 40mm Grenade Launcher**

Manufactured by Saco Defense Industries and initially deployed during the Vietnam conflict, perhaps most notably upon river patrol craft, the MK19 has undergone several modifications to make it more durable. Whether vehicle- or bipod-mounted, MK19 automatic grenade launcher is an ideal weapon for either defensive or offensive warfare.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (grenade launcher) to use properly.

### **MM-1**

This American made revolving grenade launcher is a favorite among Special Forces, despite its bulk, but sees little use in the regular army. Police, especially in riot situations, also use this grenade launcher for firing tear gas grenades. The MM-1’s cylinder must be reloaded one chamber at a time.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (grenade launcher) to use properly.

### **OCSW (Caliber Objective Crew Served Weapon)**

The OCSW is a two-man portable, crew served machine gun that fires a series of 25mm AP (see “Ammunition”) or HE (see “Grenades and Explosives”) rounds. The weapon consists of the gun (23 lb.), fire control unit (4 lb., 10 oz.), ammunition module (35 lb.), and mount (9 lb.) Though designed as a squad support weapon, the OCSW is equally effective against slow-moving aircraft, armored vehicles, and watercraft. It may also be mounted on vehicles in place of a standard heavy machine gun, such as the M2HB.

The fire control unit is night vision capable (treat as an electro-optical scope) and is equipped with a laser rangefinder and laser sight (+1 equipment bonus to attack.) This is a more advanced and resilient version of the HUD system used on the OICW.

Damage listed is for the 25mm AP round.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (heavy machine guns) to use properly.

### **OICW Grenade Launcher**

See the OICW entry under “Longarms.”

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (grenade launcher) to use properly.

### **TOW 2 (Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided) Missile Launcher**

Firing any of the various Hughes BGM TOW missiles, the M220 may be mounted on a vehicle or carried in a crew-portable, tripod arrangement by a four-man crew, taking 1d4+2 minutes to erect. Requiring a full-round to aim and fire using the TOW 2’s sighting system (+2 equipment bonus to attack), which includes nightvision capabilities, the launcher takes 3 full-rounds to reload.

On their own, any of the TOW missiles may also be mounted upon a helicopter or within a vehicle-based launcher system.

This weapon requires the Exotic Firearm Proficiency (rocket launchers) to use properly.

## **Other Ranged Weapons (12)**

### **Throwing Dart**

A modern improvement of the throwing darts of old, the new version is so accurate that it gains a +1 equipment bonus to ranged attack rolls.

### **Throwing Knife, Combat**

Machined thin for improved aerodynamics and lower weight, this weapon has only one purpose: causing damage to another living being. The design looks like a cross between a short, all-steel spear and a dart. These blades gain a +1 equipment bonus to ranged attack rolls.

### **Throwing Knife, Concealed**

Purposely short and thin so that they may be concealed upon one’s wrist, ankle, sleeve, or similar hiding place, these blades gain a +1 equipment bonus to ranged attack rolls. For a purchase DC of 7 this weapon can be made of a Kevlar or ceramic composite so that it won’t register on metal detectors.

## **Ammunition (12)**

**Table4 -@@ : Ammunition (Revised & Expanded)**

<b>Ammunition Type (Quantity)</b>		<b>Inherent Trait</b>
4.5mm SPS Special (40)	-	5
5.56mm (20)	-	4
5.66mm SPS (26)	LAP	5
7.62mm (20)	-	4
7.62mmR (20)	-	4
7.62mm SP-4 (24)	LAP	7
15.2mm APFSDS (50)	AM	9

**Purchase DC**

25mm AP (75)	HAP	15
.444 caliber (20)	-	6
.50 caliber (20)	HAP	7
9mm (50)	-	5
9mm Gyuzra (50)	HAP	9
9mm SP-6 (40)	LAP	11
10mm (50)	-	5
.22 caliber (50)	-	4
.32 caliber (50)	-	5
.38 special (50)	-	5
.357 caliber (50)	-	5
.44 caliber (50)	-	5
.45 caliber (50)	-	5
.50AE caliber (50)	LAP	6
10-gauge buckshot (10)	-	5
10-gauge slug (10)	LAP	6
12-gauge buckshot (10)	-	4
12-gauge slug (10)	LAP	5
12-gauge APDS (10)	HAP	7
12-gauge dragon's breath	-	8
12-gauge flare (10)	-	5
12-gauge FSF (10)	LAP	8
Arrow (12)	-	8
Crossbow bolt (12)	-	7

#### **4.5mm SPS Special**

This is a modified 7.62mmR case fitted with a fin-stabilized dart meant for use in the SPP-1 underwater pistol.

#### **5.66mm SPS**

This is a modified 5.56mm case fitted with a fin-stabilized dart meant for use in the APS underwater assault rifle.

#### **7.62mm SP-4**

The SP-4, designed solely for use in the PSS silenced pistol, is an unusual round. Within the cartridge is a plunger pressed between the bullet and a piston. When the gun is fired, the propelling charge rams the piston into the plunger that in turn forces the bullet outwards. Increase the DC of Listen checks to hear the weapon firing by +5. See the PSS silenced pistol for further details.

#### **9mm Gyuzra**

Specially made for the Russian Gyuzra P-9, these cored rounds utilize superior ballistic techniques to achieve a startling degree of armor piercing and damaging capabilities for so small a round. These bullets may be fired in other 9mm pistols, but doing so reduces the weapon's range by one-third, causes only 2d6 damage, and reduces the round's armor piercing ability to LAP.

#### **9mm SP-6**

This is a special, improved subsonic round designed for use in the Russian made AS Silent assault rifle. It fits a 9mm bullet into a 7.62mm cartridge designed to aid in the weapon's sound suppression. Increase the DC of Listen checks to hear the weapon firing by +5. See the AS Silent assault rifle for further details.

#### **15.2mm APFSDS (Armor Piercing Fin Stabilized Discarding Sabot)**

Thus far unique to the IWS2000, this tungsten alloy dart weighs an incredibly light 0.07 ounces and fires on an effectively flat trajectory. Designed to penetrate the sides of APCs and fortified ground positions, the 15.2mm APFSDS punches through body armor with ease.

#### **25mm AP (Armor Piercing)**

This is the standard round for the OCSW. It is meant to be both an anti-personnel and anti-armor round.

### **Shotgun, Buckshot (revised)**

These cartridges are full of many tiny pellets known as “shot,” which spread out over distance. This reduces penalties to attack due to range increments from -2 to -1, but the damage rolled is reduced by 1 point per range increment to the target, to a minimum of inflicting 1 point of damage. Buckshot cannot be modified by any ammunition traits (see elsewhere.) Consider this to be the ammunition detailed in a shotgun’s weapon statistics.

### **Shotgun, Slug**

A slug is essentially a large bullet for use in shotguns. Their primary purpose is opening heavy doors, though they are excellent for combat, especially against opponents wearing body armor. Slugs have the same damage as buckshot but increase the range increment by 50% (e.g., 30 ft. becomes 45 ft.) The penalties to attack due to range remain at the normal -2 penalty per increment.

### **Shotgun, APDS (Armor Piercing Discarding Sabot) \***

Designed for military use, this “special” shotgun shell is able to penetrate most body armors and even some lightly armored vehicles. Other than their improved armor piercing ability, APDS rounds are treated the same as shotgun slugs.

### **Shotgun, Dragon’s Breath \***

This is a standard shell casing filled with thermite. When fired, the shell causes a fireball to burst from the shotgun (thus why only shotguns capable of firing “special” rounds may accommodate them.) The shell has the following stats: *Damage*: 3d4, *Damage Type*: fire, *Range Increment*: 10 ft., and *Res* (+2.) The cost is per box of 4.

### **Shotgun, Flare \***

These “special” shells contain a small flare, the color of which may be varied. The flare bursts open upon leaving the barrel and only burns for a few seconds, long enough to illuminate the area 15 ft. to either side of its path. The flare may be seen up to about 1,000 feet in the day and roughly two miles at night.

Flare shell ranges are one-third that of a buckshot shell and, though not intended to be used as a combat round (-2 attack penalty), they cause 1d4 fire damage to a target.

### **Shotgun, FSF (Fin Stabilized Flechette) \***

This “special” shell is essentially a long, metal dart that is fired from within a standard shell. Though significantly more expensive than a standard slug, the increased damage caused by the flechette is often seen as well justified by its users. FSF shells have a threat range of 19-20, and their range increment is double that of buckshot.

### **\* “Special” Shotgun Shell Note**

Most shotguns fire only the standard shells (buckshot and slug.) The so-called “special” shells require that certain accommodations be made in the weapon’s design and manufacturing, thus usually restricting their use solely to some military (and very few police) model shotguns. These special rounds are also typically resisted to 12-gauge shells.

## **Ammunition Traits (12)**

Hard ammunition (a.k.a. bullets) may be modified in several ways, some of which are provided here. The types of weapons the trait may not be applied to, along with the other ammunition traits that the trait may not be used in combination with, are given in each trait’s description.

**AM (Anti-Material):** Designed for use against lightly armored vehicles and fortifications, an AM round fairly easily punches through anything short of tank-grade plating. Reduce the physical equipment/armor bonus of any physical armor, such as from a light-duty vest or natural armor, by 10

(minimum 0.) AM ammunition also reduces a target's hardness by up to 8 (minimum of 0) and the Damage Reduction ability by 10 (minimum of 0.) Dodge and other types of non-armor related defense bonuses, such as those gained by class, size, or a high Dex, are unaffected by anti-material rounds.

For example, an advanced flesh golem struck with AM ammunition would have its natural armor bonus reduced to +3 and its Damage Reduction ability lowered to 5/+1, and a Hummer would have its hardness completely negated.

This ammunition trait may not be applied to ammunition that is not manufactured as AM rounds, nor may AM rounds be manufactured for non-AM weapons. Of the other ammunition traits, AM rounds may only be combined with the Tracer trait.

**HAP (Heavy Armor Piercing):** Reduce the physical equipment/armor bonus of any physical armor, such as from a light-duty vest or natural armor, by 4 (minimum 0.) HAP ammunition also reduces a target's hardness by 3 (minimum of 0) and the Damage Reduction ability by 5 (minimum of 0.) Dodge and other types of non-armor related defense bonuses, such as those gained by class, size, or a high Dex, are unaffected by armor piercing rounds.

For example, a minotaur struck with HAP ammunition would have its natural armor bonus reduced to +1, and a Hummer would have its hardness reduced to 2.

The HAP trait may be applied to any round other than those of .22, .32, and .38 caliber, nor may it be applied to shotgun shells that don't already have the trait. Of the other ammunition traits, HAP rounds may not be combined with the AM, Hollow Point, LAP, Riot, Shotshell, or Wadcutter traits. Purchase DC + 2.

**Hollow Point:** Great for use against "soft" targets, such as living beings, a concave cavity has been formed in the tip of these rounds, causing it to spread out and rip large holes in its target on impact. This provides a +2 equipment bonus to damage per die of damage rolled (e.g., +4 for a weapon doing 2d6 damage.) On the other hand, the round doesn't penetrate as well; increase any equipment modifier to Defense by +4 and increase any hardness values by 50%.

The Hollow Point trait may be applied to any round except shotgun shells other than the slug. Of the other ammunition traits, Hollow Point rounds may not be combined with the AM, HAP, LAP, Riot, Shotshell, or Wadcutter traits.

**LAP (Light Armor Piercing):** Reduce the physical equipment/armor bonus of any physical armor, such as from a light-duty vest or natural armor, by 2 (minimum 0), and the hardness of a target by 1. Dodge and other types of non-armor related defense bonuses, such as those gained by class, size, or a high Dex, are unaffected by armor piercing rounds.

For example, against LAP ammunition a tactical vest has an equipment bonus of +4 and nonproficient bonus of 0, and a Harley Davidson motorcycle's hardness would be reduced to 4.

The LAP trait may be applied to any round except shotgun shells that don't already have the trait. Of the other ammunition traits, LAP rounds may not be combined with the AM, HAP, Hollow Point, Riot, Shotshell, or Wadcutter traits. Purchase DC +1

**Riot:** Available in most pistol, shotgun, and rifle rounds (shy of a .50), these rubber-tipped bullets are meant to incapacitate an opponent rather than kill him. Half of the damage caused by a rubber bullet is nonlethal while the other half remains lethal.

The Riot round may be applied to any handgun or longarm round except shotgun shells other than slugs and buckshot. Riot rounds may not be used in combination with any other traits. The purchase DC remains unchanged.

**Shotshell:** A shotshell is a cartridge that has had the bullet removed and then been filled with shotgun pellets. The spread has a greater chance of hitting a vulnerable area, increasing the weapon's critical threat range by +1, but the damage caused by the bullet decreases by 1 point for every range increment of the attack, to a minimum of 1 point of damage. Because the shot pellets could easily foul an automatic weapon, they are currently limited to revolvers.

Shotshells may only be applied to revolver rounds. Shotshell rounds may not be used in combination with any other traits. The purchase DC remains unchanged.

**Subsonic:** Because this ammunition travels at a subsonic velocity it is fired with a far quieter



BGM-71A TOW <sup>1</sup>	8d10	-	Concussion	10 ft.	18	800 ft.	Large		
56 lb.	33	Mil (+3)							
BGM-71C ITOW <sup>1</sup>	8d10	-	Concussion	5 ft.	18	1,200 ft.	Large		
56 lb.	34	Mil (+3)							
BGM-71D TOW <sup>2 1</sup>	8d10	-	Concussion	5 ft.	15	1,200 ft.	Large		
61 lb.	34	Mil (+3)							
M2 SLAM <sup>1</sup>	6d6	-	Concussion	10 ft.	18	-	Small	2 lb. 3 oz.	
16	Mil (+3)								
Stinger Missile <sup>1</sup>	6d12	-	Concussion	5 ft.	16	400 ft.	Large	23 lb.	30
	Mil (+3)								
Stun Grenade <sup>1</sup>	1d4	-	Electricity	5 ft.	15	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	23
	Od (+6)								

<sup>1</sup> See the description of this weapon for special rules.

### 20mm Fragmentation Grenade

A smaller version of the time-proven 40mm grenade, the 20mm has been developed specifically for use with the OICW. 20mm fragmentation grenades will not arm themselves, and thus will not explode, if fired at a target closer than 20 feet.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

### 20mm High Explosive Grenade

As the 20mm fragmentation grenade except 20mm HE grenades do not have a minimum range.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

### 20mm Tear Gas Grenade

As the 20mm fragmentation grenade except 20mm tear gas grenades do not have a minimum range. On the round that it is fired, a 20mm tear gas grenade fills the 5-foot square of impact with a cloud of irritant that causes eyes to fill with tears. On the following round, it fills a 5-foot radius, and on the third round it fills a 10-foot radius. It disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses it in 1 round.

A character caught in a cloud of tear gas must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be nauseated. This effect lasts as long as the character is in the cloud and for 1d6 rounds after he or she leaves the cloud. Those who succeed at their saves but remain in the cloud must continue to save each round. A gas mask renders the target immune to the effects. A wet cloth held over the eyes, nose, and mouth provides a +2 bonus on the Fortitude save.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

### 20mm Shotshell

Designed for use in a 40mm grenade launcher, a shotshell bursts like a buckshot shell upon leaving the weapon. The shotshell is meant for close quarters battle, especially in urban areas, allowing the 20mm launcher to still serve a useful function in environments where its normal explosive grenades would be restricted.

A shotshell reduces penalties to attack due to range increments from -2 to -1, but the damage rolled is reduced by 1 point per range increment to the target to a minimum of inflicting 1 point of damage.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

### 25mm HE (High Explosive)

Used with the OCSW, the 25mm HE round is an alternate, airburst capable round (see the OICW description under "Longarms" for details on airbursting munitions.) The cost is per box of 75 rounds.

### 40mm Shotshell

Treat as a 20mm shotshell except that this larger version is intended for use in 40mm grenade launchers.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

### 40mm Smoke Grenade

On the round the 40mm smoke grenade impacts, it fills the four squares around it with smoke. On



the following round, it fills all squares within 10 feet, and on the third round it fills all squares within 15 feet. The smoke obscures all sight, including the darkvision ability granted by night vision goggles. Any creature within the area has total concealment (attacks suffer a 50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target.) It disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses it in 1 round.

40mm smoke grenades are available in several colors, including white, red, yellow, green, and purple. As such, they can be used as signal devices.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

#### **40mm Tear Gas Grenade**

As per a 20mm tear gas grenade with the following changes: it initially fills a 5-foot radius. On the following round, it fills a 10-foot radius, and on the third round it fills a 15-foot radius.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

#### **40mm White Phosphorous Grenade**

40mm white phosphorus grenades use an explosive charge to distribute burning phosphorus across the burst radius. Any target that takes damage from the grenade is dealt an additional 1d6 points of fire damage in the following round and risks catching on fire.

In addition, the grenade creates a cloud of smoke. Treat a 40mm white phosphorus grenade as a smoke grenade, except that it only fills squares within 5 feet of the explosion point.

The purchase DC given is for a box of 6 grenades.

#### **60mm HE (High Explosive) Shell**

This is the standard 60mm mortar shell. It has several detonation modes: proximity (works as per the OICW's airburst ability), impact (the default), or on a time delay of up to 30 seconds.

The purchase DC is per shell.

#### **60mm Illuminating Shell**

This 60mm mortar shell is used for illuminating an area, especially to aid in sighting targets. The shell explodes at its apex, roughly 300 ft. up, lighting a four square acres area for roughly a minute as it falls slowly to earth on its parachute. The shell's light may be seen up to a mile away in daylight and 10 miles at night. Best of all is the ability to replace the shell's standard candle with one that illuminates roughly half the usual area in infrared light, leaving the area unlit save to those equipped with infrared-capable night vision equipment.

The purchase DC is per shell.

#### **60mm Smoke Shell**

On the round this mortar shell impacts, it fills the four squares around it with smoke. On the following round, it fills all squares within 10 feet, and on the third round it fills all squares within 20 feet. The smoke obscures all sight, including the darkvision ability granted by night vision goggles. Any creature within the area has total concealment (attacks suffer a 50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target.) It disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 8 rounds and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses it in 1 round.

40mm smoke grenades are available in several colors, including white, red, yellow, green, and purple. As such, they can be used as signal devices.

The purchase DC is per shell.

#### **BGM-71A Basic TOW Missile**

The wire-guided BGM-71A is the basic, more numerous of the various TOW missiles. The missile ignores up to 10 points of hardness for the target directly struck by the missile; all other targets hit by the explosion employ their full hardness against the damage.

#### **BGM-71C ITOW Missile**

The ITOW (Improved TOW) has an elongated probe mounted on its warhead, providing greater penetration, and an upgraded motor for better range. The missile ignores up to 13 points of hardness for the target directly struck by the missile; all other targets hit by the explosion employ their full hardness against the damage.

### **BGM-71D TOW 2 Missile**

Yet another improvement, the TOW 2 is equipped with better targeting and guidance systems (+1 equipment bonus to attack which stacks with the launcher's attack bonus.) It is otherwise the same as the 71C.

### **M2 SLAM (Selectable Lightweight Attack Munition)**

Designed for use against both personnel and vehicles, this compact explosive device is ideal for demolishing targets common to Special Forces operations. The SLAM has four distinct detonation modes: by trip-wire, as a mine, by remote detonation (such as by radio signal, blasting cap, etc.), or by integral timer. The SLAM is also fitted with a magnetic adherer so that it may be fitted to the vulnerable underside of a vehicle, including ship hulls. The M2 is waterproof up to 65 ft. deep.

When the SLAM is able to strike at a target's vulnerabilities, such as by striking a vehicle from below as a mine or by magnetic placement, the explosion ignores up to the first 15 points of the target's hardness, though anything caught in its burst radius is afforded its full hardness value. When not placed on a vulnerable area, the SLAM only ignores the first 7 points of the target's hardness. Other objects/vehicles/creatures within the explosion's radius gain the benefit of their full hardness value.

### **Stinger Missile**

The mainstay of current American portable air defense tactics, the Stinger may be fired from man-portable or vehicle-mounted launchers. The Stinger is a "fire-and-forget" missile, meaning that once it has been locked in and fired the operator need not worry about it, allowing the missile's targeting system to do all the work (+2 equipment bonus to attack rolls.)

For safety reasons, the Stinger will not arm itself for the first 800 ft. (two range increments) of its flight. However, once it strikes a target beyond this range, it ignores up to the first 6 points of the impacted target's hardness, though anything caught in its burst radius is afforded its full hardness value.

### **Stun Grenade**

Fashioned using portal derived technology, upon impact this small cylinder uses an aerosol apparatus to spray the immediate area with scentless, invisible ionized particles. The stun grenade then discharges a powerful electrical charge through these particles, creating a contained field that affects anyone within it as though they were hit with a stun gun. The stun grenade continues to energize this field for 30 seconds, or until destroyed (hardness 6, 10 hit points), thus affecting anyone who passes into, or remains within, the field for that duration.

The best way to detect a stun grenade's field (other than to stumble into it, that is), is to watch for odd behavior in devices that are sensitive to strong electro-magnetic fields, such as a compass.

## **Weapon Accessories (12)**

**Table -: Weapon Accessories**

<b>Object</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Purchase DC</b>	<b>Restriction</b>
Bipod	Small	1 to 2 lb.	7	-
Briefcase Holster	Med	2.5 lb.	10	S/III (+4)
Dual Suppressor				
Handgun	Tiny	1.5 lb	1416	Res (+2)
Longarm	Small	4.5 lb		Res (+2)
Electo-Optical Scope (addendum)	Small	3 lb.	18	-
Extended Magazine	Varies	Varies	Varies	Lic (+1) to Res (+2)
Flash Suppressor				
Handgun	Tiny	1 lb.	11	Res (+2)
Longarm	Small	3 lb.	13	Res (+2)
Ready Magazine	1.5 lb.	2 lb.	8	Res (+2)
Reflex Sight				
Handgun	Dim	4 oz.	11	Res (+2)
Longarm	Dim	6 oz.	12	Res (+2)

RIS, Custom	-	-	+2	Res (+2)
Spring Holster	Tiny	7 oz.		Res (+2)
Tactical Holster	Small	1 lb. 4 oz.	7	-
Thermal Imaging Scope	Small	3.1 lb.	22	-
Tripod	Med	44 lb.	11	-

### Bipod

Offering greater stability for a carefully aimed shot, a rifle using a bipod and spending an attack action reduces any attack penalties due to range by 2. Using a scope with a bipod-mounted weapon requires one attack action, not two.

### Briefcase Holster

A briefcase has been fitted with a holster that allows a Medium or smaller sized firearm to be attached within. A trigger and safety mechanism is fitted to the outside of the briefcase, usually to the handle or within the clasps, allowing the weapon to fire through a hidden port. There are also pockets within for additional ammunition. Besides the benefit of concealment, the briefcase is great for covert operations because all spent cases are caught within the briefcase rather than being littered across the ground.

Proofing the briefcase against X-rays doubles the purchase DC.

### Dual Suppressor

This device acts as both a sound and flash suppressor.

### Electro-Optical Scope (addendum)

Unlike regular darkvision, which is black and white, darkvision provided by this scope is seen in various shades of green and black due to the artificial light amplification. Electro-optical scopes render a useless image in normal lighting conditions and if exposed to a bright light will temporarily *blind* the wearer for 1d3 rounds.

### Extended Magazine

Many weapons sporting magazines are able to handle extended mags, thus improving their ammunition capacity. However, this makes the weapon bulkier and harder to conceal, imposing an additional sleight of hand modifier. There are two general types of extended magazines:

- **Extended:** The most common of the “extended” magazines, this is merely a longer box able to hold more bullets. The increased size imposes an additional -2 Sleight of Hand modifier.
- **Hi-Capacity:** These magazines use a variety of methods to provide additional ammunition, though the most common method is using a circular drum known as a “rounder,” of which the Beta-C dual drum is likely the most recognized. The weight of the ammunition container is roughly double or triple normal for those holding less than 100 rounds and as much as ten times greater for those holding more than 100 rounds.

Though a high-capacity magazine increases the weapon’s ammunition capacity, it also makes the weapon unbalanced and harder to conceal. Hi-capacity magazines containing 100 rounds or less impose a -1 penalty to attack at any range other than point blank (30 ft.) and effectively increases the weapon’s size by one rank for the purpose of Sleight of Hand checks. For high-capacity magazines containing more than 100 rounds, these penalties increase to a -2 penalty to attack at any range other than point blank (30 ft.) and an effective size increase of two ranks for the Sleight of Hand modifier.

Hi-Capacity magazines are usually Res (+2.)

**Table-4: @@ Extended Magazines**

Weapon	Magazine Type - Number of Rounds (Purchase DC)	
	Extended	Hi-Capacity
<b>Handguns</b>		
Beretta 92F	25 (5)	-
Beretta 93R	30 (5)	-
Browning Mk3	18 (5)	-
Colt M1911	10 (5)	-
Desert Eagle	15 (6)	-
Glock 17	23 (5)	-

Glock 18	23 (5)	49 (6)
Glock 20	25 (6)	-
MAC Ingram M10	50 (6)	-
Mark 23 Mod 0 SOCOM	28 (6)	-
SITES M9	-	26 (6)
Skorpion	30 (5)	-
Steyr TMP	30 (5)	50 (6)
<b>Longarms</b>		
AKM/AK-47	70 (5)	600 (8)
Colt Commando	50 (5)	90 (6)
	-	200 (7)
Colt Model 635	32 (4)	-
HK G3	70 (5)	500 (9)
HK PSG-1	15 (5)	-
LSS	9 (5)	-
M16A2	50 (5)	90 (6)
	-	300 (7)
M4/M4A1	50 (5)	90 (6)
	-	300 (7)
MP5 Series	50 (5)	200 (7)
MP5K	28 (5)	90 (6)
Remington 870 Marine Magnum	8 (5)	-
OICW	50 (5)	90 (6)
OICW Mk II	50 (5)	90 (6)
Shrike	50 (5)	90 (6)
	-	300 (7)
Steyr AUG	80 (5)	330 (7)
Steyr IWS2000	8 (5)	
Steyr Scout	10 (5)	-
Uzi	40 (5)	220 (7)
<b>Heavy Weapons</b>		
OCSW	151 (7)	-

### Flash Suppressor

Designed to reduce the muzzle flash of a weapon, a flash suppressor increases all Spot check DCs to notice the weapon being fired during dark conditions, such as at night, by +4. A flash suppressor is fitted over the end of the weapon's barrel, thereby disallowing the simultaneous use of a suppressor (silencer) in all cases except those when a sound suppressor is built into the weapon.

Flash suppressors are not available for heavy weapons, shotguns, or revolvers.

### Ready Magazine

This is a magazine addition that fits into a modified longarm weapon (purchase DC +1 for the modification.) It fits three normal or extended magazines in such a way that when one is expended the other may be pushed over and be made ready to fire at the cost of a move action.

### Reflex Sight

Designed mainly for close quarters (it counts as a free action to use), this small sight has an amber reticle that adjusts its brightness to the light levels, making it easy to use in most conditions. It does not require a power source to work. Grants a +1 equipment bonus to attack against anything within 100 ft. A scope cannot be mounted to a weapon with a reflex sight.

### RIS (Rail Integrated System), Custom

Customizing a weapon with a RIS so that it may be fitted with under-barrel accessories, such as a LSS or M203, requires a Craft (mechanical) roll (DC 15.) A custom RIS cannot accommodate attachable weapons that are of the same size or larger as the RIS's weapon.

### Tactical Holster

A hip holster designed for military and police use, the design makes it extremely difficult for someone other than the wearer to grab and draw the pistol (-6 penalty for grappling check against the pistol, whether or not resisted by the wearer.) For +1 purchase DC, the tactical holster can have a forward pouch for holding a stun gun or spare magazine.

### Thermal Imaging Scope

A thermal imaging scope works in the same manner as thermal imaging goggles (see Surveillance Gear, elsewhere), otherwise treat as a standard scope. Spare batteries have a purchase DC of 4 and the vehicle power adapter has a purchase DC of 5.

### Tripod

Used to support heavy weapons, such as the M2HB machinegun or MK19 grenade launcher, a tripod grants a full range of fire while taking on the load of the weapon's weight. This stability also means that any attack penalties due to range may be lowered by 2 by spending an attack action to aim. Using a scope with a tripod-mounted weapon requires one attack action, not two.

## Melee Weapons (12)

**Table -: Melee Weapons**

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Range Increment	Size	Weight			
Purchase DC		Restriction							
<b>Simple Weapons (require the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat)</b>									
Garrote <sup>1</sup>	See Text	19-20	Bludgeoning	-	Dim	-	-	-	
Survival Knife		1d5	19-20	Piercing	5 ft.	Tiny	1 lb. 8 oz.	9	

<sup>1</sup> See the description of this weapon for special rules

### Garrote

A strangling weapon normally consisting of a very thin, though strong, length of wire stretched between two small handgrips, a garrote is used to strangle an opponent. Typically the attacker sneaks up behind the target and wraps the garrote around the target's throat, causing damage and also stopping him from speaking. This requires a grapple check (at a +4 bonus for the first round if you successfully snuck up on him), with your opponent's base attack and strength bonuses for the opposed grapple check halved. Each attack action that the garrote maintains its grapple on the target causes 2d4 damage, as per an unarmed strike.

### Survival Knife

This appears as a regular, serrated combat knife except for the compass pommel at the tip of the wide hilt. The compass may be unscrewed, revealing the survival gear stored within the hilt. This usually includes a fishing hook, whetstone, 30 ft. of fishing line, small scissors, several small bandages, a needle, 120 ft. of thread, 5 matches, and possibly some other tiny items, all kept in a resealable plastic bag. Its serrated edge may also be used to cut and strip wires or saw wood. A survival knife grants a +2 equipment bonus on most Survival checks.

## Armor (14)

**Table 4- @@: Armor**

Armor	Type	Equipment	Bonus	Nonprof. Bonus	Maximum Dex	Bonus		
		Armor Penalty	Speed (30 ft.)	Weight	Purchase DC	Restrictions		
<b>Headgear</b>								
Ballistic Goggles <sup>1</sup>	Tactical	-	-	-	30	10 oz.	4	-
Jump Helmet <sup>1</sup>	Tactical	+1	+1	-1	30	4 lb.	11	-
PASGT Helmet <sup>1</sup>	Tactical	+3	+1	-1	30	3 lb.	9	-
Tactical Helmet <sup>1</sup>	Tactical	+1	+1	-	30	1.5 lb.	6	-

<b>Light Armor</b>									
Ranger Body Armor	Tactical	+5	+2	+4	-3	30	8 lb.	17	Mil (+3)
Ranger Upgrade	Tactical	+6	+3	+3	-4	30	16 lb.	18	Mil (+3)
<b>Medium Armor</b>									
PASGT Flak Vest <sup>1</sup>	Tactical	+3 (+6)	+1 (+6)	+4	-2	25	7.5 lb.	15	Lic (+)

1)

<sup>1</sup> See the item's description for more details

## Headgear

Understanding of headgear comes with taking any of the Armor Proficiencies (light, medium, or heavy.)

### Ballistic Goggles

Reinforced to resist impacts, these goggles have a hardness of 3 and will also keep dust, dirt, and sand out of the wearer's eyes. They also come tinted, if desired, and are large enough to wear over eyeglasses. Because of the limits imposed on peripheral vision, the wearer suffers a -2 penalty to Spot checks.

### Jump Helmet

Insulated against the cold of extremely high altitudes, this helmet is designed to be used with the PHAOS (see elsewhere.) It is also insulated against the sounds of the wind screaming by (-8 equipment penalty to Listen checks), but is equipped with integrated headphones so that a portable communications system, normally equipped with a throat mic, may be used. Skydiving goggles are also standard.

The helmet also provides a +10 bonus to Reflex saves involving impact to the head, such as from falling objects.

### PASGT (Personal Armor System for Ground Troops) Helmet

This is the standard military helmet. It is a single piece unit made from multiple layers of Kevlar® 29 aramid fiber. The helmet's bonuses only apply to attacks directed at the head or those that affect an area. The given Maximum Dex Bonus is subtracted from the Maximum Dex Bonus of any additional armor worn. The helmet also provides a +4 bonus to Reflex saves involving impact to the head, such as from falling objects.

### Tactical Helmet

Used by Delta Force, SEALs, and other Special Operators who are more worried about banging their head off something during a covert mission than they are taking a bullet (they're supposed to be skilled enough to not become targets in the first place), these padded half-head helmets a +10 bonus to any Reflex saves involving impact to the head, such as from falling objects; any damage indicated to be less than 1 point causes no damage.

## Light Armor (12)

### Ranger Body Armor

Designed specifically for the US Rangers with the purpose of providing good protection with little to no cost to speed and mobility, the Ranger body armor has since been adopted by several other elite combat units. Armored plates over the chest and back contained within the flexible vest provide excellent protection.

### Ranger Upgrade

This is identical to the standard Ranger body armor except that an additional anti-ballistic ceramic plate is also inserted into the vest.

## Medium Armor (12)

### PASGT (Personal Armor System for Ground Troops) Vest

Made from water repelling ballistic nylon with shoulder pads and overlapping protective layers. Two front pockets can each hold one standard magazine while two loop hangers allow for one grenade each. Designed with protecting the wearer from fragments more so than bullets, the number in parenthesis is the bonus granted to Reflex saves to lessen the damage caused by an explosion.

## General Equipment (14)

**Table 4- @ @: General Equipment**

Object	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
<b>Clothing</b>				
Bandoleer, Box	Small	1 lb.	9	-
Bandoleer, 40mm	Small	1 lb.	9	-
Bandoleer, Shotgun	Small	1 lb.	9	-
E-NBC suit	Med	6 lb.	16	
Fade Suit	Med	4 lb.	46	Od (+6)
Force XXI Land Warrior II	Large	13 lb. 12 oz.	33	Res (+2)
Ghillie Suit, Updated	Med	5 lb.	7	-
STEPO	Med	12 lb.	20	Res (+2)
<b>Communications Gear</b>				
AN/PRC-137 HF Radio	Med	9 lb.	20	Mil (+3)
AN/-PSC-5 Shadowfire	Med	19.7 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
Throat Microphone	Dim	-	13	-
“Shadow” Cell phone	Dim	-	15	S/III (+4)
<b>Computers &amp; Consumer Electronics</b>				
Break Alarm	Dim	1.5 lb.	7	-
Budd Light	Fine	2 oz.	4	-
Digital Video Camera	Small	6 lb.	19	-
<b>Surveillance Gear</b>				
Acoustic Ground Sensor	Small	3 lb.	15	-
AN/PAQ-3 MULE	Med	42 lb.	36	Mil (+3)
AN/PPS-15 Portable Radar	Med	23.5 lb.	23	-
Laser Microphone	Med	7 lb. 4 oz.	21	-
Laser Sensor, Home	Tiny	1 lb.	14 per set	-
Laser Sensor, Portable	Tiny	1 lb.	15 per set	-
Night Vision Goggles (update)	Small	3 lb.	17	-
Night Vision Palm Viewer	Dim	2 lb.	15	-
Parabolic Microphone	Med	2 lb.	15	-
Pheromone Sensor	Small	1.5 lb.	23	-
Thermal Imaging Digital Camera	Tiny	0.5 lb.	22	-
Thermal Imaging Goggles	Small	3.5 lb.	22	-
Thermal Imaging Palm Viewer	Tiny	2.5 lb.	21	-
Thermal Imaging Video Camera	Small	4 lb. 2 oz.	24	-
<b>Professional Gear</b>				
Botany Kit	Med	7 lb.	17	-
Geiger Counter	Tiny	2 lb.	12	-
Geology Kit	Med	12 lb.	23	-
ICAM	Tiny	8 lb.	27	-
PHAOS	Small	6.5 lb.	18	-
<b>Survival Gear</b>				
Water Distiller	Small	3.5 lb.	16	-
Water Purification Tablets	Dim	5 oz.	8	-

<b>Software</b>				
Anti-Virus	-	-	5 +1 per rank	-
Encryption	-	-	Encrypt. DC	-
Infiltration, Hunter	-	-	5 +1 per rank	Res (+2)
Infiltration, Relay	-	-	5 +1 per rank	Res (+2)
Security	-	-	Varies	-
Spyware	-	-	½ Detection DC	-
Stealth	-	-	+1/2 Detection DC	-
Task	-	-	7 +2 per rank	-
Virus, Penetration	-	-	5 +1 per rank	Res (+2)
Virus, Predator	-	-	5 +1 per rank	Res (+2)

## Clothing (12)

### **Bandoleer, Box**

Slung over the shoulder and around the chest and back, the bandoleer has pouches for seven standard-type box magazines. The bandoleer keeps ammunition within easy reach without affecting the wearer's movement or performance.

### **Bandoleer, 40mm**

Similar to the box magazine bandoleer, this bandoleer has small pockets for holding eight 40mm grenades.

### **Bandoleer, Shotgun**

Similar to the box magazine bandoleer, this bandoleer has enough loops to securely hold up to 48 shotgun shells.

### **E-NBC (Enhanced Nuclear Biological Chemical) Suit**

Designed to provide soldiers with NBC protection in the field (+15 equipment bonus to save vs biological, chemical, and radioactive agents and sources), the E-NBC has a 3-hour oxygen respirator and a cooling system good up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The E-NBC's save bonus begins to degrade at a rate of -1 per half hour against NBC agents with a save DC of 14 or less, at -1 per 15 minutes for a DC of 15 to 20, and at -1 per 5 minutes for a DC of 21 or more. A GM can also easily rule that some sources of radiation, such as a blast crater from a fresh nuke, are so radioactive as to render the suit's save bonus negated or drastically reduced. Once properly decontaminated, the E-NBC suit may be reused.

While in an E-NBC suit, the wearer suffers a -3 Armor Check penalty and is restricted by a +6 Maximum Dex Bonus. The suit comes in white for laboratory and emergency response team use, and camouflage for field use by soldiers. Wearers suffer a -2 penalty to Spot and Search checks due to a limited field of vision.

### **Fade Suit**

Derived from portal technology, a fade suit uses microscopic LCDs to project a semblance of the wearer's surroundings upon the suit's surface. This chameleon effect allows the wearer to "fade" into the background, appearing as little more than the ripples of heat distortion and providing a Hide equipment bonus based upon the wearer's rate of movement.

<b>Movement Rate</b>	<b>Hide Bonus</b>
Stationary	+25
15 ft. or less	+20
30 ft.	+15
60 ft.	+12
90 ft.	+10
120 ft.	+7
150 ft.	+5
Greater than 150 ft.	-

However, the suit's chameleon ability is severely vulnerable to electricity. There is a 5% chance



per 1 point of Electrical damage suffered by the wearer (or to the suit directly), that the chameleon function will fail for 1d4+4 rounds; if the roll is equal to or less than 10%, the suit fails until repairs can be made. Powerful electromagnetic fields also play havoc with the suit's chameleon ability, reducing the Hide bonus by 5 for slightly powerful fields within 10 ft., by 10 for moderately powerful fields, and by 20 for very powerful fields, all to a minimum bonus of +0.

The fade suit runs off of four regular "D" batteries, providing enough power for 30 minutes of operation.

There are rumors within Odyssey Prime that this same technology is being refined for improving the stealth capabilities of vehicles, such as strike jets, but the kinks would obviously have to be worked out first, not to mention making the technology more cost effective.

### **Force XXI Land Warrior II**

An ambitious project, the Land Warrior combines a man-portable computer system with an integrated sighting and weapon combination in order to make the wearer a more capable and informed combatant. The three components of the Land Warrior are the Computer/Radio Subsystem (CRS), the weapon (usually a M16, M4, or OICW), and the Integrated Helmet Assembly Subsystem (IHAS.) A menu driven computer system controlled by a terminal attached to the soldier's chest or near the trigger finger (allowing the user to retain a firing position) commands the Land Warrior's many functions.

The **CRS** is worn upon the soldier's standard rucksack and contains a powerful computer system loaded with mission-specific software (such as intelligence on enemy locations and equipment, load inventory, maps, friendly locations, etc.), a link to the Land Warrior's integrated weapon sighting system, a long-lasting battery (6 hours), a GPS, and a digital data recorder. The digital radio has a range of 5 miles and can be used to download mission updates and map waypoints from a command post, or to upload similar data to same.

The **IHAS** is fitted to a standard PASGT helmet and is comprised of a pair of ballistic goggles fitted with laser protection, night vision capabilities, and a monocular LCD upon which all information from the CRS and integrated weapon sight is displayed.

Fitted to the top of the weapon (or it is already a part of the weapon, in the case of the OICW) is the **integrated weapon sighting system**. This system includes a night vision- and thermal imaging-capable scope, a laser designator (75 ft. range increment), laser sight, illuminator, digital video camera and relay, and laser detection module (detects laser sights and laser designators pointing within 5 ft. of the detector) The system allows the user to point his gun around a corner while keeping his body undercover, using the signal from the sighting system to aim instead of the naked eye.

Light body armor, NBC gear, and several spare batteries (10 oz., purchase DC 4) usually round out the Land Warrior kit.

**Bonuses:** +1 equipment bonus to attack (laser sight); increase range increments by 50% when using scope (any setting.)

**Penalties:** -3 Armor Penalty due to weight and distribution; -4 to Spot and Search checks due to vision restrictions from goggles.

### **Ghillie Suit, Updated**

Besides the more common woodland ghillie suit, this camouflage uniform also comes in the following configurations:

- **Arctic:** Proper coloring is more important than added camouflage elements. Total white should be worn in areas of total or heavy snow, whereas a mixture of white interspersed woodland greens and browns should be employed in areas of light snow.
- **Desert:** Various tans and browns are used in such environments. The wearer must be especially careful when choosing a hiding spot or while moving because such regions rarely offer as much natural cover as many other environments.
- **Jungle:** Various shades of green, intermingled with textured elements and items taken from the environment, comprise this configuration.
- **Urban:** Grays and tans usually comprise this configuration. The wearer must be very aware of the cover provided, as rubble left from combat is often interspersed with colors that could easily clash with the suit's camouflage, thus making the wearer an easy target.

### **STEPO (Self-Contained Toxic Environment Protection Outfit)**

Designed to protect the wearer from toxins (+30 equipment bonus to save vs. contact and inhaled

biological and chemical agents), be they a weapon, fuel, industrial, or related in nature, the STEPO provides 4 hours of protection - including an air supply worn inside the suit and internal cooling - before its integrity is brought into question. The STEPO's save bonus begins to degrade at a rate of -1 per half hour against chemical/biological agents with a save DC of 14 or less, at -1 per 15 minutes for a DC of 15 to 20, and at -1 per 5 minutes for a DC of 21 or more. GMs should feel free to lower or increase this rate for agents that are lightly or highly corrosive, respectively. It is also possible to fit the STEPO with an airline for prolonged use. Once properly decontaminated, the STEPO may be reused.

While in a STEPO, the wearer suffers a -6 Armor Check penalty and is restricted by a +3 Maximum Dex Bonus. Wearers suffer a -2 penalty to Spot and Search checks due to a limited field of vision.

## Communications Gear (12)

### **AN/PRC-137 HF Radio**

Unique to US Special Forces, this lightweight, high-frequency radio operates by targeting a specific receiver. The operator uses a small keyboard to download a message to the radio, which then waits for the receiver to come online, at which point it sends the message and alerts the operator. This allows the operator to continue on with his mission without having to constantly keep an eye on his signal traffic. The radio also bestows a +5 DC bonus against attempts to decrypt or jam the signal.

The PRC-137 can also be linked with and controlled by either a laptop or desktop computer and is capable of sending and receiving email. Given the proper adapter, such as a digital camera looped through a laptop hooked up to the PRC-137, this radio could even send digital images with little signal loss. Range is roughly 20 miles.

### **AN/PSC-5 Shadowfire Radio**

Built by Raytheon, the Shadowfire has multi-band UHF/VHF, LOS (Line of Sight), and ASTOM (Satellite Communications) capabilities, providing extremely secure communications (+8 DC to decrypt or jam) in whichever mode is used. The Shadowfire also allows this man pack unit to communicate (and often coordinate) with a team of similar or smaller communications systems privy to its encryption and band, thus it is favored by officers and team leaders in the field. Range is estimated to be approximately 50 miles.

Though it comes standard with a telephone handset, this may be replaced by a microphone headset. A complete unit consists of the radio and antenna (11.7 lb.) and a battery pack (8 lb.) Setup and teardown each require roughly 15 seconds.

### **Throat Microphone**

Attached to an elastic strap so that it may fit around most necks, are two contact microphones. These microphones pick up on the vibrations in the user's larynx and throat while speaking instead of picking up the sounds as they exit the mouth. This leaves the user's hands free, except when he turns the mic on or off. The throat mic may be fitted to any equipment with a standard microphone jack.

### **"Shadow" Phone**

This works and acts just like a normal digital cell phone with one exception: it is fitted with an impressive encryption system (+5 DC to decrypt, trace, or jam.) Once encryption is enabled, only other communication systems that have access to the encrypted cell network can understand what is said through the phone.

## Computers & Consumer Electronics (12)

### **Break Alarm**

This cylinder is fitted with a small wire (Spot DC 20) that, if broken, causes the device to emit a high-pitched, very loud, repeating alarm signal. The unit may be carried by security personnel or used in perimeter defense by attaching the wire to a closed door or stringing it between trees no further than 10 ft. apart.

### **Budd Light**

This diminutive device is used to create a beacon visible to anyone equipped with infrared vision enhancement. For civilians, this means being able to gain the attention of search aircraft overhead in survival situations. For the military, the Budd Light is used to mark targets for air support, to mark trails and obstacles such as mine fields, to indicate safe landing zones, and so on.

A Budd Light is made of the infrared beacon, which pulses its signal, and its waterproofed circuitry. A standard 9v battery powers the Budd Light, giving it an 8-hour life span.

**Digital Video Camera**

This device works much the same as a portable video camera except that it records digitally. The video may be downloaded onto a computer though additional software is required to edit the video file.

**Surveillance Gear (12)**

**Acoustic Ground Sensor**

Placed within the earth, this sensor detects vibrations through the ground and sends its data - including whether it believes the moving object to be a person, animal, or tracked or wheeled vehicle, along with the amount of detected objects/creatures - to a central receiver via radio signals. Each sensor covers roughly 4 square acres. Consider the sensor to have 20 ranks in Listen for anything trying to move through that area.

**AN/PAQ-3 MULE (Modular Universal Laser Equipment)**

The PAQ-3 laser designator is a man-portable, tripod-mounted device that is used to “paint” a target with a laser (requires a touch attack roll) that is only visible with infrared or thermal imaging vision enhancements. Once the laser has painted the target with its beam, the target can be singled out by satellite for use as a beacon or laser guided missiles or bombs, usually launched from over flying jets, can use the laser’s signal to attack the target rather than being aimed by the aircraft’s pilot (use the touch attack roll of the laser designator’s operator rather than that of the pilot.) The unit is also fitted with a laser rangefinder. The laser rangefinder and laser designator both have a range increment of 1,300 ft.

The PAQ-3 takes about 2 minutes to set up and may be fitted with a night vision scope (+66 lb., purchase DC .26) The unit has a battery life of about 10 minutes with 7 hours being need to recharge.

**AN/PPS-15 Portable Radar**

Designed for perimeter surveillance, the PPS-15 Doppler radar detects movement and can be set on its tripod or mounted on a vehicle. A live controller may command it remotely or it can be programmed to automatically scan across a 120-degree sector, sending its information to the remote control station where beeping tones make the listener aware of movement, the direction, and the speed of approach.

Consider the AN/PPS-15 to have 20 ranks of Spot with penalties versus someone/something trying to move through its scanned area being conferred by the amount of cover afforded to the moving object. The PPS-15 is allowed two Spot checks per round against everything in its scanned area.

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Spot Modifier</b>
No Cover	-
One-quarter cover	-5
One-half cover	-10
Three-quarters cover	-15
Nine-tenths cover	-18
Total cover	-20
Per 1,000 ft. away	-1
Moving faster than 15 ft. per round	+10

The entire unit is contained within a briefcase-sized metal case and includes the radar unit, tripod, remote receiver/transmitter, two headsets for the receiver, antennae, and battery with vehicle adapter. The PPS-15 operates in most terrains and weather conditions, detecting vehicles up to 2 miles and people up to 1 mile away. It takes roughly 2 minutes to set up the PPS-15.

**Laser Microphone**

This device emits a steady laser beam up with a 45 ft. range increment that, while pointed at an acoustic-friendly surface, such as a windowpane, picks up on the vibrations through the target object and

transmits them to a receiver. The receiver not only converts the laser's data into sounds, but it also acts as a digital recorder. This effectively allows the listener to make a Listen check against any sounds that might be vibrating through the targeted object; GMs should assign the DC based upon the target material's acoustics, the loudness of the sounds, etc. Some materials and window types are even proof against such devices.

The laser microphone weighs 4 lb. and comes on a tripod while the receiver weighs 3 lb. 4 oz. The laser is normally invisible to the naked eye unless exposed by weather conditions or viewed by anything that can see infrared. The battery has a 4-hour life span.

### **Laser Sensor, Home**

Consisting of the laser emitter and the reflector, this device is placed within an object, usually a wall, and bounces a beam between the emitter and the reflector. If the beam is broken, as would happen were a person to pass between the emitter and reflector, an alarm signal is sent to a security station. This device is primarily used in home and business security.

The beam is invisible to the naked eye but can be revealed by a number of sources, including smoke, aerosols, or infrared vision enhancement.

Besides the cost of each sensor and reflector there is an additional purchase DC of 20 for wiring all the sensors to a security station or panel.

### **Laser Sensor, Portable**

Used by civilians mainly for camera activation at the start and finish line of sporting events, the military has found a use for these devices in securing a perimeter. Either powered by a generator or battery with a life span of 10 hours, the emitter may be placed as far as 225 ft. away from the reflector, typically from one tree to another. The signal is then fed by wire or radio (purchase DC +1) to a receiver (purchase DC 16), which can keep track of up to 24 separate emitters. Both emitter and reflector are weather resistant.

It is also possible to adapt a mine or similar device with remote detonation capabilities to use a laser sensor in order to create a booby trap, requiring Craft (electronic) (DC 10) and Demolition (DC 10) checks to do so.

### **Night Vision Goggles (addendum)**

Unlike regular darkvision, which is black and white, darkvision provided by night vision goggles is seen in various shades of green and black due to the artificial light amplification. Night vision goggles render a useless image in normal lighting conditions and if exposed to a bright light will temporarily *blind* the wearer for 1d4 rounds.

Night Vision and Driving: Because there is a severe loss of detail and depth perception while using night vision devices, an untrained user attempting to Drive, Pilot, or Ride through such a visual enhancement suffers a -4 penalty to all rolls. Even those trained in vehicle operation while using night vision enhancement, such as military pilots, still suffer a -2 penalty.

### **Night Vision Palm Viewer**

This is a small hand-held night vision sight. It offers only the image and doesn't have any recording capabilities, nor does it act as a weapon scope.

### **Parabolic Microphone**

Comprised of a 20 in. diameter parabolic dish that is hooked up to an equalizer, this device can pick up and amplify sounds from up to 900 ft., with line of sight. The microphone is able to pick up sounds through windows and some walls, though such sounds tend to be muffled, especially at extreme distances (-1 Listen penalty per 50 ft. away.) The microphone allows the user to make a Listen check with a +4 equipment bonus against sounds in the direction the microphone is pointing, with the DC being assigned by the GM based upon intervening objects and obscuring noise, etc.

The microphone runs off standard batteries for a life span of approximately 100 hours.

### **Pheromone Sensor**

This sensor detects the pheromones emitted by humans and animals and relays its data to a central receiver by radio signal. The sensor's computer can discern between human (including those wearing fragrances, such as perfume and deodorant) and animal (often down to the type if the animal has been programmed as common to the area.) Pheromones of an unfamiliar type may still be detected but will return an identification of "unknown." There are several ways to defeat these sensors, including covering oneself

in animal urine, which is why they are usually employed along with other security sensors.

Consider the sensor to have a Spot of 15 ranks against a living creature passing through its scanned area (roughly a 500 ft. radius, plus whatever gets blown to it on the wind.) The basic DC to Spot a person by pheromone is 15 while an animal is usually 10 or so. The sensor's Spot check may be modified, however, by the following:

Target Circumstances	Spot Modifier
Has been exerting itself (sweating)	+8
Wearing antiperspirant	-2
Wearing perfume	+4
Wearing sterile environmental clothing (e.g., a STEPO suit)	-25
Sensor is downwind	+4
Sensor is upwind	-4
Sensor is upwind, high wind conditions	-10

### Thermal Imaging Digital Camera

This works like a regular digital camera except that it comes with thermal imaging abilities, which may be turned on or off. See Thermal Imaging Goggles for details on thermal imaging.

### Thermal Imaging Goggles

These vision-enhancement goggles use infrared emissions to create a visual representation of the objects and environment being viewed; the more heat being emitted by something, the brighter the colors representing it in the goggles. These goggles will provide an image in any lighting condition, be it a bright day or complete darkness, and will see through smoke, dust, fog, most walls, and similar conditions.

They grant the user the ability to see in darkness as per darkvision, except in various shades of heat instead of in black and white. Because of the restricted field of view and lack of depth perception, coupled with the lack of distinguishing details from the thermal image, these goggles normally impose a -4 penalty on all Spot and Search checks made by someone wearing them. The environment's temperature variance also confers additional modifiers to Spot and Search checks, as well as attack rolls. Weather conditions of varying temperatures may also serve to interfere with the thermal imaging.

Condition	Example	Spot/Search/Drive	
Modifier	Attack Modifier *		
Extreme temp. variance	A warm body against a snow field	+4	+
2			
Much temp. variance	A warm body against a grass field that has been cooled by the night air		+
2	+1		
Moderate temp. variance	A warm body against a structure's interior wall	+1	-
Minimal temp. variance	A warm body against a field of grass during the day	-3	-1
Negligible temp. variance	A warm body against a sandy desert at noon	-6	-3
Poor weather	Light rain or mild snow	-2	-
Extreme weather	A deluge or snowstorm	-4	-1
Per interceding thin obstacle		A wall made from	
plywood or drywall	-2	As Cover	
Per interceding thick obstacle		A 16-wheeler truck or	
a reinforced wall	-4	As Cover	

\* This only applies to thermal imaging scopes and similar targeting devices.

Because the goggles are only receiving and amplifying information and are not emitting any of their own, their use cannot be detected. The batteries need to be replaced every half hour of heavy use (purchase DC 5.) An adapter that allows them to run off the power of an external source, be it a wall socket, car lighter socket, or dedicated military jack, has a purchase DC of 6.

Thermal Imaging and Driving: Because there is a severe loss of detail and depth perception due to heat image blending while using thermal imaging devices, an untrained user attempting to Drive, Pilot, or Ride through such a visual enhancement suffers an additional -4 penalty to all checks, on top of the applicable imposed Spot/Search modifiers due to the specified conditions. Those trained in vehicle operation while using thermal vision, such as military pilots, only suffer a penalty equal to the Spot/Search modifiers.

**Thermal Imaging Palm Viewer**

This is a small hand-held thermal imaging sight. It offers only the image and doesn't have any recording capabilities, nor does it act as a weapon scope. The battery life is 4 hours. See Thermal Imaging Goggles for details on thermal imaging.

**Thermal Imaging Video Camera**

This works like a regular video camera except that it comes with thermal imaging abilities, which may be turned on or off. See Thermal Imaging Goggles for details on thermal imaging.

**Professional Gear (12)****Botany Kit**

A portable laboratory designed to aid in the examination and classification of flora, this kit includes a field microscope, chemicals, sample containers, water and pH testing equipment, and other gear required to make a basic analysis of plant life in the field.

**Geiger Counter**

This digital sensor detects radioactivity in the immediate vicinity and indicates such radiation by clicking. A chart on the front explains the degree of radioactivity based on the clicks per second.

**Geology Kit**

This portable lab is able to rudimentarily analyze and examine rock and soil samples using chemical and computer testing. There are also tools for removing and chipping rocks, making pH tests, taking core samples, making shallow subsurface profiles, and seismic readings.

A Geiger counter is also a common geologist's tool, though that must be purchased separately.

**ICAM (Improved Chemical Agent Monitor)**

The ICAM consists of a large battery unit and monitoring "wand." The ICAM detects chemical or vapor agents in the air, feeding its information to a microprocessor that examines the agent's behavior and composition to (hopefully) identify it. Uncommon or new agents will read as "unknown." The ICAM will also determine the density of the agent in the air based on the location where the sample is taken.

**PHAOS (Parachutists High Altitude Oxygen System)**

Designed for jumps of extreme altitude, this system consists of a breath mask with regulator with a connected oxygen tank good for 40 minutes. The oxygen flow may be regulated manually, or pre-programmed to suit the changing altitude during freefall or to meet the parachutist's preference.

**Survival Gear (12)****Water Distiller**

By heating the gallon of water within this unit, the filtering steam traps capture the distilled water that is 99% pure of all but the most tenacious of chemical and biological contaminants (such as radioactivity.) Roll to save against the contaminant's effects with a +20 bonus. Success means that the water has been decontaminated.

**Water Purification Tablets**

These tablets release a germicide that kills most bacteria and similar contaminants. Roll to save against the contaminant's effects with a +10 bonus. Success means that the water has been decontaminated. A bottle contains 50 tablets, each of which can purify one quart of water after 10 minutes of exposure.

**Software (12)**

See the updated Computer Use skill description for expanded rules on writing programs, as well as for an

explanation of the difference between automated and assist type programs.

#### **Anti-virus (automated)**

These programs are designed to defend a computer system against virus attacks. Besides checking all incoming files and email, these programs are also set to perform active sweeps of the system for viruses at regular intervals, usually either once a day or once a week.

The anti-virus first makes a Computer Use check against the virus' detection DC, with success indicating that the program has noticed the intruding program. The anti-virus program then uses its Computer Use skill to make an opposed check against the virus' Computer Use skill. If the anti-virus software's check is successful, it has inoculated its system against that particular virus, destroying the intruding software. A virus defeated in this manner must be modified and/or improved before it can retry to avoid inoculation. Each failure to defeat the virus in this opposed check grants the virus a cumulative +2 bonus to oppose any future attempts to inoculate it by that particular anti-virus program.

#### **Encryption (automated)**

Oftentimes it is desirable to make a file only accessible to a limited group of people, and so the information is encrypted beyond the security provided by the system itself. The encryption could be as simple as a video game copyright protection to as complex as the codes used to protect America's nuclear arsenal launch codes. Whatever its purpose, the DC provided by the encryption software must be defeated by a Computer Use check in order for the data to be decrypted and accessed, as per the *Defeat Computer Security* aspect of the Computer Use skill.

Unlike most other programs, the DC to write this software is the program's encryption DC +5. Thus a program with an encryption DC of 20 would have be DC 25 to write.

#### **Infiltrator, Hunter (automated & assist)**

This type of program is inserted into a system that has already been accessed, allowing the user to find a specific file or type of information as though the hunter's Computer Use ranks were performing a *Find File* function (see the Computer Use skill.) The program can be left to search on its own for the data or it may be used to assist the operator.

Hunter programs are designed to escape notice, thus an operator or program actively looking for foreign software must defeat its detection DC (18 + its Computer Use ranks/bonus) with a Computer Use check in order to notice it.

#### **Infiltrator, Relay (automated)**

A relay infiltrator program is inserted into a system that has already been accessed, acting as a router of specified information once the user leaves the system. This data could be relayed directly from a specified source, such as sending a copy of every file downloaded into a particular directory, or it could be information gathered by another program inserted by the hacker, such as spyware or a hunter infiltrator.

Relay infiltrators are designed to escape notice, thus an operator or program actively looking for foreign software must defeat its detection DC (18 + its Computer Use ranks/bonus) with a Computer Use check in order to notice it. If the infiltrated system's operator chooses to, he can try to trace the destination of the relay program's data, requiring a Computer Use check (DC equal to its detection DC +5.) Hackers often set up numerous relays throughout independently hacked systems, bouncing information from one to the next, in order to confuse anyone trying to trace it.

#### **Security (automated)**

This is the basic security package for a system. This defines the default DC that must be beaten to in order to access a system without proper authorization, be it hacking a password on site or trying to break through the firewall from the Internet, and it also provides the DC for any read/write copyright protection on any of the system's files.

The DC to write a security program is equal to the DC of the program's protection: Minimum (DC 20), Average (DC 25), Exceptional (DC 35), Maximum (DC 40.) The purchase DC also varies: Minimum: 12, Average 15, Exceptional 22, and Maximum 28.

#### **Spyware Program (automated)**

Spyware is often used by law enforcement to capture criminals and spies, whereas the private sector uses it to keep tabs on employee activity. Once spyware has been installed on a system, it records all

activity, from what web sites and files are accessed, and for how long, to which keys are typed. As one can imagine, a hacker who manages to place such a program onto a system can reap a bounty of information, not the least of which is every login name and password types on that particular terminal. A spyware's data is all recorded on site, requiring the hacker to go back and retrieve it, unless a relay is also set up.

The DC to write a spyware program is equal to the detection DC (minimum of 20.)

Spyware programs are designed to escape notice, thus an operator or program actively looking for foreign software must defeat its detection DC with a Computer Use check in order to discover it.

### Stealth (automated)

Stealth isn't a program unto itself per se, rather it is additional code that is added to any other program that wouldn't normally have a programmed detection DC (see the *Detection DC* aspect of the updated Computer Use skill.) Examples of such programs include simple document files or anti-virus software.

The DC to write a stealth program is equal to the detection DC, though it must also be combined with the other software (see the *Combining Programs* aspect of the updated Computer Use skill.)

### Task (assist)

Task programs are designed to assist the operator by providing a bonus to a single specific skill. The program can do anything from offer facts, perform calculations, keep track of complex data, or correct simple mistakes, depending upon the skill that is being assisted. GMs are also free to rule that some skills cannot be assisted by a task program. For example, the Concentration skill is so dependent on the person rather than knowledge that the GM would be well within his rights to rule that this skill cannot benefit from a task program. On the other hand, Knowledge skills would be an ideal example of a skill that could make good use of such software.

The DC to write a task program is 18 +2 per +1 bonus of the program. The bonus is limited to the normal maximum for writing a program or to the character's own amount of ranks in the skill the task program is meant to assist, whichever is lower.

### Virus, Penetration (automated & assist)

This program is used to defeat a system's or file's defenses by using its Computer Use ranks/bonus against the security or encryption DC of the system or file that is being hacked (see the *Defeat Computer Security* section of the Computer Use skill for details.)

Penetration viruses are especially obtrusive, requiring an operator or program actively looking for foreign software to defeat its comparatively low detection DC (15 +1 per 2 Computer Use ranks) with a Computer Use check in order to notice it.

### Virus, Predator (automated)

Much like a hunter infiltrator program, the predator virus is designed to find specific files or types of files, such as executables or gif files. Unlike the hunter, however, the predator's job doesn't stop at finding the file and alerting the operator. Once the predator has successfully performed a *Find File* function, it destroys the file and then moves on to search for the next file that meets its criteria, as per the *Degrade Programming* aspect of the Computer Use skill.

Predator viruses are especially obtrusive, requiring an operator or program actively looking for foreign software to defeat its comparatively low detection DC (15 +1 per 2 Computer Use ranks) with a Computer Use check in order to notice it.

## Vehicles (14)

**Table 4 @@-: Vehicles**

Name	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Maneuver	Top Speed	Defense	Hardness	Hit Points			
	Size	Purchase	DC	Restriction								
<b>Civilian Aircraft</b>												
Parachute, Circular	1	1	500 lb.	-4	NA	30 (3)	2	0	15	L	16	-
Parachute, Steerable	1	1	450 lb.	-4	-2	30 (3)	4	0	22	H		
	20	-										
Powered Parachute	1	-	950 lb.	-3	-3	115 (11)	6	4	20	G	23	



Lic (+1)

<b>Military Vehicles, Ground</b>											
Chenoweth DPV	1	2	1,500 lb.	-1	+1	130 (13)	9	5	28	L	
	29	Mil (+3)									
M1043 HMMWV	1	4	2,500 lb.	-2	-2	110 (11)	8	7	38	H	
	31	Mil (+3)									
M151 FAV	1	3	1,240 lb.	-2	-1	120 (12)	9	5	30	H	
	26	Mil (+3)									
M93A1 Fox NBCRS	1	2	3,000 lb.	-2	-2	110 (11)	7	10	40	H	
	44	Mil (+3)									
<b>Drones</b>											
BQM-147A Dragon	-	-	25 lb.	+0	+3	180 (18)	10	3	15	L	
	38	Mil (+3)									

## Aircraft, Military (12)

### Parachute, Circular

This is the round (ram-air) parachute seen in old movies and was the only type available until the development of the paragliding parachute (see following.) The parachutist has no control over his direction of descent once the parachute has been deployed.

The speed is a set rate that may not be changed.

### Parachute, Steerable

Wide and narrow, this parachute functions as an airfoil. Steerable parachutes can be made to change direction using a Parachuting check (DC 10 for long, lazy turns and DC 20 for short, sharp turns.) Failing this check means that the parachutist failed to turn in the direction desired; failing by 10 or more points results in a 5% chance per point the DC was missed by that the parachute becomes entangled and collapses (see the Parachuting skill.)

The speed is a set rate that may not be changed.

### Powered Parachute

A powered parachute is the general name for rotor-propelled vehicles suspended from a paragliding parachute. Such vehicles require approximately 10 minutes to assemble from their disassembled, transport state (13 ft. long, 103 lb.) The ease with which the vehicle may be carried makes it ideal for covert insertions.

A powered parachute can carry a surprising amount of weight, but doing so drastically reduces the speed; lower the maximum speed by 3 character/0.3 chase per 50 lb. (or 12/1 per 200 lb.) over 200 lb., to a maximum weight of 950 lb. It requires about 700 ft. of takeoff space to attain flight from the ground while at maximum weight.

Two-seat versions also exist, but with a purchase DC of 22.

It provides one-quarter cover to its crew.

## Military Vehicles, Ground (12)

Unless otherwise stated, all military ground vehicles require one full-round to start up and another full-round to begin moving.

### Chenoweth Desert Patrol Vehicle (DPV)

Built by Chenoweth for use by the SEALs and Delta Force (among others), this fast attack vehicle seats the driver, a passenger (who may man the optional shotgun weapon), and a gunner mounted in the aft swivel seat, which is protected by an elevated roll cage. The driver and passenger both benefit from half-cover while the gunner only receives one-quarter cover. The DPV is two squares wide and three squares long.

The gunner has both a forward-facing M2HB and an aft-facing M-60 machineguns at his disposal,

whereas the gunner may optionally be equipped with small arms, or a forward-facing MK-19 grenade launcher or M-60 machinegun. Lots of additional equipment may be packed onto the vehicle, including standard kit, fuel, ammunition, tires, or even wounded. Note that the DPV has special sand tires that cause it to retain its traction in loose sand and gravel.

#### **M1043 HMMWV**

The High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) is intended to eventually replace all the M151 vehicles currently in service. The HMMWV four-door is driven by a V8, 6.2 liter, fuel-injected diesel, has four-wheel drive, and is able to ford water up to 2.5 feet deep (5 ft. with fording kit.)

The M1043 model of the HMMWV is armored, has a roof and cargo bed cover attachment with dual rear doors, and is meant to be fitted with a M60, M240, M2HB, or MK-19 upon the gunner's mount behind the forwards seats. A powered winch is also standard. The driver and passengers by the windows receive one-half cover, passengers in the cargo bed have full cover, and the gunner's station provides one-quarter cover.

#### **M151 Fast Attack Vehicle (FAV)**

Though they are being phased out by the more utilitarian HMMWV series of vehicles, the 4x4 M151 remains in use by both the Army and the Marine as simple personnel transports and as FAVs. A M151 FAV will typically mount a M60, M240, M2HB, or TOW launcher in its rear. The M151's greatest remaining virtue is that it is easily air-portable, allowing it to be carried and dropped into combat by cargo helicopter or plane, an option that is not as readily available to the heavier and larger HMMWV.

The M151 provides one-quarter cover to its crew and is one square wide by 2 squares long. It is capable of towing 2,138 lb.

#### **M93A1 Fox NBCRS (Nuclear Biological Chemical Recon System)**

The Fox is equipped with cutting edge nuclear, biological, and chemical detection and identification equipment using ground, air, and water sampling (3 mile range.) The crew, the driver and two technicians, are contained within a NBC resistant sleeve (+30 equipment save bonus vs NBC and crew receives full cover), allowing them to operate free of NBC suits so that they may more effectively study and report the NBC conditions of their scanning area. Meant to be used in just about any battlefield conditions, the Fox is air portable at 2 squares wide and 4 squares long. It is also equipped with twin propellers and is waterproof, allowing the Fox to swim (speed 10/1.)

The M93A1 is armed with a top-mounted M240 machine gun and two smoke grenade launchers (each fires a spread of 5 smoke grenades in a line 10 ft. to either side of the vehicle, with 5 feet between each grenade.)

### **Drones (12)**

#### **BQM-147A Dragon**

With only an 8 ft. wingspan, making it 2 squares wide by 1 square long, and weighing only 65 lb., the Dragon is ideal for reconnaissance of unknown areas. The drone has a flight time of 2.5 hours and can fly as high as 10,000 ft. (just under 2 miles.) and its payload is usually one of the following, with all data being transmitted to its control station via microwave signal:

- Digital zoom video with night vision capabilities (as per night vision goggles; purchase DC 23.)
- Digital zoom video with thermo imaging capabilities (as per thermo imaging goggles; purchase DC 26.)
- Laser Designator (range increment 400 ft., purchase DC 31.)
- Electronics Jammer. This disrupts radio communications for a 2.5 mile radius (treat all radio traffic as encrypted with a DC of 20 to unjam.)

The Dragon may be piloted remotely by UHF signal or its autopilot microprocessor may be programmed to fly a prescribed flight pattern, and is also equipped with a GPS system. It is launched from a pneumatic rail system that can either be assembled from its component parts or mounted on a vehicle (130 lb., purchase DC 23.)



## Chapter Five: The Last Line of Survival (18)

[begin fiction text]

*Frank Caleb has been called into Smith's office only once before. Of course, that was the mandatory meeting with the director. Smith, if that is his real name, makes it a point to see every new recruit.*

*In the month since he signed on as a med guy for the Odyssey Team, Frank has gone on two whole missions. He's just a rookie, not a team leader or even an active type who would warrant special attention—certainly not anything worth a Dam Con escort down the corridor. He keeps replaying the missions in his head. Nope, no major screw-ups. Unless...*

*He breathes in deep and enters the office.*

*"Have a seat," offers Smith's shadowed silhouette. Frank catches the vague outline of a thick envelope on the desk between them.*

*"Mr. Caleb... can I call you Frank? How do you like being with the Project thus far?"*

*"It's been a real eye-opener," Frank opts to play it cool. "Saw things I never imagined I'd see."*

*"And you do realize the importance of our operation, I presume?"*

*"Save the human race. Can't beat that."*

*"Then I would appreciate your keeping it under wraps until the time WE decide otherwise, Mr.... Blaylock. Ethan, is it?"*

*Busted, is the only thought running through Frank, er, Ethan's mind.*

*"Gotta hand it to ya, son, that was quite a cover job. If Carol didn't by chance recognize you from your quick stopover as a columnist for the paper in that little Vermont town she's from, you probably could have kept up the charade."*

*That explains why she looked at me funny the other day, Ethan realizes. And here I thought she was checking me out. She's a little too old for me, anyway...*

*Meanwhile, Smith has opened the hefty envelope and begins poring over the content. "1992, Master's degree in journalism, University of Bristol Heights... Staff Reporter, Segowitz News Service, upstate New York, for three years... Bounced around after that. Pity you couldn't prove it was you, not that half-wit hack, who broke the Ganron Hill scandal. Woulda set your career on fire with that piece."*

*"Yeah," Ethan answers weakly, "had to leave before I do something I might regret. Spare me the rest, Smith. I'm familiar with my own life."*

*"All right. Who are you freelancing for? Time? McNeil & Laughlin? Continental Post? The wires?"*

*"No story this time. Verbal agreement with Pallantine. Two-book deal. The latter a memoir. If I can make it through alive, that is."*

*"What goes on here would make one hell of a book, I must admit... You would get another shot at Big Time. But you know we can't let that happen now, right?"*

*Ethan rolls his eyes and fights back a sigh in frustration.*

*"Fortunately you only sold Pallantine the sizzle, it seemed" Smith continued, "though we might have to, uh, 'clean' your agent up a bit, if she knows more than we like."*

*Not a whole lot. Hazy details about some secret government organization saving*

*the world from some big disaster, that's all. Still, poor Gwen. Nobody pitches bare bones of an idea as good as her. Hope they don't shake her up too bad...*

*"As for you, Dam Con did a sweep and figured you must've been clutching onto that manuscript real tight. Guess you learned your lesson from Ganron." Ethan can almost feel a grin creeping up Smith's face. "So I believe we can cut a deal."*

*"I'm listening."*

*"We'll let you not only work on your book, but pass you some info privy to the higher-ups. In exchange, I want no more surprises and you to continue with your Odyssey duty. But in the meantime..."-now Ethan is sure Smith is grinning-"we're going to kill ya."*

*"Kill me."*

*"Yes. Ethan Blaylock will be dead, at least to the outside world. Tell us how you want to go, if you like, I'm sure Dam Con will gladly arrange it. After that you become full-time property of Odyssey, while writing about what an exciting time you're having with us-under supervision, of course. Can't risk a breach."*

*Ethan leans back. "Let me get this straight. You fake my death, I duck out of sight and help your gig here, finish writing my book, then reap the fame and fortune I deserve right before the world blows up?"*

*"That is option A. Who knows, maybe you can use the hoax to help sell your book after it comes out."*

*"And option B?"*

*"You die for real. Your choice."*

*"Fine negotiating tactic, Smith. Why they didn't save you a spot on the scouts, I'll never know."*

*That draws a laugh from Smith. "Oh, one more thing... let's see the draft of your bestseller, dead man."*

[end fiction text]

So this is it. One billion years of evolution comes down to ten.

See those kids in the park, riding on merry-go-round and running with the dogs? They probably won't get a chance to grow old enough to take their own children to the park. See all the drivers speeding on the freeway, eager to get to wherever they're going? Odds are they'll go nowhere fast ten years down the road. How about that chatty vendor who's been handing you double weiners, extra-relish-no-onion, from the same old cart for, oh, as long as you remembered? Enjoy your next 5,000 bites or so, because he might not be around long after that.

Doomsday is coming. Mark your calendar. Christmas may not be too merry in 2012. There may not be a Christmas in 2012 at all.

We can't see doomsday yet, but we know it's there. It's an asteroid the size of Australia-we think, about 120 million miles away from Earth and closing fast. Unlike its fifty other cousins shanking wide annually, NASA is fairly sure this one is not going to miss us.

Over 90% "fairly" sure, in fact.

As you read this, some of the most renowned scientific minds in the country have gathered to formulate a solution in a secret think tank somewhere. The military is naturally in the president's ear, hot to load up a Mother of All Warheads and blow the rock to smithereens.

How do I know all this?

I am-more precisely, was-"Frank Caleb, medical assistant" for a scout team of Project Odyssey, the biggest conspirator in this Mother of All Disasters. Perhaps the biggest savior, too.

This is my-and Frank's-life on the inside. There will be forgotten stories, cover-ups and mind games, dirty laundries, skeletons in closets, good news, bad news, esoteric theories, travels to other worlds. I tell ya, the things you see and hear on this job...

Finders Not Keepers: The Origin of an Odyssey (14)

Textbooks inform us a lot happened in the 1920's. Women finally attained the right to vote. Lindberg flew solo across the Atlantic, presumably went looking for a cold one right afterwards in Paris since the Prohibition dried up the good ole Red, White & Blue. Then "Black Friday," the stock market crash, closed out the Roaring 20's and sent America tumbling into the Whimpering 30's.

What they never mentioned is the name Rudell Sherman. Had the good professor found evidence for the fabled Camelot as was his intent, it would easily cement his spot among the 20's lore.

Instead, Professor Sherman is in danger of forever relegated to afterthought in ultra-hush memos that trafficked silently amid the government brass, because he discovered something else.

Prof. Sherman stood the foremost Arthurian scholar in the America of his era. He taught at a prestigious East Coast university and chaired its History Department. The life and time of Pendragon was more than his forte, it was his passion. To Sherman, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table were neither mythic figures nor highly romanticized accounts of an unremarkable aristocracy. He believed Camelot existed and that it's still there, hidden but awaiting rediscovery. Any definitive segment, any indisputable trace of Arthur's sovereignty would go toward solidifying the myth from fiction to fact. Rudell Sherman would seek it. He would find it. He would prove it. In essence, Camelot was his Holy Grail.

Ultimately parlaying his conviction into a healthy grant, Sherman assembled a team of historians, researchers, and surveyors. They landed on the southwestern shore of England, August, 1922, and gathered clues for the following eight months under Sherman's watchful eyes.

The professor's journal showed his research and intuition about Camelot were, for the most part, on target. It also mentioned the barbs from jingoistic British counterparts who resented the notion of an American-led expedition validating *their* heritage. While stopped short of accusation, Sherman was discernibly leery of these rivals' sabotage—something his detractors would be quick to point as paranoia that clouded his effort during return trips.

By his account, a major breakthrough occurred early April, 1923. A tattered parchment and local relics guided the crew to center its search on hills fifty miles west of Salisbury. The professor related his initial excitement for over ten pages. It was shortlived, however, when no substantial evidence revealed itself after an arduous week's work. The disappointment moved Sherman to wander through a nearby forest on a spring night, in hopes of relaxing himself.

That was when he discovered the “something else.”

Quite accidentally, too. If what almost tripped him was an ordinary rock or tree root, it is conceivable his name would not even rate a footnote outside academia. The professor, despondent as he might be, was still cognizant enough to know stone and wood do not resonate faint metallic tings when kicked.

Sherman returned the next day with help and tools. They began digging.

“Rudell thought someone had buried a giant pipe out there at first, which was a peculiar spot for that, to say the least,” recalled Dr. Daniel Lamphert, a fellow lecturer of Sherman at the college, a close friend and member of his expedition. “We didn't have a clue what it was or the size of it. Obviously it had very little to do with what we were seeking.”

They excavated a ruin beyond giant pipe. A fifteen-foot tall metallic rim bent under the earth's weight that housed torn but intricate circuits with indecipherable script, to be exact. The group dismissed the odds of a hoax perpetrated to discredit them. Too elaborate and too great a chance for it to go unnoticed for a ruse.

Albert Tate was lightning on the draw as the chief liaison/official state representative, who got on the horn back to D.C. “the moment we determined there's no possible way any nation, any civilization, any person on Earth, past or present, could have constructed a technology of such sophistication.”

Another team arrived post haste, this time consisted of U.S. government suits. They interviewed the witnesses-i.e., everyone in Prof. Sherman's group, and ‘confiscated’ the find.

Sherman fumed over the intruders' audacity. It might not be an Arthurian artifact, but it was still an artifact, discovered on a scholarly excursion, by scholars! Only threats of annulling his current funding and promises of future sponsorship cooled his anger somewhat. The professor would spend the remainder of his stay storming around his tent while the agents examined the device.

When the feds failed to make heads or tails out of it, they decided to haul it back home for more thorough analyses. They requested permission from the British government. Although they all but strongarmed Professor Sherman, they have no qualms citing his name and expedition as a ground for the release. That, plus sundry backroom deliberations later, Uncle Sam fanagled the relic. It was on the first classified cargo boat to America.

Rudell Sherman came back shortly after the interruption as well. He collected himself and persisted his quest four more times thereafter, each with lesser success than the previous. However, he and the original staff remained mum about his greatest discovery, as demanded. Professor Sherman passed away in 1939, a week before England entered World War II, missing his Holy Grail.

*“Impressive. You dug all this up in the mere month you’ve been here?”*

*“Wasn’t easy getting into the database, even on the inside. Stick around, Smith, you might see more to gush about,” Ethan winks.*

#### Batteries Not Included, Some Assembly Required (14)

Now we had a new secret toy. All we needed to know was what did it do and how it worked.

In that sense, we were akin to a toddler latching onto a plaything in death grip, fascinated by the knobs, strings, buttons, and not comprehending their significance one iota. We had to touch, tug, pull, prod, shake, swing, bite to get an inkling for what each part did, and what the sum was supposed to do.

The relic, given the moniker “Sherman ring,” made its new home at a subterranean federal laboratory in Virginia, just off the Appalachian Trails. Codenamed “Rock Crab,” the lab was hollowed from solid granite on a mountainside, perfectly isolated from view by natural fog and able to withstand heavy explosions inside and out, so fortified that no signs of a botched experiment, not even a whiff of smoke, would leave this mini-citadel. Military sources compared Rock Crab as a precursor to Mount Weather, the cavernous underground complex that heired decades later as THE shelter for our nation’s leaders in event of a nuclear war. It certainly provided the blueprint.

Within Rock Crab’s confines, some of America’s finest technical minds tackled the task of solving the Sherman ring. Age hadn’t been kind to it; the millennia of neglect disfigured its complex features, the once-astounding frame of a technological wonder decayed to a mere shell from the long burial. The boys felt like they were putting together a puzzle box from Mars that came without important pieces and instructions.

For an idea of the early successes, if you happen to peruse this at night, please shut off the lights. Find your way to the dresser and dump all your socks on the floor. Now, assuming the socks are of different colors, try to match the right pairs in total darkness. If you’re



reading this during daytime, close your eyes before trying.

The Great Depression made suddenly duller the already haphazard progress. Resource crunch slowly paralyzed the research, driving it to the brink of abandonment, when none other than the British government stepped in to lend a hand.

As per agreement, we kept the Brits abreast of all Sherman ring developments. Despite fumbling socks in the dark, we did manage to infer the principles behind certain parts, and reasoned the technology may create near-instant travel between two worlds, possibly alternate dimensions! Her Majesty's Country was eager to pick up the slack, perhaps motivated to implement any strategic applications this alien device may suggest in anticipation of the rising threat in Germany that is Hitler. We dispatched the schematics for everything we had surmised up till then, plus our best educated guesses for the blanks. From there, the British would add their own improvisations to construct a duplicate ring.

The historical first field test took place April of 1933, almost exactly ten years to the date Professor Sherman stumbled across the original wreck. The testers chose a secluded lakeside spot, crossed their fingers and let it rip. Their model sprang alive humming, electrodes jolting with vitality, counters dancing a maddening ballet... but they saw nothing more for thirty minutes. Then a hour. Then another hour. Still nothing. They quit and got ready to whipped out the drawing board again.

They would come to realize the momentous occasion was not entirely a debacle, though. Within two weeks, eyewitness reports of a monster in that very lake began to circulate. Sightings of the supposedly giant sea beast multiplied and exploded by summer's end.

The experiment created the Loch Ness monster. Or at least brought it there, the testers concluded. They theorized that their version did indeed work, that it did create a gateway to another world-but lacked any precision to the actual placement. In this case, noting the creature's resemblance to a plesiosaurus, a portal must have opened in the depth of Loch Ness Lake and connected it with a foreign prehistoric-like aquatic locale.

[begin fiction text]

*"Here's your first trivia," Smith stops to add, "we think Nessie commutes between the lake and her home, probably using Loch Ness as a feeding reservoir."*

*"Hmm, no wonder she hides so well from all the Nessie hunters, not to mention radars and sonars. Can't spot her when she's not around... But wouldn't that mean the portal is still there?"*

*"You catch on fast. For all I know, they never did figure a way to shut it."*  
*Ethan is sure Smith grinned when he said that.*

[end fiction text]

The Yankee techs had a good laugh upon getting the report, but were genuinely impressed with the effort and encouraged by the result as well. Meanwhile, words of the test run filtered up and caught the attention of some very powerful people in the intel business.

After a pulled string here, a juggled accounting there, funds “unexpectedly” freed up for the research in the way a favorite uncle would slip you extra money but told you to keep it to yourself.

Work resumed with an optimistic staff. Armed with information from their English allies off the Loch Ness experiment, inspired engineers revised the plan of the faux British ring, which itself a modification of the American original. They finally had proof the technology could be adapted, it just needed some fine tuning.

Fine tuning that eventually spanned three, four generations. Fine tuning of minor inconveniences like getting it to operate reliably and, when opened, controlling where the portal popped up. There might be a mountain of discarded ringers (no pun intended) stashed somewhere in Warehouse X; you know, the enormous storage where forklifts marched anonymous crates along the myriad endless aisles to their final destination, reminiscent of the closing shot in that Indiana Jones movie.

Not that it exists. No, really.

But we digress. Fact is, so precise was the mechanics to replicate, especially with components amissed, every imperfection could and half the time did set the research back to square one. Bridging the technological void during the constant trial-and-error was always an exercise in adventure and gaffe, when not futility. Should we use impulse conductors here? Do we reconfigure the primary flux conduit? What happens if we boost the current through the triple-transistor chamber? Hey, someone better decide how to substitute this busted part here!

The engineers and physicists’ faces might change, but the challenges and questions usually didn’t. And occasionally, not all problems originated within the workshop.

Ah, a timely segue to the good ship USS Eldridge, prime example of overzealous interference.

It was 1943. The Pearl Harbor attack finally drew America into World War II. President Roosevelt was up for payback. The same gong-ho infected the nation top to bottom, overrunning the military in particular, which never needed much of a reason to kick some behind.

Our soliders ran into snags in the Pacific. The same Japanese forces we sought vengeance against proved a stubborn nut, especially in Malaysia and the Phillipines (the “Bataan Death March” stood out as a war atrocity). U.S. Navy wanted a swift, decisive victory at the Asian seas, so they banged their collective head on every door looking for the Miracle Weapon. Per chance, a couple of Navy technicians were on loan to the Sherman ring project. Didn’t take long to see where their loyalty lied and for their superiors to shout “Eureka!”

Despite protestations that the model was neither complete nor tested, the impetuous Navy high command jumped the gun, anyway. Secrecy and misinformation were plentiful to

fool most of Navy's own generals into believing it was a trial in invisibility, not shortcutting across the ocean through spatial warp as the true intent.

The warship USS Eldridge was the choice subject. Using contraptions owing design to the Sherman ring, Navy scientists showered the destroyer and its sailor complement with an intense magnetic field. But the ship remained unbudged in the harbor throughout, let alone vanishing as many were expecting. It was an abject failure, worsened by the horrible side effects plaguing Eldridge's crewmen in the aftermath, from coma to hallucination and total insanity.

The Navy quietly swept the incident under the rug, as official agencies are prone to do with all unpublicized blunders, and hurried on to the Next Big Thing. (The atomic bomb wouldn't be perfected for another twenty months or so.) Over time, distorted memories, false planted clues and misled conspiracy buffs have exaggerated this affair, the Philadelphia Experiment.

[begin fiction text]

*"You cracked the Philly Experiment too... Very good!"*

*"That was one of the toughest files I've ever had to burrow into, Smith. Not even my first Odyssey mission kicked my ass that bad. You guys sure sealed them tight, wouldn't be shocked if I accidentally left some trails. Come to think of it, I'm starting to wonder if there's more to you catching me than just Carol ratting me out."*

*"That's for us to know and you to find out. Can't give away all the trade secrets, kid."*

[end fiction text]

Highlights of the following years for the Sherman ring featured winding detours as the official staff ran dry of ideas. It would log miles the envy of any frequent traveler, shuttling unseen among high-profile facilities in such cosmopolitan locales as Bonasco, New Mexico and Little Crooked, Montana; sometimes stopping long enough just for the local security-cleared gearheads to add their two cents.

Groom Lake, Nevada, better known today as Area 51, has the distinction as the longest host to the ring outside Rock Crab. Records showed it was there undergoing a battery of tests shortly before the Roswell crash, Project Bluebook, and the whole UFO phenomenon/hysteria took off... Coincidence? Or did someone open a passage to another world across the galaxy? Let's just say there are strong suspicions.

[begin fiction text]

*Smith exhales a puff of smoke and snuffs out a cigar. "It was really a weather balloon that went down in Roswell, you know."*

*Ethan perks an eyebrow and waits with interest.*

*"Of course, they never said what shot it down. Apparently, aliens fight each other like we do. Collateral damage, the poor balloon."*

*“What about the bodies that Air Force supposedly recovered?”  
Smith lights another fat one. “Oh, we got them. Not from Roswell but miles out.  
Casualties of civil war, the poor E.T.s.”*

[end fiction text]

In the 60's, when we were sending men to the moon and feeling good about the space age and ourselves, we also ironed out most of the bugs. Well, some, at least. The operators have now attained reasonable control. They got the gateway to unfold within the ring frame, rather than blinking wildly all over God's creation like an Internet pop-up window on speeds. Nevertheless, they have very little idea to where it would connect, and exactly how long would the portal stay open. The misadventure continued on the summit of Mount Henner in Washington, on a typical drizzling day. Someone blinked, probably due to a long shift or the need to catch a smoke, and a clan of giant, apish humanoids wandered out past bewildered techs. Some of them must have migrated southward later because one was filmed on camera at Bluff Creek, California, on the infamous “Bigfoot” tape.

That would be the last outdoor experiment for a while.

[begin fiction text]

*“That Bigfoot thing would have been pretty embarrassing,” Smith admits, “if there weren't already others like them around for centuries... Don't look at me. There are mysteries even we don't have answers to.”*

[end fiction text]

Flash forward. Tarik Williams left the lab not a happy man. The ring literally blew a tube and the portal's collapse nearly ripped open a mini-blackhole. Now there's something they don't prepare you for at MIT. That, and two months of hard work just got figuratively sucked into the void. He was still weighing the pros and cons of isolation coils when he hopped on a subway train.

Out in the mundane world, President Clinton's impeachment was fetching an even bet. JFK Jr. went missing at sea, and would later be found dead in a plane crash. A judge decided Microsoft is a monopoly after all. Pop psychologists and “concerned” parents hunted for scapegoats to explain the Columbine shooting, from computer games to that old-standby rock music. Turkey got leveled by an earthquake. But this being 1999, the biggest in-thing to get jitters over was the millennium bug.

Half a globe away, Misawa Kuroyoshi stepped off a subway train. He headed for the Akitenryu Group headquarters, ready to begin his first day there as a developer.

East and West were about to meet for the Mother of All Breakthroughs.

“Supa Teku”: The Leap to Mastery (14)

When Tarik was put in charge of the Sherman ring research, it has already bounced in and out of the laps of numerous government outfits, most signed their last paper before the Reagan Administration.

Though not packing the unforgiving wallop of the 30's Depression, 70's oil crisis still did a number on economy everywhere, including the government. Extremous agencies, especially underground ones, got reorganized, merged, or shut down. Orphaned pet projects lingered in Warehouse X in droves.

The Sherman ring flirted with extinction but was never quite buried because some bigwigs somewhere would always think they'll be the one to make it work and adopt it into their home. As a result, the project has had some strange foster parents.

Tarik could sympathize with that. The offspring of an Egyptian immigrant mother and an American father who saw his shares of residence inside maximum prisons, Tarik served time of his own bussing from relatives to relatives, in neighborhoods that will never be known for their property values. Being a honors student of an inner-city school, he found, was somewhat akin to winning the Miss Hoboken County Fair pageant-you don't get a whole lot of notices, let alone lucrative scholarship offers if you're not athletically gifted. So he joined the Air Force, where he excelled in technical programs and ascended the ranks, and earned enough to put himself through the renowned Massachusset Insitute of Technology. Uncle Sam was waiting at the graduation ceremony to enlist his services back. He's been in the fold ever since.

He is acquainted with the ring's vagrant past as well. He himself has supervised the project for five years under eight different bureaus... or was it nine? He lost count. Which explained why he wasn't too surprised when yet another arm scooped it up after the Pentagon, who had thrown it to a backroom and neglected it like a red-headed stepchild, became the latest to drop the ball. But really, Department of Energy? Who's next, the Department of Agriculture? The Department of Motor Vehicles?

Tarik was told once that the Sherman ring is a "lost cause." Even though the project always flew under the radar, for those privy to it, the seemingly long reign of futility hasn't done much to lift that stigma. Not with Nixon tirading about it on the missing portion of the Watergate tape. Not when Reagan stopped funneling massive dollars to it under guise of the Star Wars Initiative. Not now.

But he knows better. He knows the current prototype is a Ferrari over the Model-T's of previous generations. A Ferrari that's one adjustment away from hitting the cosmic highway, cruising the multiverse at 120. Admittedly, minus that adjustment it's been pulling 20 and dying in the driveway. If he could just puzzle out that final piece...

On surface, Akitenryu Group resembles a typical Japanese high-tech firm in every manner. It boasts an impressive international clientele. It generates revenue in the millions annually. It has dedicated workstaff outputting incredible, cutting-edge innovations. It sends armies of executives all over every continent. It watches thousands

of employees revolve through the corporate tower's door each day.

The business-as-usual façade hid the fact that Akitenryu is also a world-leading investor in covert scientific developments. With heavy ties to and sponsors in the Japanese *diet* (parliament), it possesses the contacts and resources to offer both financial and technological backings to virtually any country on the planet. (Heck, the company is run so much by the diet, it's practically the Japanese government under a corporate skin.)

Akitenryu has an almost John Wayne-esque rep for how it rides in and rescues besieged scientific pioneers from bureaucratic, pennypinching red-tape Indians, but you won't find it bragging about that. It's content to reap the rewards quietly and maybe wear the grin of a coy cat that might have just swallowed a canary.

One thing is definite: the corporation wasn't grinning when they first took in Kuroyoshi.

It's not because Kuroyoshi didn't come from a respectable family. On contrary, the

Misawa pedigree is rife with influential senators and business magnates. Ability isn't the problem, either; if anything, Kuroyoshi exhibits an intuition for science that bordered on supernatural. His "shortcoming" is education.

For his genius, Kuroyoshi seemed eternally bored by schoolwork. He would neglect lessons in favor of scribbling arcane codes on paper. Once in junior high, he paid for that by having to hold a full bucket straight out in each arm for an hour as punishment. It wasn't until the teacher took Kuroyoshi's notes into a discussion later with the principal when somebody realized the kid was actually navigating shortcuts to advanced physics equations!

That means next to nothing, regrettably, in a country placing utmost premium on traditional learning. Grades and test scores correspond directly to a student's honor and in turn the family's honor. A person not keeping up with even one single subject effects a considerable "loss of face" on the entire kin. Imagine the shame, then, the esteemed Misawas suffered from 'Yoshi's constant failing across the board.

With the clan coercing the school officials, plus an occasional greasing of the right palms, Yoshi barely eeked out a high school diploma. Never mind college; the means to conceivably fix Japan's national entrance exam system is beyond even the Misawas. Yoshi grew more reclusive, losing himself in more arcane-coded papers avalanching his room, until the senior Misawa, gritting with embarrassment, finally pressured a position out of Akitenryu for him.

Suffice to say the corporation didn't exactly welcome a "disgraceful flunker" into its lineup of educated stalwarts, who graduated *cum laude* from the likes of Cal Tech, Cambridge, and University of Tokyo. It viewed Yoshi as a charity case, despite his awesome talent, and languished him in low-priority jobs.

At the time Akitenryu held a contract with the U.S. Department of Energy, and a

throwaway project became available for Yoshi's employer to stick him with. The eccentric prodigy promptly turned the routine efficiency-improvement consultation into a magnum opus, drafting an implementation so profoundly simplistic in its ingenuity, many overlooked the groundbreaking principle implied therein.

By sheer coincidence, Tarik was asked to do a cursory check and sign off on Yoshi's plan in place of the usual administrator who had fallen ill. The brilliance didn't escape Tarik's eyes, though, as he marveled at the codes with a widening smile. He knew a final piece when he saw one.

To get Kuroyoshi means Tarik had to come clean with Akitenryu, and no way was Akitenryu going to miss out its cut of this nifty pie, which is fine by a DoE about to weather another federal belt-tightening, anyway.

Yoshi was instantly enamored with the Sherman Ring. He wanted to study everything about it. That took a while given his very limited English and Tarik's nonexistent Japanese. Fortunately, things like mathematical equations, intellectual bonds, and a common passion for trailblazing technologies tend to transcend language barriers.

Tarik recruited Kuroyoshi with the notion of transplanting at least part of Yoshi's scheme he saw for the ring, specifically to stabilize the energy flow for what he felt was the last step to mastering the device. Kuroyoshi, once grasping the nuances, saw further.

We've been using the ring as a car on autopilot, from his perspective. We assumed there would be a new world waiting every time a portal opened, as if it had a preprogrammed itinerary. Statistics suggested otherwise, showing on average 18 "successful" gateway openings with that criterion, out of estimated every 3,000 attempts. That told him we have been bumbling about a cosmic maze, hitting exits as a fluke, and that the original model didn't come with such a self-guiding luxury.

What good is a car with a less than 1% chance of getting you somewhere? Ah, unless it also doubles as a "global positioning system" to scan for possible destinations in the cosmos, of course. Yoshi postulated that, barring technical glitches, the ring might have functioned correctly as much as 80% of time in the past, just that the gateway opened to complete nothingness of the vast spatial rift which the operators quickly dismissed as failures, since they couldn't discern any activities.

He equates the concept to a childhood carnival game. It is a large square box divided into numerous rows and columns of compartments, covered over with an opaque sheet. Players pay money for the privilege to poke holes into the compartments. You win if one reveals a prize inside, except naturally the odds are stacked to all but ensured that you find empty spaces.

Now, substitute the multiverse for the large box, and the Sherman ring as a finger piercing the paper that's fabric of space. Some "compartments" will have a world in them, most won't. The trick is to accelerate the "poking" speed so to uncover the rare, prized squares in an infinitely big box as fast as possible. Only when those are discovered

will the ring be the transportation to take us there.

The insight moved the project in a radical direction. In addition to solving many old “problems” that really weren’t, it immersed the team in the creation and augmentation of a dimensional mapping system. They also took comfort in operating without financial constraint for the first time in a long time, thanks to Akitenryu footing most bills.

Months later, *Voila!*, they have a brand new, homegrown, fully functional, extraspatial-traveling *supa tekū*-which Tarik has learned to interpret as Yoshi speech for “super technology.”

One journey has ended. Cue the next.

[begin fiction text]

*“Misawa Kuroyoshi, a living Cinderella story.”*

*“How so?” asks Ethan.*

*“The Akitenryu stepmother ordered him to menial labor. Then he slipped on the magic slipper and became instrumental in the most incredible technological advancement ever. All of sudden he’s their favorite son all along. Imagine that.”*

*“Take it he’s doing well?”*

*“If being the Chief Director of Special Project Development in a giant like Akitenryu qualifies, sure.”*

[end fiction text]

Ten-Year Warning (14)

In retrospect, the ring’s perfection is paradoxically both in time and too late. Timely, because it guarantees humanity will prevail in face of the worst cataclysm in Earth’s history. Too late, because we can use all the practice runs we can get.

The harbinger of doom is coming from the sky. When this is written, it’s still a blur on photo transmissions but will have been tracked religiously by NASA for over a year. The guys down at Houston do run little private missions. Attention grabbers such as the space shuttles, the Voyagers, the Vikings, even the giant dishes combing for extraterrestrial signals cut into just a portion of NASA’s actual allotment, you see. When they cry empty wallet, you can usually bet it’s because they sent up a few too many unpublicized, confidential space cameras and zoom lenses to satisfy their own curiosity.

NASA’s technological capability is also more sophisticated than advertised. The Hubble Telescope is the best on your nightly newscast only (and boy, do they laugh over the PR crock for that one). Satellites with superior range, magnification, and precision are regularly dispatched into the final frontier, hanging out somewhere in Star Trekkish quadrants. The NASA innermost vault is littered with deckplans for enterprises from battle stations to orbital hotels throughout the solar system, some of which rumored to be under construction. Who knows, they could have already found a huge city under Mars



that they are digging out right now. Hey, you can't spend all that money without hardly a thing to show for, right?

The culprit for doomsay began, innocently enough, as just another blip on NASA's radar. Nothing special to elicit more than a shrug. After all, they had seen millions of these before, and will see millions more. The monitoring staff went through the motions of giving this new blip a nondescript "TQ4881" tag. Even the asteroid's nickname was a vanilla "John Doe #7," for the seventh one they had seen that day. (Nicknaming new asteroids is normally a hot contest among these guys, so when it gets down to "John Doe," you know it's a slow day.) Just run the numbers through and call it a wrap. Yawn.

Until they ran down the data and saw how fast it's hauling ass. Asteroids could move at a decent clip, a good reason to get out of their way, but this one was Jesse Owens.

The second sign of trouble was Mr. Doe is wide as it's fast. Asteroids could get pretty big, which made better sense to avoid colliding with them, but this one was a Paul Bunyon the size of Australia.

The facts upgraded it from irrelevant to a curiosity. Still, not to panic, it was cruising at the outer edge of galaxy. We have thousands like that. Just pin a probe on Doe's tail and keep tabs periodically. 'George,' a NASA director speaking in anonymity, recalls the next transmission.

"The second numbers didn't come in till, oh, maybe half-a-year after. Remember, the reason we'd even considered this was due to the asteroid's unusual speed and size, otherwise we wouldn't have bothered. To say the evaluation raised some concerns is calling Noah's flood a basement leak. What we saw on that analysis was a darn good chance of Doe barging into the solar system and nudge Jupiter. Literally the computer spewed out the projections and we spewed our coffee."

"Darn good chance" being 27%. However, by astronomical standards where scantily few celestial objects were ever given positive value for threat potential (i.e., a lonely one precedence at a whopping +0.06 rating), and whizzing within 500,000 miles of a planet is considered too close for comfort, 27% seems as big as Australia.

All the more alarming when it's 27% and climbing.

[begin fiction text]

*"Good ole George. Did he still babble about alien abductions and the Mayan calendar?" Smith asks, though the tone clearly suggests it's rhetorical. Ethan stares blankly and shrugs, obviously waiting to be clued in on the joke.*

*"Until Doomsday, he had been on a theory binge for why the Mayans ended their calendar on 2012. They were kooky for a man of his education. You ought to hear the doozy about the harvest cycles and Alpha Centuri. That one really took the cake. If he wasn't so astute in running his division, they would've carted him off to the loony bin long ago.*

*“Alien abductions, on the other hand, is another story...”*

[end fiction text]

With TQ4881, now more creatively called “Knock Knock,” shooting up the priority ladder, reports were coming in on a monthly basis. “We were getting better readings the closer it pushed toward our system. We got increasingly concise stats to let us calculate where it might end up and when,” George discloses, “but the news was inversely less and less promising, sometimes downright ugly now that I think about it. Hope went south as the percentages kept going up north.

“It rose from 27% to 32%, then 36%, 45%, 58%... I was double-checking, triple-checking to make sure we didn’t goof on the calculations. Finally we said forget Jupiter, let’s pray it doesn’t come near us!”

Then came the ambivalent report George received in early autumn, 2001. Good news: TQ4881 (name changed again to “Fat Messiah”) was going to miss Jupiter. Bad news: it might hit Earth.

The room for George’s secret stargazing department must have felt like a sauna those days, the way he and his crew sweated out each data feed and held their breath for the computers to regurgitate projections. Every result ran the gamut of hope, anticipation, anxiety, fear, despair. Then they’d do it again next hour.

Company tagged along on the roller coaster ride, too. The usual suspects from CIA, FBI, NSA, Secret Service, plus the Pentagon, the military, Department of Defense, the presidential advisors... all had George on speed dial and demanded updates, if not assigning reps to observe and relay analysis in person.

“I had guys threatening to quit because they couldn’t handle the constant pressure from outside agencies. Those arrogant bastards can hassle you with the best of rude clerks.” By the way, Colonel Worholz, if you’re reading this, George wants you to go to hell.

While the agencies might jostle and fight each other for details, they all agreed to hide them from the public, especially the media. That they did a superb job of. CIA, for example, pulled their weight in making several curious citizens disappear. Sorry for the belated news, surviving Hutchinsons of Indigo, California.

With the final stats in hand, George’s briefing to the government contingent in March, 2002 confirmed the worst fear.

Impact imminent. ETA: 10 years, December, 2012, give or take a couple months. At a meaty 98.5% chance of clobbering Earth, it is aptly dubbed “Doomsday.” It is officially a full-blown, red-alert national crisis.

Anybody passing high-school astronomy knows hundreds of dust grains, pebbles, and other space debris shower Earth every day. They are next to harmless since they burn up

in the atmosphere. Once a while, a chunk survives but still amounts to little more than a spectacular nighttime aerial show.

Then there are the really big ones that astronomers worry about, killers at least a mile across. About 50 of these are thought to intersect the Earth's orbit. Our best guess has one actually striking every 300,000 year. That seems a longshot for you to exclaim, "not happening in this lifetime!" until you realize it converts to a one-in-6,000 chance over the next 50 years, or six times more likely than you dying in a plane crash.

An asteroid a mere mile in diameter would unleash force equal to 100,000 megatons of TNT. That's 5 million times the force of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and nearly 10 times the force of the world's nuclear arsenal put together.

Asclepius 4581 was a close shave, missing Earth by twice the distance to the Moon in 1989. It is as wide as the Empire State Building and just as tall. The damage report if it had hit? 1,000 megatons of TNT, or 50,000 Hiroshima bombs at once.

During a week-long bombardment in July 1994, the fragments of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 crashed into Jupiter's atmosphere in excess of 120,000 mph. The subsequent explosions produced fireballs larger than the Earth.

Consensus holds that the dinosaurs were wiped out by an intruding meteor approximately 65 million years ago. The largest species to ever dominate this planet, *\*snap!\** gone, just like that. Scientists figure that the rock would have to have been at least 10 miles across.

The guilty parties in all instances above are dwarves by ungodly margin to Doomsday. I'll leave the ramifications to your imagination.

Gentlemen, Start Your Armageddon (14)

A cabal of convicts was sentenced to execution at dawn. On their final eve, they decided to have one big pizza for their last meal, which gave away to that age-old dilemma: they couldn't agree on the toppings. (Aside from no anchovies, that is.)

Although it was the very last time they would eat, and precious seconds ticking away on their clock, debates raged over the finer points of pepperoni and mushroom versus sausage and green pepper.

With their own equivalent of judgment day imminent, proposals and solutions concerning Doomsday assaulted the White House walls at power meetings, as our high brass played out their version of Pizza Time at the Capitol.

You have the conventional nuke-it-in-space. (Pepperoni.) You have the variants-like drilling a hole first, obviously inspired by the 1998 blockbuster flick Armageddon but not so insipid as to hire untrained astronauts for drillers-on the conventional nuke-it. (Canadian bacon.) You have the slightly offwall concoctions such as interplanetary gravitational manipulation to affect its course. (Pineapples). And the left-field screwballs

(time travel, psychic energy repulsion) that no one would touch. (Anchovies, anyone?)

The main players, of course, all have pet ideas they got a deathgrip on and pushed with less shame than a used car salesman.

The Pentagon's bombastic belligerence covered a few, especially when one is not accustomed to the barking scowls of career soldiers, up close and personal. After a lopsided discussion in a conference that's more akin to a prisoner interrogation, you too might think hurling everything we got at the rock is the surest bet since America vs. Iraq in the Gulf War.

CIA played the usual "national security" card, as did other minor intelligence services. They all claimed to have perfectly workable solutions but teased like a Playboy cover. It's a wonder how many obscure classifications could be created, and how many ranked officials suddenly lacked the clearance to access them.

Blustered posturings were also rampant everywhere, but the bluster-est came from the Department of Defense, who believed, along with everyone else, that it fell under their jurisdiction, exclusively. The DOD, while matching hands with CIA in the national security card game, all but grandstanded in selling the president its scheme to defend the disaster. Several times, in fact. Impressive presentations all, but apparently the Chief-in-Command thought warmover 80's Star Wars technology is hardly the answer, either.

Even the Secret Service and second-strings like Defense Technical Information Center got into the bruhaha for a while, commissioning think tanks and advisory boards before throwing themselves behind the "hot theory du jour."

Our government, disorganized? Nah, never happens.

[begin fiction text]

*"Johnson was really into that space railgun stuff."*

*"Who?" Ethan asks.*

*"Johnson. Runs DOD. First name Mister."*

*"Ha ha."*

*"I think he's getting the department to build that too, in secret, just like all those other guys after that big spat in the Oval Office over Doomsday.... Wasn't pleasant in the least bit. We'd be the laughing stock if people find out what went on in there that day. Oh, this is off record. Don't want see any of it in your book."*

*Ethan nods, and notes mentally to research the incident.*

[end fiction text]

The race was on for the ultimate answer, but to call the altruism overflowing would, sadly, be naïve and make you a prospective buyer of the Brooklyn Bridge. It was not about salvation, though that certainly was an impetus. It was about political egos as much as saving their own ass. It's not everyday you have a cataclysmic crisis and a chance to

bail out the world with your brilliance, and be forever credited in history as a messiah.

Meanwhile, who's up for pizza?

### **A Project is Reborn (14)**

No telling what the CIA had up their sleeves, or whether they indeed got something and not just blowing smoke, when they shilled alongside their big government brethren. In the Strategic Security Council's case, however, it was definitely a yes... and no.

Yes as in "we do have a prospect." That being the Sherman Ring. The SCC has actually been keeping tabs on its development, going as far as planting a mole in recent time when there might be a breakthrough, just in the event that Williams managed to make it work. Well, he did.

And no as in "we haven't swindled/bullied/extorted it over from the Department of Energy yet, but it was only a matter of time.

Just who or what is the Strategic Security Council, you wonder?

The latest incarnation in the long tradition of trusted ultra-secret advisory chambers in the president's back pocket, which reports directly to The Man, etc., etc., where you go if you retire at the top of politics, big business, intel, armed forces, or the federal bench and are chummy enough with the prez to attend his "real" Christmas parties. The roster is loaded top to bottom as usual, apexed by nine old-timer kingpins who can snap their fingers and make a third-world country disappear. One of them may or may not be a former president himself. Ahem.

What to do, then, when you're a cypher interested in something but don't want to risk exposing yourself? Why, you get a partner to acquire and operate it for you, preferably a low-profile (out goes the military), nonthreatening entity that hasn't eroded the public's trust (out goes the CIA), with vast yet virtually overlooked powers (out goes the DoE). The Council knew just who to shake hand with.

Hello, FEMA, a.k.a. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

[begin fiction text]

*"What's wrong, Smith? I can almost feel you frown from here."*

*"SSC. How'd you get that far?"*

*"Oh that... If it comforts you, I didn't get much. What you see is all I got. There wasn't a whole lot, but then not all files are buried anal-tight like yours-the ones in FEMA's system, for instance. And since I'm technically a FEMA employee..." Ethan smiles.*

*"Hmm. How do you feel about working Dam Con?"*

[end fiction text]

In this marriage, FEMA would supply the administration and coordinate the operation. The Council brought the covert guidance, plus the muscles necessary to fix behind-the-system “inconveniences.” Not that FEMA is chump change itself. Unlike the military or CIA, FEMA is not subject to Congress. It was originally conceived not for disaster relief but to ensure the survival of our national government in a major crisis, such as nuclear war. To serve that end, presidents like Nixon, Carter, Reagan and Bush penned several orders exclusively enforceable by FEMA. It can move entire populations, seize transportations and food sources, detain and hold citizens without warrants or trial. Technically it can suspend any law, including the Constitution. Add them all together and it’s clear why paranoid conspiracists called FEMA “the secret government.” Some even linked the agency to the silent black helicopters seen hovering ominously throughout the western states of America.

FEMA has quite a federal backing for a bureau with about 3,000 full time employees. Running on a secret budget in billions of dollars, it supposedly diverts just six percent to helping out victims of floods and earthquakes while spending \$1.3 billion on secret bunkers, if you trust the rumors and underground dirt sheets.

All that resources and powers aside, SSC still couldn’t have made a more appropriate choice than FEMA, considering the agency’s directives (at least to the public) and innocuous, almost-immaculate image. With mentions of disaster assistance plastered all over its official website and in pamphlets, FEMA is the Boy Scout of the American government (albeit a boy scout with the might of ten men). Really, who would seriously suspect an organization of amoral motives when it is essentially a federal double for the Red Cross?

The hijack proceeded in perfect textbook fashion, starting with SSC locking down everything having to do with the Sherman Ring project under executive orders wrangled from their pal the president, before anyone else could get a whiff of it. The move in turn gave FEMA a monopoly on the device, every nut and bolt of it.

Next, it took but a minute for the SSC to sniff out the money bag: Akitenryu. Council “representatives” promptly flew over and met with the giant Japanes corp, whose response to the lucrative package of future government contracts arranged by the SSC was, shall we say, rather positive. Positive enough for them to consider pulling the plug on the ring-unless it goes to their newfound partner, FEMA.

Holding aces in hand with SSC’s blessings, FEMA went on to consummate the heavy-handed negotiation with DoE. Seeing the writing on the wall, the Department heads gladly accepted promises of upward rank mobility and favors as compensation for signing the project over. It wasn’t as if they had definitive plans for the ring, anyway.

Williams, and his project-mates as well, was naturally stunned by the unexpected transition. FEMA’s assurance that they all still have jobs and will continue at a higher payscale did much to help alleviate the shock.

Tarik himself was further excited by the role his baby will play in SSC/FEMA's grand scheme, but only after dissuading his new bosses from their original farfetched and impossible idea, which was to somehow put the ring in Doomsday's path, either with an enormous spaceworthy replicate or by beaming some sort of an energy portal, and exile the asteroid to the far end of a galaxy or dimension. Yes, somebody in the office had read one too many cheesy sci-fi story.

He had maintained a simpler, practical vision: use the ring to explore new frontiers. The theme was always there; with extinction knocking at our door, the ring has just crossed beyond a scientific tool into a vehicle for salvation. It's an insurance policy for the human race should means to stave off Doomsday fail. We just have to discover new paradises among the billions and billions of stars out there for the exodus.

In the second meeting, Tarik prepared and delivered a speech to a cadre of FEMA directors, while the SSC listened intently on satellite audio link. He chose to illustrate his vision with the magnum opus of his favorite author, the famed Greek poet Homer. The recounting of Odysseus's epic journey through fantastic perils was intertwined with reminders of man's incredible capacity for knowledge, adventure, and most of all, perseverance, from which invariably arised security and great rewards.

As Williams was leaving the room for them discuss it over, a FEMA superior quickly pulled him aside.

The deliberation is only a formality, the man said. The SSC probably ate the speech up. "Got a name for the plan?"

Absolutely, he smiled. Project Odyssey.

Worldwide Evac in Three Easy Steps (14)

FEMA dived head-first into organizing the biggest field trip in history. The initial explorations, codenamed Project Odyssey on the suggestion of Tarik Williams, chief engineer of the centerpiece technology, is but first of three stages.

Project Odyssey's main agenda is to dipatch scientific staff, with combat support personnel, on a quest for replacement homes in space and dimensions, using the Sherman Ring for their ride. Paraphrasing a director, the crew is to "get in, see if it's liveable, get out, next world." (Not always that easy, of course.) The first wave of teams are collectively called Odyssey Prime.

Stage two, Project Columbus, lays the groundwork to colonize the selected alien worlds we'll eventually call our own, after solid ties have been established with the native population (or all oppositions have been eradicated, whichever comes first). Approximately five years down the schedule, this is when bulldozers roll in and buildings start going up, and certain privileged groups of people are informed to begin packing.

The less-privileged are herded at the final stage, Project Exodus, about twelve months

before the Doomsday strikes-or sooner if the world is already on its way to hell from the revelation. We say goodbye to Earth, humanity is scattered throughout the multiverse yet maintains contact via Sherman Rings and hopefully thrives, happy ending.

That's the plan, anyway.

The sharper among you may realize you probably won't qualified as privileged, or even less-privileged, thus ineligible for the trip. Sadly, you are correct. An unfortunate consequence of this operation puts FEMA and SSC in position to play God, deciding who lives, who dies.

Those in positions vital to a government's daily functions are on the invite. This includes the president, the vice president, the cabinet, everyone holding crucial jobs in all three branches, their families and on down to possibly mailroom clerks. Presumably rich, influential civilians roosting, say, the Fortune 500 get automatic passes, too. Skilled tradesmen, craftsmen, and technicians are necessary for a burgeoning civilization, so count some of them in. Big-star celebrity entertainers will get the nod because they always do.

Although not terribly rich, famous, skilled, or influential (yet), I too shall move on, a perk for the Project workers. We receive relocation and may bring our immediate family along, to a world of our choice. That, the fat Uncle Sam checks and the generous health benefits almost offset the occupational hazards. Almost. We retain the package as long as we are part of Project Odyssey... which probably means I will no longer be a "we" when you see this in print, since I'll have exposed much of the operation. The sacrifices I make for investigative journalism. Sigh.

The flip side of the list is considerably longer. Look forward to kissing the asteroid if you're a wanted felon or fugitive of the law; known or suspected terrorist; member of anti-American faction or government; czar of a foreign criminal empire. That alone eliminates a great portion of the population, from drug cartels to the Al-Quaeda and countries that aren't buddy-buddy with the United States.

And if your country pals with the United States, you may have already gotten a piece of the technology to help move your privileged citizens. Great Britain is most definitely in on it, dating back to the ring's original discovery and has been dutifully updated every step along the way. Japan, by extension through Akitenryu and Kuroyoshi, is another. It's a good bet allies like Canada, Israel, Germany, Brazil, and Australia all have their own Odyssey Prime, taking baby steps or fully operational.

[begin fiction text]

*"Not to mention Kuwait, a piggybacking 'beneficiary' who didn't get a ring but is too rich to ignore," Smith grumbles.*

*"Heck, give it to a couple more countries and we probably can save the whole world."*

*"No need for that. We have a shot at creating new utopias with this. A fresh start.*



*We are God, remember?"*

[end fiction text]

Whereas back home, the SSC is hiding the Project with the kind of smoke-n-mirror and sleight-of-hand that'd make world-champion magicians and pickpockets blush. The Council devotes an admirable effort to keeping just the bare minimum of people in the loop. Most CIA and NSA vet spooks have never heard of Project Odyssey until they're recruited, let alone freelancers and desk jockeys. The other agencies from top dogs on down, as well as the majority on that exclusive relocation list, will live on blissfully ignorant until the Project notifies them at its discretion. Those having had contact or was connected with the technology previously are absorbed as a part of the current outfit, get misled around by their noses, or are bribed/intimidated into silence. Even FEMA itself is completely oblivious except for the few highest-level executives. Walk into any regional office or the D.C. headquarters, inquire about Odyssey Prime and you're guaranteed honest-to-goodness, Mission: Impossible disavows.

After that you'll either be booted from the lobby as a loon, or receive midnight visits from men with menacing guns, depending on how much you know. Having read this far, you know too much.

The Land of Od (14)

Given the fact only a handful in its parent bureau is aware of its existence, this frees Project Odyssey up to run itself as an independent compartment tucked unseen inside the FEMA structure (just off the left of Office of National Security Coordination on the organization chart, in the bushes somewhere).

The plan boldly calls for secret Odyssey bases, or "Od cell," around the U.S., in one big network of constant communication and coordination so to cut down redundancy and practice ergonomic exploration. That, with red tape and months-long board deliberations absent, leads to bases being built pro haste.

Every Od cell is like a Grand Central Station to the cosmos, trafficking the Project's elite squads to and from alien destinations on a clockwork schedule. Cells come in all shapes and sizes, tailored to fit each operation according to locale and personnel. In a perfect world, all cells would be entrenched deep in underground strategic complexes among the Colorado Rockies or the outbacks of similar mountainous states, as seen in that one popular sci-fi TV series featuring portal travel. Alas, in reality concealability periodically defers to whatever is available. Legends already tell of a base actually resembling Grand Central, having been converted from an aborted public commute project, somewhere up north in a tiny hub burg.

The Project tends to hit paydirt with unused military headquarters. They are already government properties, come with restricted access, usually still retain the installations and equipment for the job. Certainly nothing a little renovation or upgrade won't fix. The SSC/FEMA takes care the paperwork and leaves the staff to worry about moving date.

Where subterranean fortresses and ex-military bases aren't an option, the Project is said to have improvised cells out of abandoned research facilities, foreclosed resorts, even former business office complexes. They share commonality in that all are reasonably remote from centers of population, whether it's in L.A.'s winding valleys or the outskirts of a snowy, small Midwestern dot missing on most maps.

A prototypical cell is plain as plain can be on the outside. There is nothing to tip anyone off that a highly sensitive operation is happening behind the fenced gates, or even that it's government business except for the routine displays of "no trespassing, authorized federal personnel only" warnings and sentry posts (or security desk in some cases). No signs to inform you of the responsible branch or agency. Daytime deliveries and visitors are far and few between. Trying to obtain a pass will only get you a run-around hard enough to make your head spin for a week, media or not.

I know. I've tried. If you somehow have the connection and luck, they'll just tour you around the harmless parts and recycle some ho-hum government programs for the charade, any of which you can find by punching up the Internet, anyway.

My cell, for example (and I will cite it from here on out because although no two cells are exactly same, the procedures are similar, and it's one I can speak for with best authority), maintains a couple decoys to keep up a front. Real innocent ones with humanitarian objectives like researching the distribution plans for federal aid if, say, F-5 tornadoes, foreign nuclear missiles, and Noah's Flood should all hit at once, complete with dioramas and pre-prepped statistics. Okay, so we present far more plausible and legit scenarios than that, but the boys love to go a little overboard sometimes.

It's a whole different world past the horse-and-ponies. 99% of the real show takes stage beneath your feet, in several sub-levels. You normally get to them through an adjacent, perfectly normal structure such as an underground parking lot. Still, that doesn't mean it's unrestricted; you're obligated to flash a permit or papers at the checkpoint and give a matching code.

Then it gets harder. Specifically, finding the correct entrance while ducking blanket of cameras and motion detectors if you're not supposed to be there. Public lifts and fire exits aside, there are dozen of locked, identically marked doors lining the walls. The trick here is knowing which ones open to boiler rooms and custodian closets, and which ones take you to the secret elevators. Each personnel member is assigned a door and instructed to always use it to enter Project proper. His/her key will open only that door and no others. I personally drew a rather lousy route that has me walking what feels like miles from my parking spot.

Behind each of these access doors is a winding passage leading to another door, this time metal with a tinted, one-way window. You now need to insert your ID card into the reader next to it and press your personal code on the panel for the solid steel to slide open. Finally, you're greeted by a bank of large elevators-plus a tandem of badass mofos (hi Franz, hi Jerome). Welcome to the threshold of Project Odyssey.

The elevators, however, purposely don't all reach every level in the cell to induce more guesswork for outsiders. We the staff of course are told which ones to ride for our respective tasks. After stopping at Research & Data a few times when you were really going for lunch, you'd commit it to memory too.

Here's the easiest item to remember: only one goes to the Sherman Ring operations deck, smartly sheathed at the installation's lowest level. And that level's unmarked; you have to slide the ID card again into a slot to get it to drop all the way down.

Lower Level One is the lounge. You have the kitchenettes, free vending machines, coffee makers, giant screens with full satellite hookup, video console games. Nothing special unless you're next to take Hank's wager and thrash him in Madden Football.

LL Two contains gym and training facility. Nestled in one corner from the muscle machines, treadmills, ball courts, martial arts and boxing rings is a sophisticated firing range, where foolish bettors relinquish to Sally their winnings from Hank in shooting contests. (Let this be a warning: That redhead can flat out aim.)

The Project also provides barracks and accommodations for people whose career is their life on this level. These residents are certainly no strangers to making their job the home, comprised mostly of ex-military grunts and former Company Men on security payroll, on call 24/7. As you might have noticed, security is a big issue with the Project. True, it's never cool to let a cell be breached or the ring technology be stolen, damaged, or hijacked, but there's a bigger picture where the Project is concerned. When you have an impending cataclysm on the global scale like Doomsday with still time left for the world to panic-and it will-you can never be too paranoid.

To prevent that, Project Odyssey goes so far as to retain its own secret elite "task force." In addition to defending the technology and cell personnel, this special unit's main purpose is to stop all disclosures and hints that could and would lead to Doomsday becoming public knowledge. It is expected to clamp down on any poor fool veering too close to the fact, and never hesitate in flexing some of that FEMA muscle, the Bill of Rights be damned. This team fine-combs the media and monitors communication channels, including phone taps and net hack, for leaks to plug. If absolutely necessary, it will resort to violence to silence its quarry. It is protection, espionage, black-ops, conspiratorial enforcement all crammed into a package politely christened Damage Control.

Every cell has a Dam Con squad. Unless you're a director or an actual member, though, you can never be completely sure who's a part of it. Dam Con guys are supposedly told to minimize their fraternization with non-members in the Project, presumably to avoid developing emotional attachments that can possibly influence their doing a job-I guess in case one of us goes rogue and they have to hunt us down or something. If that's true, the suspected Dam Con fellas in my cell are actually pretty sociable. Yeah, there're always going to be some arrogant jerks in the bunch, but in the end they're still *your* arrogant jerks who'll watch your back.

A Dam Con team is said to lust after the best experts under the sun. Consider their duties, you have to figure that includes high-tech surveillance, intelligence gathering, investigation, subterfuge, tactical planning, infiltration, persuasion, electronics, technical, mechanical, and plenty of firepower to fall back on, just to cover the basis. Former spies and tough special-forces hombres have the best qualifications for the list, hence they're often the choicest recruits. A civilian usually has to be extremely talented to pique Dam Con's interest, and occasionally "helped" along by bad luck, such as Slick Anthony. "Slick" holds the record for evading Dam Con at three weeks, after breaking into the wrong car and lifting the wrong stuff trying to make a wrong buck. They ended up paying him to be one of them.

As the tightknit gang they are, Dam Con teams customarily adopt nickname, motif, motto, insignia, tatoos, and colors to show unity. The unit here calls themselves the Blackwatch, sporting a dark patch with large flaming red-pupiled eye on their uniform when they go into action. It's better than the unconfirmed Death Clown gimmick for another Dam Con squad by the California coast I was once told about, I suppose.

The third sub-level begins the "deep echelon," which is separated by good solid yards of earth from the upper two sub-levels. Brains of the Project gathered here, Research & Data, to entertain each other with profound stats, info analysis, alien sample dissections, and tryouts of strange gadgets in different labs repleted with holding pens, supercomputer terminals, delicate scientific instruments, and the sure sign of genius-messy desks (or so I've been told). All findings and evaluations are catalogued on a powerful computer system easily ranked in the world's top three.

As I write this, they're expanding the infirmary, from occupying one-third of this deck to one-half. Drs. Reynard and Gerardi will be one chirpy pair with all that space and upgraded tools at their disposal. We'll hear less of the grumbling about the rash of recent injuries, if nothing else.

The center and nerve of an Odyssey cell is located at Lower Level Four, from whence Project directors' orders are dished out, inter-cell communications and notes are passed between, and the security scrutinizes all levels like a transfixed hawk.

Directors rule the Project hierarchy. An Od cell usually has a board of 3-6 directors, counting the Chief Executive Director, who's king to the royalty. The Odyssey bosses come in varied temperaments, just like any regular 9-to-5, from curmudgeons to personable types you can chug a beer down with. There must be a unwritten, universal prerequisite for them to be time-honored graduates of the covert intel system, which would explain why even the buddiest CED's could get downright unbearably stuffy and enigmatic.

Such as Smith, speaking of enigmatic CED's. The man personifies the word, as if his "name" isn't a tipoff. Smith runs this cell. Everybody has spoken with him, at least when they first signed on, at his insistence. His voice and slightly rotund figure suggest a man in his 50's. Suggest, because quite possibly no Project member has ever seen his face.

Maybe old intel habits die hard, but he loves to obscure himself in silhouette. I'm venturing a guess that his own mother and wife haven't gotten a good look in years.

Another thing he loves to do is repeating Odyssey's importance. "What we have is more than a job, a responsibility to save humanity" he is fond of reminding. I got the speech my first time in, one he probably gives to every rookie. It pumped you so full of righteousness, you wanted to leap through the ring and start marching right there.

"Every other so-called solution is just meaningless conjecture. To trust them is to gamble with yours and your loved ones' lives. Are you ready to wake up with that little voice in the back of your head wondering, 'what if it doesn't work?' every morning for the next ten years?" Smith would preach, "we have the answer at this very moment without wasting precious time, because we alone possess the only tool, we alone are taking an active crusade to guarantee mankind will continue to stride, thrive, leave mark on history.

And that makes me, and you, saviors."

What I saw next was truly wondrous. Smith turned stone into bread, cured lepers, then walked on water as he left the room.

[begin fiction text]

*Smith perks up from the manuscript. "So tell me, do I part seas in the next chapter?"*

*"Nah, thought three miracles were enough."*

*"You really think I'm an enigmatic, self-deluded messiah?"*

*It obviously catches Ethan offguard. He pauses to ponder the question before venturing a nod. "Yeah."*

*"Good. I like to think I am."*

*Ethan doesn't know whether he should start worrying. His quandry is interrupted by the intercom beeps on Smith's phone. The CED's secretary Carol informs both on speaker that Ethan's, uh, Frank's Odyssey duty calls, shipping out in 30.*

*"You heard her. Get outta here and save humanity."*

*Ethan gets up but hesitates when he thinks he saw a wink out of Smith.*

*Smith waves him on. "Go. I'll finish reading this on my own. I'm a literate messiah."*

[end fiction text]

Lastly, in the cavernous Lower Level Five, the largest of all levels, poised human's last hope: the operational unit for Sherman Ring and the Ring itself.

Hitting the Cosmic Superhighway (14)

It rarely fails to raise goose-bumps, I hear, when one sees the 20-foot ring cranking up, electric juice coarsing the portal face, for the very first time.

I believe it. I know it did me.

I'll attempt to relate the full experience step-by-step for "portal virgins." Hopefully my words-eye-view will do it justice.

It starts with "the call" from Tech Op, buzzing to let you know they've hit a new prospect and it's showtime. I don't profess to know the exact method, but Tech Op refined the technique pioneered by the genius Kuroyoshi to detect world presences in the multiverse. Gear Ted explained it to me before, and here's the gist of what I managed to comprehend:

Using Kuroyoshi's box-poking principle, they set up space and dimensional planes in imaginary trays, then divide them into little boxes. Each box is designated a code for location reference, with Earth at 0-0-0-0 being the center. Under this mapping system, the other stars on the same dimensional tray as us would start with 0, then depending on the distance and direction from Earth, they'll fall into boxes with positive or negative numbers in the infinite sequence. A star in one dimensional tray to our "right," shining somewhere in the lower left quadrant would start off -1 for tray, +X for horizon, -X for axis, lastly either a positive or negative for depth, for instance. It reminds me too much of high-school algebraic graph, which I almost flunk, but way harder.

Next. Kuroyoshi managed to convert what he took as a subspace communication system in the original ring into a navigational beacon by reversing some \$50 technical term nobody normal would understand, and that is the stick we poke box holes with. What Tech Op did, as Ted so excitedly described as though he's heading out on a hot date, was hooking the beacon up to intricate programs that run it on auto-poke. Basically it goes: poke, any prize in this box?, no?, poke, rinse, repeat. If there is a world, the computers alert us, and we send in the robot probe. Ted mentioned, in more \$50 jargons, that they're working on new gizmos for the stick to report just the finds that fit preset criteria, like atmosphere and temperature, so we can hop right in whenever it goes off without the robot.

Then I took two aspirins and called Doc Reynard in the morning.

You hurry down to the dressing room on the LL5, likely meeting up with a couple mission-mates and chat about everything from last night's game to who's being left off your will this month, all the while anticipation builds. You may joke on the surface, but I'm convinced you can never get rid of the butterflies no matter how many trips you've taken. This is a good time for the nervous to vomit and get it out of the system. You grab your gear and join the rest of your Odyssey team at the briefing.

Generally the Project will go out of its way to accommodate your special request, provided the equipment in question is reasonable and helpful to your function and the team. The basic rule is bigger the gun, the more convincing your argument better be. Me the medic won't be wise to ask for a bazooka, for example, something even combat monsters like Ranger Mack probably will have a hard time getting permissions for. Anything approaching nuclear is flat out end of discussion.

Billy, ever the vigilant outrider, points out you can spot rookies from vets by who's sweating at the pre-mission brief. Maybe he means REALLY sweating, since I haven't seen anyone not sweat yet in there. Then again, I can't tell apart half the tracks he finds.

The perspiration certainly isn't due to a big crowd in a small room. The hall cozily fits in the whole Odyssey team, a director or two, the Tech Op guy giving the lowdown on our destination and anything he brings for special presentations. No, it comes from anxiety and, predominately in newbies, fear of the unknown. To paraphrase a series with similar theme, you're about to boldly go where no man has gone before, and you don't know if all of you will return. It's only human to have a little scare put into ya. The difference here is, the experienced learned to control it.

So you sweat-or not-through the Tech Op's rudimentary weather report on the newfound world. The director reiterates the mission objective and any other issues he/she cares to make. Your team leader then huddle the team together to go over plans, perhaps with a pep talk or group prayer thrown in. You leave in ten minutes, which could be your final time on Earth. Last chance to vomit for the nervous stomached.

Well, this is it. Everybody checks, re-checks, triple checks the gear, as well as the uniform to see the team emblem is proudly displayed. Yes, Odyssey teams are every bit tightknit as Dam Con. They too create names and the whole nine yards. Us, we're the Knight Slyders.

The team leader gives a thumbs-up to the Tech Op guys in the overhang suite. They get busy with the button punching and switch flipping. As you stand in the sealed foyer, listening to the electric cackles, watching the sparks dart across the device's giant mouth, the old shakes start to go away. Some people flash back to their childhood, the time they stayed up all night before their first camping trip. Some strengthen themselves with the memories and love for their family, secured in the knowledge that Odyssey will take care of them even if the worst shall happen. Others, particularly newbies, just simply get caught up in a spectacle they've never seen before, or never cease to enjoy. When the ring finishes revving in a roar and the lightnings seemingly tear away a dark cover to reveal blue glimmering curtain of energy underneath, your sense of wonder and adventure will have eradicated all butterflies, instead substituing tingles in their place... tingles of excitement.

Next comes the adrenal rush, as the team single-files up a ramp through a tunnel, marching toward the portal. Your heart races faster the closer you get because you're making history with every step, that every descendant of the human settlers to this new world will know your name, read how you contributed to their lives. You are the Columbus to their America. Nonetheless, you may have one final thought of turning back. I mean, you're about to tread uncharted terrorty, who knows what lethal creatures and danger await you on the other side?

But that'll be washed away by adrenaline in a second because, what the heck, you want to survive just to do this all over again.

It's Showtime.

Genuine salvation is tough to come by nowadays. People from ordinary laborers to extraordinary CEOs work long hours, hustling in and out of their homes with hardly a hug or goodbye for the family, reducing domestic life to a nonfactor in the daily equation. Homes are deteriorating from serene shelters into stopovers for sleeping and eating between job. Law and the justice system is tailspinning into a joke. Made to protect good folks, the scale seems to tip increasingly in the guilty's favor. The religious bottom line still hinges on donations, pay-per-deliverance remains tenet of the day, be it a Sunday church, downtown synogouge, or temple in the hills.

There are charities doing the best they can, rescuing endangered species, feeding the homeless, pulling kids off the streets. Applaudable causes all, but exercises in temporary fixes, not permanent. The media? We certainly won't find redemption in the sensationalized, cry-wolf reporting. Notice the absence of polticians whom we elected to improve our welfare anywhere.

I'll step off the soapbox now. Should know better by now than to philosophize and wax social commentary after stubbing my toe on the curb. That always set me off.

The point? Yeah. Geninue salvation is and will continue be tough to come by. But when I look at that big steel rim in the cave bowel of my work, just before going through into who-knows-what behind the shimmering sheet of energy, I've come to believe I'm witnessing the closest thing to a real salvation for this lifetime, a modern miracle. Because of our crusade, millions, perhaps billions, will live after Doomsday, after the shattered remanants of Earth have long drifted across the solar system.

Maybe Smith is right. We are god here.

[begin fiction text]

*From the peculiar knocks, Smith has worked too long with her to know it's Carol.*  
*"What've you got for me?"*  
*"Just White House circulars, Council memos, daily pick-3's, the usual bullcrap... How did it go with Fra... Ethan? I see you didn't Dam Con-five him."*  
*"Nope. He's salvageable." Smith exhales another puff of cigar.*  
*"You made him a deal, didn't you?" Carol presses but doesn't need an answer.*  
*She's worked too long with Smith to know he did.*  
*Smith shrugs. "I told ya, he's salvageable. Fairly sharp and impressive for a pup."*  
*"Bah. You wouldn't have done that for just anybody. You did it 'cus you saw some of yourself in him."*  
*"I don't see jack in him." Smith snappily denies, though his tone conveys perfectly clear to Carol the opposite.*

[end fiction text]



## Chapter 6: The Journey of a Thousand Worlds (18)

[begin fiction text]

*Chelsea stares in total daze at the big gun that has tumbled to her feet, sent there by a dragon's massive tail swipe, which incidently also dropped another of her teammates.*

*Guns frighten her, a real library rat. They make loud noises she really hates. She doesn't even like reading about them.*

*The monster now clutches Jack in a foreclaw, crunching the protective armor and digging firmly into his flesh. Chelsea hopes against all hopes that Jack can fight out of this, because he is the only fighter on the team left standing.*

*"Get the gun, Chel... Use it!" Jack can barely scream out in agonizing pain.*

*Chelsea looks again in shock at the Desert Eagle by her feet.*

*"Go for... the eye... The eye!..." Jack realizes he's fading fast, noting it's much more strenuous this time.*

*A billion thoughts shot through Chelsea's mind, none astonishingly having to do with loud noises. She picks up the hefty sidearm in a shaking trance ("The eye!..." Jack's voice seems to echo), aims ("The eyes!..."), fires...*

*It's Jack's turn to look dumbfounded. A block of explosives, intricately rigged to launch the Sky City of Juruzhan even higher. In pieces.*

*Chelsea, normally the person to defuse such problems, has just narrowly survived a bombing herself. She's in neckbrace and traction. Impossible for her to move, much less trying to disarm the charges in... TWO MINUTES!?!*

*"Be my eyes, Jack," Chelsea mutters weakly over the headset, "I'll walk you through."*

*Jack knows this will be the shortest two minutes of his life. He pries open the casing and snakes his hand gingerly toward the liquid-crystal vial, painstakingly avoiding the obtrusive black thingamagik that Chelsea tells him not to touch...*

[end fiction text]

Will Chelsea hit the desperate shot to save the team? Will Jack undo the bomb before the counter ticks down to 0:00?

A main design goal for Odyssey Prime is to award dramatic actions, to encourage characters' bucking overwhelming odds when appropriately heroic, as opposed to falling back on conservative minimaxing or rules lawyering that regularly make for bad convention war stories.

Under laws of cinema, climactic last-ditch efforts actually stand a very reasonable chance to succeed, regardless who or how unskilled. When Chelsea pulls the trigger, realism ought not intrude with -4 unproficiency or other penalties to her ordinarily snowball's chance of hitting a dragon, let alone in the eye. What she's doing is dramatic. Same for Jack, neither pausing to ponder he's untrained nor ducking out on the near-impossibility. What he's doing is dramatic.

Granted, additions such as Action Points and Defense Bonus make D20 Modern a preference for heroic campaigns over the sire Dungeons & Dragons Third Edition. Nonetheless, there're still gaps in the game system to prevent a full transition to larger-than-life cinematic heroism. We won't crow to completely closing the gaps, but we believe we have nudged it few steps in the right direction. Naturally, it is GM's discretion whether to adapt this material whole, in parts, or not at all. There will be no Drama Police to shut down your Odyssey Prime game.

Now then, bring on the odds!

**Table 6-1: DRAMATIC ACTION RESOLUTION (DAR)**

<b>Difficulty</b>	<b>Enhances Plot/Drama</b>	<b>Neutral to Plot/Drama</b>	<b>Detracts Plot/Drama</b>
Average	5	10	20
Challenging	10	20	35
Heroic	15	30	50

The Dramatic Action Resolution (Table 6-1) is the centerpiece, the One Table to Rule Them All! (tm)

Grandiose aside, the DAR is a multi-purpose tool, as you'll see. First, the explanations:

The numbers correspond to Difficulty Class (DC). Check out D20 Modern Core Rulebook for refresher on DC if needed.

The leftmost column, titled Difficulty, means exactly that, the degree of difficulty for the task in question. Only three distinctions are made in DAR, all identical to their namesakes used in D20 Modern system but with consolidations, i.e., Average also encompasses Tough, while Formidable merges into Challenging. There is no difficulty surpassing Heroic. Old, greater difficulties (Superheroic, Nearly Impossible) are simply regarded as Heroic.

Not a whole lot of rocket science here. If an action requires considerably more than a routine effort (Average), it's Challenging. If the GM thinks it takes extraordinary means and is beyond the stretch of remarkable, it's Heroic. Actions easier than Average should be automatic and never rolled.

Across the top is how a successful action will impact the storyline or its dramatic flow, in GM's opinion.

**Enhances Plot/Drama (EPD):** The action is brilliantly choreographed to advance the plot or bring the encounter to a rousing, satisfactory conclusion. The event sequence has built up tension and suspense. Players can score this consistently by narrating and injecting drama complementing the current story into their action.

**Neutral to Plot/Drama (NPD):** The action bears negligible or uncertain significance to the plot, or carries little to no dramatic implications. If the GM does not care whether the action succeeds, use this. It basically functions on a normal DC scale, so when in doubt, default to Neutral.

**Detracts Plot/Drama (DPD):** The action is anticlimactic, will detrimentally sidetrack the storyline, shortcircuit the scenario prematurely, or is plain disruptive to the game in any way. Normally actions should never be DPD unless the consequence will unquestionably wreck the adventure, sending it to dead plots' equivalent of the Ninth Level of Hell.

To use DAR, the GM first considers the difficulty (Average/Challenging/Heroic), then the action's consequence, if successful, to the current plot or drama. In the scenario with Chelsea, hitting a normally unhittable dragon, especially in the eye with unfamiliar weapon, is unquestionably Heroic difficulty. On the other hand, the GM thinks it is dramatically set up and her success will make a memorable story, if not an exciting end to the encounter. (Plus, he probably doesn't want to wipe out the PCs, who should be featured stars of a campaign, at that point in the adventure.)

Having decided on Heroic-Enhances Plot/Drama, the GM cross-indexes the two on Dramatic Action Resolution to find DC15 for the desperate prayer. Chelsea is rewarded for her valiant stand with a much easier shot. (Of course, the GM is not obligated to inform the player her DC prior to the roll.)

Negative modifiers are not assessable in DAR; they should be reflected in difficulty. Using improvised equipment may lower an Average action to Challenging, for example. Positive modifiers, i.e., attack bonus and skill rank, however, are added to the d20 roll. Thus, Chelsea gets to tack on her attack bonus and Dex modifier to her roll, giving her an even better chance. Action Points can be spent as per D20 Modern rule to further improve the roll.

DAR can also substitute for any d20 rolls, including saving throws when it's dramatic to keep the characters alive, conscious, relatively uninjured, etc. (And when the plotpoint necessitates their falling down and staying down. This is heavy-handed, so you better have a good story reason.)

If the GM dislikes static numbers, the DC listed may represent only the minimum DC. The DC for an Average-Neutral task will then fall in between 10-19, for example, after which it becomes Challenging-Neutral, starting at DC20 and climbs to DC29. A GM can have, say, a DC17 Average-Neutral or DC64 Heroic-Detracts task as he sees fit. We do recommend that Heroic-Enhances DC goes no higher than 20 under any circumstances.

Oh, basic d20 die-rolling conventions remain unchanged, so a natural 1 is still a failure and natural 20 an automatic success.

Tell players before your next game that you are using Dramatic Action Resolution if you decide to so it won't be a shock. Show them how it works to help them flip the mental

switch from “what rules can I use to get another +2” to “what can I do to make the action more dramatic.” You’ll want to lay this down as you do other campaign ground rules you may have (such as level and class limitations). Players are generally receptive and compliant when they know the bottom line. A clear understanding that “doing dramatically appropriate things is good; deliberately sabotaging the plot is bad,” as is the exact message DAR is sending, will eliminate a lot of attitude problems up front.

You might want to run a practice vignette using DAR so they can get a grasp on the nuances, as well as what you’re looking for, drama-wise.

OK, Dramatic Action Resolution can be seen as another way to fudge rolls. Any good GM worth his dice bag, however, will see it’s constructive fudging. And legal, too, since it’s in the book (for you book-quoting rules lawyers out there). It is not much different from what many seasoned GMs have been doing, turning a blind eye to bad rolls at critical moments to save a character or turn the tide of fortune for the party, although DAR is more versatile than that. It rewards the cooperative as well as circumventing the disruptive. On paper, at least, it gives the gamemaster a greater control over story and game flow.

Are those cries of “Railroading!” from the back?

Yes, we concede a GM can easily use DAR to bind players in suffocatingly linear plots. Just make all non-prescribed actions DPD to stonewall the players and there’s nothing they can do about it.

The counterargument is that a railroading GM for this game will still railroad players in any other game, regardless of campaign, genre, rules. Carting a bad gamemaster off to a new game won’t magically make him a good GM all of sudden, sorry to say. It then begs the question why would anyone willingly play with such a rigid GM.

Rest of this chapter isn’t written for the incorrigible tyrants. It will not work with a dictatorial approach. Instead, it’s for open-minded gamemasters with a sense for drama wanting extra mileage out of DAR. If you consider yourself such a GM, please proceed.

Tool to Complement Story Flow (12)

DAR is deceptively more flexible than ostensibly appeared. It works as a “movable scale” to accommodate the importance of anything, from a whole scene on down to a tiny trinket, over the course of a scenario. For example, a confidential computer file may require a Detracts check to break into at the early stages, since it holds revelations that will derail the adventure if done prematurely, but becomes Enhances later when the characters are supposed to crack it near or during the climax.

It’s quite possible for dramatic importance to shift back and forth as needs change and unexpected surprises develop. Take the case of a villain’s minion who holds information critical to the adventure’s success. The GM may choose to make the minion’s saving throws on Enhances level to help him survive all the crazy accidents and explosions. On

top of that, his skill checks may all be EPD's if he's meant to be elusive in the meantime. After the characters have managed to extract the necessary info from this plot device, his checks can slip down to Neutral because he is not essential anymore to the plot, or even to Detracts if the GM has planned him a quick demise. However, if through strange twist of fate that the lackey should somehow become instrumental again, he is entitled rolls under Enhances until his "story usefulness" expires a second time.

On the other hand, not everything will change its plot role. The aforementioned computer file may have nothing to do with the scenario at all and is simply a red-herring, in which case it will not matter when the characters try to break into it, it remains Heroic-Detracts (or whatever the assigned difficulty). As long as the GM is selective about giving away DC and dramatic importance, it will keep the players guessing yet not stunting their attempt at the cinematic, as they'll never know if the next try will be the one to put it at EPD.

GM flexibility is the key to effective Dramatic Action Resolution. Frequently a GM can lapse into a strict vision of how he perceived the scenario should be played out. A telltale sign is when he rains down a flurry of DPD's for anything not conforming to his preconceptions. This stifles player creativity and strikes of railroading. An open-minded GM judges and interpret player actions and reactions on a case-by-case basis. He allows players to wander off on tangents unrelated to the central plot. So long as the subplots are entertaining, the actions may very well be Enhances Plot/Drama because they're creating whole new stories and complementing those stories. Only when they start to digress detrimentally, or degenerate into a mood polar opposite of what the GM intends to convey, will he break out the Detracts and herd them back on track. He avoids single-solution scenarios, opting instead for a single objective with many ways for the characters to get there, then applies DAR judiciously to reinforce drama and guide the game hopefully to a storybook ending.

The GM should never interrupt story flow to tell a player outright that something isn't supposed to happen yet-just like he should never tell anyone when he's fudging a in game. Let the player guess whether, say, a lock is impossible to pick because of drama or simply a high difficulty. Mention "you failed to pick the lock" and move on.

#### Tool to Provide Cinematic Motivation (12)

DAR may perhaps be gaming's ultimate demonstration of the carrot-on-a-stick principle. It involves getting a horse to move by dangling a carrot in front of the steed, the idea being you can motivate anyone to do anything if there are right incentives.

Here, the carrot that inspires players' horse is simpler DC, the reward for opting to be dramatic. Basically, whenever players add flavor, contribute positively, and otherwise being entertainingly creative they should get a bite. Describing a coupe de grace to a hated enemy in cinematic details, complete with emotional dialogue? Give that character an Enhances Plot attack roll. Stop chasing foes to save a baby stroller in heavy traffic? A heroic deserving of EPD saving throws. And how they "script" their seduction of that influential politician can mean the difference between Neutral and Enhances.

Moreover, DAR lets every creative player has a shot at climactic glory if it serves a dramatic purpose, instead of always coming down to the character with the uber-stats for the job. A bookworm can now take a shot at a dragon and actually stands a reasonable chance!

Once they realize it really pays to adhere to cinematic conventions and act heroically, they should be thinking "What sort of dramatic things can I do to give me the best chance to succeed?" and "Hey, I can pull off cool stuff without realistic rules to tie me down!" soon enough.

When that time comes, keep feeding them carrots.

#### Tool to Control Intentional Disruption (12)

On the other hand, count yourself lucky if you never played or GMed a game where munchkins wander off and start randomly raising hell because they are bored, want to show off, or both.

As much as DAR is a godsend for genuine roleplayers, it can be GM's avenging angel to punish uncooperative knuckleheads. Next time they disrespect your game and slip into destructo mode, hit them with a flurry of Detracts till they get the point. When they can't strike the broad side of the barn, when everybody always catches them stealing, when they keep tripping over in their flee from law, they'll realize their disruptive behavior isn't getting the in-game attention they crave and stop. Or leave. Either is good.

Seems heavy-handed? Well, stuff them dead in their tracks or let them destroy the adventure you put hard work into, those are your choices. We'd take Option #1 ourselves.

Of course, we're not advocating this any time a character dallies astray of the plot. Mistakes happen even to the best players and unintentional lapses should be forgiven. No, this is the rotten-sour half of the carrot stick, reserved solely for the offending munchkin moments, which should be terribly obvious to any experienced GM.

In doing so, you're also sending a message. Please play nice. You won't like me when you don't play nice.

#### Tool to Encourage Cooperation (12)

A roleplaying session should be a cooperative storytelling experience, with the GM and every player setting private agendas aside to create as good a story as they can.

It's not always possible, of course. Players, being humans, sometimes carry over grudges from another game, or worse, personal life. Vets out there will know when we say the heaven for characters is well stocked with casualty of intra-party frictions.

What can you do? Help mending the rift with DAR. At the first sign of trouble, drop hints

that you will reward their characters' working together with EPD (even begrudgingly), if not outright issuing warnings (to the whole group) that deliberate, unreasonable hostility against another player character will detract from the game. Then be patient. Anybody refusing to take the bait should be written off as a lost cause for you to consider jettison from the game.

DAR can curtail another popular game syndrome: Spotlight Stealing. Little else is more frustrating to a player than having his character's moment in the sun ruined by a gloryhound. DAR will assure that the spotlight shines and stay on the intended target. When an encounter is specifically designed to feature a character or when the GM senses a dramatic importance for the character, all actions from others attempting to interfere or otherwise spoil the scene are automatically Detracts! That goes for actions to ostensibly "aid" the character, such as jumping in to finish off the star character's nemesis during his climactic showdown after years of searching.

A drama-based resolution like DAR can also be used to enforce a certain flavor you want for a game. Let's say you're running a horror mini-campaign that downplays the importance of hardware, because you prefer old-fashioned monster hunting with stakes and such over high heat. Simply inform players that blow-'em-up-with-big-guns is contradictory to the spirit of your game, so any similar tactics will likely operate on the Detracts end of the scale. Knowing such violations will actually hurt their chances tends to steer them clear of any genre/campaign-inappropriateness, and the mood in turn preserved.

#### Tool to Reduce Letdowns (12)

Use DAR to reduce anticlimactic endings due to poor rolls. No director would film a finale where a heroic pack escapes through a collapsing tomb, only to have a falling block crush a slower hero at the end. Neither should you.

Granted, the DAR will not eliminate atrocious dice rolls entirely and there is always the 5% possibility of failure (damn natural 1's!), but it gives the players a much better fighting chance where before they wouldn't have any. Don't send the players home unhappy. EPD and climactic scenes should always go hand in hand.

#### Tool for Exciting Combat (12)

Turn ordinary combat up a notch or two on the drama meter by reading DAR DC's as Defense. *Voila!*, an instant exciting battle that combines cinematic flair with role importance.

How they describe and embellish their attacks now figures a big part in success, as the GM will weigh the liveliness of their narration on the dramatic scale. Resorting to the usual, bland "I shoot him" will rate a Neutral at best, whereas "I dive over a tables, slide along the bar and return fire" is certainly worthy of EPD contention. (Caution: Don't sweat the small stuff; Ref saves to diving over the table and slide along the bar aren't necessary here. The point is to make the fight look cool. You can't do that if players are

concerned about rolling for everything.)

It also allows GM to better protect certain characters in combat, from mater villains to player characters themselves. Applying an earlier principle, anyone can be make eaiser or impossible to hit according to story needs. Mr. Big's invincible righthand man may be hard to take down at the beginning to show how badass he is, but in DAR the heroes understand they will get them at the end, when beating him enhances the plot.

For cinematic damage, roll DAR for critical threat range also, if the attack is Enhances. Shall Chelsea roll a fantastic hit on the dragon, for instance, she will roll again with her critical threat range at 15-20, the same original Heroic-Enhances DC for her attack.

### An Alternate Experience Point Award System (14)

D20 Modern's experience points system is skewed heavily toward overcoming threats (i.e., combat and survival). While not entirely bad, it does leave bits of bitter taste in roleplayers' mouth. "Isn't the name of the game ROLEPLAYING?" we wonder. But when was the last time a GM actually told you to "take 2,000 XPs, plus 500 for good combat" instead of "2,000 XPs, plus 500 for good roleplaying"? The RP part just always seems to be the bridesmaid in the equation, never the bride.

So in DAR's vein, we cooked up what we hope will promote roleplaying in your game, if that's your interest. We believe it encourages dramatic interaction. It mandates inter-party cooperation. It has a neat little feature to let you customize how you're going to gain experience points. It slices. It dices. It doesn't brew coffee in the morning, though. Sorry.

There are two options in adopting this new system. One is as bonus Experience Points, given in addition to the regular XP awarded for an adventure as per D20 Modern rules. The other is to junk the normal award system and install this as the sole method to earn experience. Which one the GM will choose should depend on the type of players. We recommend the bonus-XP route for beginning to intermediate groups, or advanced groups consisting of primarily, oh, combatmongers and less-than-stellar roleplayers.

### How It Works (12)

On your character sheet you should see three rows of three checkboxes, like this:

<b>TEAMWORK</b>	OOO
_____	OOO
_____	OOO

Your goal is to fill up all the boxes for Experience Points.

Teamwork is always the top row; it's mandatory and never changes. Teamwork is self-explanatory: Respect and cooperation with teammates, follow team plans, working together to function as a well-oiled machine, looking out for each other, etc. It also



includes good gaming conduct as a part of the criteria that you're judged on. Being a courteous, considerate, and entertaining player will earn you checks for Teamwork boxes.

Both second and third row are left blank for you to fill in. For the second row you must pick from a list below (see Experience List), which spans a multitude of roles, qualities, themes and goals, from Comic Relief to Inner Conflict, to Romance, to Knowledge. This more or less defines the character's central feature, so pick carefully. It tells you who are, what makes you tick, what characteristic stands out most. Unlike Teamwork, this row is not etched in stone; you may select a different one after 3 to 5 average-length adventures with GM's permission. You might do that because you want to focus on another aspect of the character, having fully explored the previous. Then when you feel you've exhausted that theme, choose a new one.

The GM can recommend everyone switching to a particular selection for just one adventure if he intends to highlight a certain theme. It may be "Chivalry" to illustrate courage and honor, "Tragedy" to roleplay how characters cope with a tragic event's aftermath, and "Revelation" if the characters are expected to discover a shocking secret.

The communication actually goes both ways. Through their selections, players can indicate what type of interactions they're interested in seeing their characters involved. If a player chooses Romance, it's obvious that he expects courtship to be figured into the character's life at some point, at least possibilities for a romantic relation. It's a hint for the GM to throw him some bones and a good GM will find a way to comply in the game. Meanwhile, the GM can use it to guide character developments, and create situations to spotlight the items that a player finds difficulty with.

Row Three you can either pick from the same list as for Row Two, or make up anything that the GM will let you get away with! This can be innocently trivial like "steal a kiss from so-and-so," to immediate goals ("make a million dollars in one month"), to serious problems ("hide my lycanthropy from rest of the world")... in short, absolutely anything, so long with GM's stamp of approval.

This row can change on a drop of a hat, even in the middle of an adventure if the GM okays it. (There's a penalty for that, which we'll get to later.) It can even be left unfilled and filled in during a game after the player has a chance to realize his niche or decide on a schtick for that adventure.

It's not against the rules to take two items that contradict each other like fire and ice, such as Altruism and Vengeance-if you think you can handle the intense roleplaying. It makes for an interesting character and game sessions. (Amateurs, don't try this at home.)

#### Awarding Experience (12)

Checkboxes translate to Experience Points. You're trying to check off all three boxes of all three row. If you're using the supplemental option, each row checked will net you a bonus 100 x character level in Experience Points. For replacement option, it's 300 x character level. So each time Jack, a 4<sup>th</sup>-level character, completes a row he receives

either (100 x 4 =) additional Experience Points, or (300 x 4 =) 1,200 straight XP in Option Two, whereas Chelsea at 5<sup>th</sup> level gets 500/1,500 for accomplishing the same.

The GM will award you checks according to your effort-not to be confused with achievement. You're evaluated based on your actions, the actual struggle to reach that end or demonstrate that quality. The better, more sincere the effort, and more dramatically prolonged the struggle, the more boxes get checked for that row.

Take "steal a kiss," for instance. The character will mark off boxes for constantly devising methods to woo that so-and-so, setting up "coincidence" to get up close, maybe even subcumbing to that person's preferences, regardless how successful the result. As the saying goes, the thrill is in the chase. Achievement is fine and dandy, and congratulations if the outcome turns out best. But it's not nearly the primary determinant as effort is in this system.

Any boxes not checked are carried over to the next game, when the player will hopefully give enough drama and effort to earn checks.

There's a catch, though: Rows clear and start over only when ALL NINE boxes have been checked. This means you can't just concentrate on checking off the "easy" rows or you'll be stuck forever! For example, Dante manages to fill up his second (Vengeance) and third row ("Get the commie bastard who conned me!") in a couple sessions, but until he shows some Teamwork to complete that row, the other two rows won't clear and he won't advance further. He will have to curb his loner tendency and ride in over the hill like a cavalry to help out his buddies eventually.

Any time you change item for one of the bottom two rows, e.g., from Greed to Comic Relief), you lose all boxes already marked for that row thus far and must start over. Think twice before you switch out.

This system also works on an instant-gratification. Traditionally, X.P.s are dished out after a session. Not here. The individualized setup means the GM may overlook a cool thing or two that a player did hours ago in the chaos following a game, when everybody's busy shuffling around, scouring for lost dice, picking up rulebooks and character sheets, and dragging themselves out the door.

Rather, the GM should award box-checks as the characters take actions to justify them. When Jack does something to advance his "Romance" goal, he gets to check off one box for that immediately. When Dante turns away from polishing his guns long enough to actually suggest a sensible attack plan, a Teamwork box is marked off on his character sheet.

This reward system provides a direct incentive for players to contribute to the group experience, as well as their own character's goals. They get the carrot for their good roleplay right away, which will only motivates them to do more.

Experience List (12)

This list is by no mean exhaustive. Feel free to suggest your own additions to the GM and work with him to expand it to everybody's satisfaction.

**Altruism:** The character concerns not for herself but for others. She is selfless, charitable, and always looking to help others to the best of her abilities.

**Chivalry:** The character is striving to be honorable and courageous. He protects the weak and never renegs on his word. He does not cheat in any contest, including combat, unless the opponent does so first. Even then he will not stoop to a lower level than his foe.

**Comic Relief:** The character is there for wisecracks, pratfalls, or visual gags. He can be either a prankster or a victim. No one really takes him seriously.

**Crusade:** The character has devoted himself to a cause. He is on a passionate campaign, fantastically attempting to converting others while fighting wholeheartedly for it, to the point of martyrdom if necessary.

**Emotional Crisis:** Something is causing the character emotional distraught, from family problems to job-related stress, or worse. She does not necessarily have to resolve the issue, but must roleplay dealing with the negative impact.

**Finesse:** The character is silky smooth. She seldom handles obstacles and problems (especially hostile confrontations) with brute force but with wits and *je ne sais quoi*.

**Greed:** The character is insatiable when it comes to wealth. He seeks to amass as much personal fortune as possible and is easily tempted by money.

**Knowledge:** The pursuit of sholarly knowledge is a powerful driving force for this character. Whenever a chance for learning something new surfaces, she is there, no matter the location and what danger may be present.

**Lust:** Someone is the object of desire for this character. It need not be the same person from session to session, and he can even lust after more than one at a time!

**Obsession:** The character has an overactive collector-itis. She covets something and she wants it all! Pick a broad category for the obsession (for example, rare art paintings, powerful occult items, sports car, etc.)

**Pacifism:** Either the character will not harm a fly or is undergoing intense anger-management to not harm a fly. In any case, she will not be the aggressor or instigator for any fight. She will defend herself or those she cares about when threatened, but with only the minimum force necessary, and never maim or kill intentionally.

**Power:** The character seeks power. Anything that can possibly gives him more control over others he will try to get, by hook or by crook.

**Physical Limitation:** The character is severely limited physically, whether by a debilitating illness (though may be hidden from others) or disabling handicap. He earns checks by roleplaying the limitation and how he copes with it.

**Redemption:** The character wants to redeem herself from a past sin or mistake, real or perceived. She will often try too hard in her singleminded quest to prove herself worthy again that it blinds her to all facts and reason.

**Revelation:** The character bears a terrible secret that will affect many lives around her, if not her own. She wants to reveal it but is struggling internally for the best, most gentle way to break it. Regardless whether she finally lets it out, roleplaying the struggle is what gets the boxes checked.

**Romance:** Unlike lust, romance involves genuine interest and commitment. If the character is alone, he may be searching for true love. If he has a prospective partner, he is trying to foster or strengthen the relationship.

**Thrill:** The character is an adrenaline junkie, risking herself (and often others) constantly just for the thrill of it. She does not mind endangering her body, as long as it gives her an exhilarating rush.

**Tragedy:** The character is a tragic figure, or has suffered a personal misfortune that is haunting him. He is visibly troubled, and may or may not be willing to discuss the event openly. His solemn somberness makes him all gloom 'n' doom.

**Vengeance:** Wrath be thy character name! He is quick to challenge any insult and avenge any slight, real or imagined. Revenge is definitely a dish served cold in his book, with a side of retribution to boot. He believes in not an eye for an eye, but *two* eyes for an eye. Pity be the fool who tries to tread on him.

### **After the Mission (14)**

Odyssey Team and Dam Con personnels are required to file a report after each mission, giving their individual account of events and their personal impressions. While this is normally a non-roleplaying thing, every player has the option to fill it out for bonus experience points.

To interested players, the GM hands out blank photocopies of the proper log after completion of an adventure. The players will then complete the form separate from each other and *as their characters*. They should adopt the character's manner, attitude, education, and even accents in writing it out. More importantly, it should be written from their character's perspective. In other words, what they think happened and how they see it versus what actually happened. It can be full of biases, personal agendas, and even outright lies as long as they match the character's view or motive.

For their trouble, they receive 100 x character level in extra XPs for turning in the log, provided at least they make at least an acceptable effort with it.

The logs are an incentive for both players and GM. The players extend their roleplaying and gain additional XPs to advance characters. The GM gets tangible, detailed records of the campaign he can use for future reference, with reminders of noteworthy events to provide catalyst for scenarios.

### **Odyssey Evaluation Log (12)**

This is what Odyssey Team members fill out after exploring a new world.

“Reporting Member” is, obviously, name the character filing the report, while the name for his squad is identified under “Team.”

“Destination World” is what the team collectively choose to call the world.

“Designated Coordinates” indicates the world's location on the “infinite box” scheme,

determined by the GM. This can be left unfilled.

A single sentence will suffice for the next block of items from “Atmosphere” to “Civilization(s).” Terse responses like “Breathable,” “Cool with some rain,” or “Bipedal humanoids” are acceptable in most cases. Anything that immediately jumps out about the environment is saved for “Unique Feature(s).” Mention distinctions like “magic-heavy,” “three purple moons satellite this planet,” “incredibly weird technology” and so on here.

“Notable Events & Measures Taken” should describe major, significant encounters involving the character, along with the procedure or course of action taken by him.

“Evaluations & Recommendations” is the character’s opinion on the new world’s suitability for human living. Every character’s review will be instrumental in the final decision to whether colonize the world.

“Personal Observations & Comments” is where the character praises or rants about anything that happened on the mission he cares to, from equipment to planning, the world to fellow team members. Since all reports are confidential and accessible only to Project Directors, the characters have a free reign to say whatever they want here.

Damage Control Mission Log (12)

This is the sheet Dam Con guys fill out following every mission. Assume the entries are the same as their Odyssey counterparts if they are not elaborated here.

Describe the goal briefly in “Mission Objective,” followed by the character’s job and function in “Member’s Objective.”

“Primary Quarry” is the main person or target you’re after. Secondary targets or other parties of interest are noted under “Other Quarries.”

The directors will be most interested in “Evaluations & Recommendations.” Aside from seeing how the character will approach a problem, they want to know the size of the problem, how to remedy it or prevent it in the future.

## ODYSSEY EVALUATION LOG

Reporting Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination World:

Designated Coordinates: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Atmosphere:

Climate:

Dominant Lifeform(s):

Civilization(s):

Unique Feature(s):

Notable Events & Measures Taken:

Evaluations & Recommendations:

Personal Observations & Comments:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Member Name)

## DAMAGE CONTROL MISSION LOG

Reporting Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Mission Objective:

Member's Objective:

Primary Quarry:

Other Quarries:

Notable Events & Measures Taken:

Evaluations & Recommendations:

Personal Observations & Comments:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Member Name)

### **Adventure Seeds (14)**

One of *Odyssey Prime's* greatest assets is that it can accommodate *any* idea you may have for a game. Want to run a game where the characters are stuck fighting magic-flinging wizards and sword-swinging knights? Great! All you have to do is say they portal to such a world. How about dropping the characters in the middle of a planet spanning, futuristic city sprawl? Presto, there's another world for the characters to visit. There is quite literally no setting or adventure idea that could not be accommodated by the *Odyssey Prime* concept. In fact, the wilder and more creative a GM decides to be, the more fun the game is likely to be.

Still, sometimes even the most imaginative GM needs a little help getting started. This section of the book provides several "adventure seeds" for just such occurrences. These seeds are just that, the seeds of ideas, and are not fully fleshed out adventures unto

themselves. They are meant to get the game rolling, or to interject a change of pace, and therefore are merely small packages of ideas and possibilities. What happens with them beyond that is entirely up to the GM and the players.

### **Wayward (Odyssey Team) (12)**

**Setup:** While investigating another world, one of the other Odyssey Teams goes missing. They didn't come back through the portal at the appointed time and a follow-up team found their base camp deserted, though most of their equipment was still there, undisturbed.

**Possibilities:** Did the locals take the team away for interrogation, or did the former do something far more sinister? Perhaps something entirely different happened, like they were trapped while exploring some nearby terrain, such as a cavern system. It is also entirely possible that the missing team fell victim to the circumstances presented in some of the other adventure seeds ("Mirror Images," for example.)

The big questions are will the player characters find out what happened and will they also succumb to the cause of the other team's disappearance?

**Resolution:** There are essentially two possible resolutions to this problem: 1) the Team is found (dead or alive), 2) the team is never heard from again, though the answer to their disappearance may be discovered or left unsolved.

### **I Have Seen The Future, And It Ain't Pretty (Odyssey Team) (12)**

**Setup:** While going or returning through the portal, one or more of the Odyssey Team's members is given a flash of insight into the future.

**Possibilities:** Just what is shown in the vision (or if it is even true to begin with) is entirely up the GM and where he wants to take the game. Regardless, the glimpse of the future should be brief and vague with enough familiar and recognizable places, people, and/or events to spark the characters' interest (and concern.) The most likely choice for such a prophetic vision would be something terrible and horrifying. Having the character see the destruction of the asteroid, Doomsday, would be incredibly anti-climatic and would kill the campaign right there - no more motivation, no more fun, no more game. So, GMs should put a lot of thought into what they wish to reveal and how they choose to do it.

The GM need not feel that the vision writes the future of his campaign in stone, either. After all, what good is allowing the character to see what will (may?) happen if not to provide him the chance to prevent it?

**Resolution:** This adventure seed is easily resolved: either the event occurs or it is prevented. And yet, who is to say that preventing the glimpsed events make things any better?

### **Mirror Images (Odyssey Team or Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** An Odyssey Team returning from a mission runs into an unexpected



situation: they have switched places with their mirror images from an alternate universe! If the Odyssey Team characters are being used, then the player characters shall be the ones to find themselves in the parallel dimension, but if the Dam Con characters are the intended benefactors of this adventure, then they will have to find a way to switch the misplaced team members with their counterparts.

**Possibilities:** The biggest part of defining this adventure is to decide what the alternate universe is like. Is the alternate Earth a fascist regime where the Nazi's won the Second World War and the alternate Odyssey Team was on a mission to find new worlds to conquer? Are the mirror images the reverse sex of this dimension's team members? Did the portal not only act as a gateway through dimensions but through time as well, possibly bringing the mirror versions through from a time when some unknown enemy followed the humans back to Earth and invaded, or possibly even from after the coming of Doomsday and the Earth's destruction? In the latter case, maybe the "mirror images" aren't from another dimension at all, but possibly solely from the future, come back to warn the present as to where things went wrong?

Another question is just what will the mirror images do while they are here, or, in the case of the characters being the Odyssey Team, what will the characters do while they are in the alternate dimension? Will they be held as spies or experimented on? Will the alternate world's goals be so contrary to that of our own that the counterparts will start making trouble by attempting to undermine Odyssey Prime?

**Resolution:** The obvious resolution is that either the Odyssey Team or Dam Con characters find some way to return their missing comrades to their home dimension or they do not. Another option is that the team could be missing for weeks, months, or even years, or they may not be returned at all! For an Odyssey Team, this would mean taking the campaign completely off track and leading it into an entirely different direction, one where the character's goals will suddenly become much different than a standard Odyssey Prime game. Although this can be fun, it shouldn't be undertaken lightly.

## **Wolf Among the Sheep (Odyssey Team & Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** Upon returning from an expedition, the Odyssey Team learns that one of their members is an imposter.

**Possibilities:** There are several methods that may be employed to run this scenario. The easiest way to do it, and yet keep things a mystery, is for the GM to temporarily turn the Odyssey Team characters into NPCs. It may seem best to put a NPC into the group during an earlier mission and then use him/her as the imposter, but doing so makes it fairly obvious who the imposter is unless the GM devises a way to do otherwise while still keeping things a mystery.

In such a scenario, the players use their Dam Con characters to try and discover who the imposter is. Will the imposter begin to defend its subterfuge by sabotaging or even assassinating Odyssey Prime personnel? Will the innocent be forced to look guilty by being placed in a position where they fear for their own safety, either because of Dam Con's inquisition or because of false trails setup by the imposter?

It is also possible to allow the players to keep playing as the Odyssey Team, but with a twist. In order to keep the imposter a mystery, the GM should secretly take one of the players aside and tell them that they're character has been replaced, and then lay out

the guidelines within which the imposter must operate.

A brave GM may also try another variation to the previous Odyssey Team aspect of this adventure: get the players to exchange characters. This way each character's behavior will not be normal because the players are not entirely familiar with the new character (the non-imposters can claim it to be because of the stress of the situation), and it will make it that much more difficult for the players to decide who among them the GM has assigned as the imposter.

The imposter's intentions are also varied. Is the imposter merely a scout from the last world visited (or maybe from several worlds back, and the imposter has only now been learned of; it's also possible the imposter has been in place since before the character's recruitment into Odyssey Prime) who is as interested in learning about Earth as Odyssey Prime is in learning about other worlds? Of course, the scout's goal may not necessarily be benevolent. Other options include the imposter being an agent of an off-world enemy of Odyssey Prime, or an entirely new enemy who is on a mission to recon Earth for invasion.

**Resolution:** The easiest solution is to have the imposter revealed, though this leaves the question of what happened to the original. The question of how much damage was caused (if any) while the imposter was in place, despite restrictions that would have been imposed on their activity, may also haunt Odyssey Prime for months, if not longer.

But what if the imposter was not found? Perhaps the other Odyssey Team members, fearing knee-jerk precautions, flee for fear of their own safety and are thus labeled as a threat to national security, or maybe the hunt for the imposter is believed to have been resolved but the "imposter" that was caught was actually the real person, setup to take the fall so that the true imposter would be free to carry out its agenda with impunity.

Or what if there was more than one imposter?

The great thing about this adventure seed is that even when it is finished, it doesn't necessarily have to be resolved.

## **The Fifth Estate (Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** A reporter is posing a danger to the secrecy of Odyssey Prime and it is up to Dam Con to fix the matter.

**Possibilities:** How the reporter got the information is likely as important as what he plans to do with it. Did the reporter infiltrate Odyssey Prime, get the information, and then flee, or is there a mole in Odyssey Prime feeding him the data? This in itself can lead to further adventures, such as tracking down the source of the leaked information.

Next is deciding what the reporter plans to do with the information he's gathered. Is he only interested in going public to further his career or because he feels the public has the right to know such a conspiracy exists, or is the reporter planning to blackmail Odyssey Prime? Deciding this will go a long way in determining how the situation will have to be handled.

**Resolution:** Of course, just what the reporter plans, how he plans to do it, and the window of opportunity provided will decide Dam Con's response: termination, blackmail, discredit, or conscription into Odyssey Prime.

The GM can also decide to have the information come out anyway, either by the

reporter himself or by means of the old standby of “if anything happens to me, a letter gets mailed to every newspaper in the country.” Will everything be brushed away by the public as a crackpot agenda, or will the people believe the reporter? The GM should be careful of the latter route, as taking Odyssey Prime into the public eye will most likely completely alter the atmosphere of the game.

### **Deus Ex Machina (Odyssey Team & Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** When an Odyssey Team (likely the player characters) returns from another world, all of the Odyssey Prime facility’s computers slowly begin to act strangely.

**Possibilities:** Did the team bring back some high-technology devices that contained a computer virus that infected the facility’s systems during examination, and if so, what happens next? Is the virus just a program or does it possess artificial intelligence, and thus have a desire to replicate itself across the world’s computer networks? Such a program is also likely to have a strong sense of self-preservation and will stop at nothing to prevent the player characters from purging it, not a happy thought considering the lethality of some of the facility’s computer-controlled security and defense measures. What’s worse is how long would it take for the virus to reach the world’s nuclear arsenals, thus opting to go the ultimate route of self-preservation by terminating human life in a nuclear fire?

But what if it wasn’t a virus? What if it was some manner of being that was able to possess machines? Would such a creature seek to make a robotic body for itself? Would it maybe try to set itself up as ruler of Earth? Perhaps the creature isn’t necessarily malevolent and its unfamiliarity with mankind’s technology is causing the problems, not a conscious desire to cause Odyssey Prime harm.

How would the Odyssey Team or Dam Con members deal with such a creature? Should it be purged and killed, regardless of its intentions, or should some way be found to communicate with it in the hope of making a new ally?

**Resolution:** Common sense would require that the virus or creature be defeated, otherwise the shape of Earth’s civilizations will be forced to go through some drastic changes as each nation begins to lose control over its computers. How the situation is resolved depends upon the type of threat the GM decided upon, of course, and what problems it has caused.

And yet, a sadistic GM could always keep a simple thought squirreled away for a rainy day: what would happen if, seeing the end getting closer, the virus or creature managed to make a copy or backup of itself?

Food for thought.

### **Spy Hunter (Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** A member of Odyssey Prime is actually an infiltrator and it is up to Dam Con to find and deal with him (or them.)

**Possibilities:** Who sent the infiltrator and why are the biggest decisions to be made for this adventure. Possible antagonists include corporations hoping to steal Odyssey Prime’s technology (both what is currently possessed and what may be brought

back from other worlds), foreign nations who are trying to uncover just what “Odyssey Prime” is and why it warrants so much security and black bag cash, or even another agency within the governments behind Odyssey Prime.

Next up is answering what the infiltrator’s backers intend to do with the information they’re stealing, or what they may have already done if the leak has existed long enough for Odyssey Prime’s secrets to have already been vastly compromised. Is it possible to cover-up any information that’s already been released, or is Odyssey Prime now going to be stuck with a public relations nightmare?

**Resolution:** The spies are stopped or they aren’t, but the information that has already been passed along (if any) will certainly lead to new problems that shall have to be addressed.

### **Invasion (Odyssey Team & Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** As an Odyssey Team is returning through the portal, something unexpected happens: the portal refuses to close. It seems that something on the other side is keeping the portal open. Just as the eggheads start mobilizing to figure out what has gone wrong, something comes through.

**Possibilities:** Uh oh, it seems that someone has decided to invade the Earth from the other side of the portal! The invaders could be an advanced civilization from the world the Odyssey Team just left, or it could be something else altogether.

What if the invader had detected Odyssey Prime’s use of the portal technology and had somehow “piggybacked” their own wormhole onto Earth’s? Are the invaders able to do this because they too have been studying a lost portal artifact, or are they the race that created it or perhaps even an enemy of the creators? Have they come to conquer Earth or merely to remove what they perceive to be the corrupting influence and evil of portal technology? Perhaps they have an altogether different agenda.

**Resolution:** Just what extent the invasion is allowed to develop to is in the GM’s hands. The invaders could get no farther than the Odyssey Prime facility, or they could push past their beachhead to make themselves known to the public. The furthest extent of this adventure seed is to have the world involved in a war of the worlds, one that they may not necessarily win.

### **Outbreak (Odyssey Team & Dam Con) (12)**

**Setup:** An Odyssey Team (possibly the player characters) returning from another world has unknowingly brought back a dangerous disease or other form of contaminant.

**Possibilities:** What does the disease do? Is it a new, more powerful form of a disease similar to one that is already known on Earth? Does this mean that it is treatable or will it avoid all known methods of inoculation? Perhaps the infection’s effects are far more exotic than is normal. Does the disease kill its victims, only to raise them up as the undead, or does it transform its living hosts into lycanthropes?

After deciding just what it is that the contaminant does, the GM must decide how far the disease will spread before (if?) it is contained and cured. Is it restricted to the Odyssey Prime facility or does some unwitting guard on his leave spread it into the general populace? If the latter, just how public will Odyssey Prime become in its attempts

to find a cure? What if the contaminant was brought to Earth months earlier and has been incubating since, meaning that it has since had ample opportunity to be spread, possibly reaching around the world before its hosts became active?

Dam Con characters will be involved in trying to contain the disease and its effects here on Earth while Odyssey Prime characters will likely be sent off world in search of a cure.

**Resolution:** Finding a cure is the most likely way to finish this adventure, though how long it takes and how much damage is caused in the interim is another matter. A cure need not be found, however, though going this route leaves the GM with a series of conditions that will likely alter the entire shape of the campaign.

## **Equipping a Team**

One of the most important aspects of an Odyssey Prime team's preparation, be it a group of explorers sent to make first contact with an extraterrestrial civilization or a Dam Con team on a mission at home, is choosing the right gear for the job. Just what type of equipment a team of operatives shall be afforded depends chiefly upon the assignment's goals and the degree and nature of any expected (and unexpected) opposition.

Standard and MOP (Mission Operating Parameter) kits are also included for each team type for those of you who just want to jump right into things without puzzling over who gets what and why.

### **Exploration (Odyssey Team)**

The most common mission assigned the Odyssey Teams while off world is that of exploration. Once the initial probe has determined that the world on the other side of the portal can sustain human life, the explorers are cleared to arrive.

Such a team will be outfitted with an abundance of scientific and recording gear, so as to make progressive reports of what they encounter for later analysis.

Armaments: Typically every team member will carry a sidearm at the very least, though submachine guns are also likely. The team's "muscle" will probably be cleared to carry precision rifles, assault rifles, and maybe some heavier ordnance, such as grenades and squad support weapons, if the probe's data raises sufficient reason to suspect that the indigenous flora or fauna might pose a problem.

Still, armaments are, as a rule, kept light. This makes any first contact situations less likely to go awry due to a misunderstanding, and it also leaves the team more room to carry equipment necessary for their survey.

Gear: Each team has to carry equipment for taking soil, rock, air, water, plant, and, if possible, animal samples (usually in the form of small animals, insects, and droppings.) Such samples will allow the labs back home to get a good idea of the alien world's ecology and environmental development, including anything that might pose a danger to human life.

Several high-end laptops are a necessity, as are plenty of spare batteries. The computers are used to store recorded data, and run and coordinate several of the peripheral surveying devices employed. These preliminary data sorts will let the team know what areas require more samples than others, allowing the team to better plan its time before returning.

Sometimes a team may be called upon to visit a hazardous world. In such cases NBC gear is also provided.

Transportation: Depending upon the terrain, transportation is typically light if any is assigned at all. Small all-terrain vehicles and durable motorcycles are the preferred choice. If trouble is expected, a light vehicle capable of mounting a support weapon may also be assigned.

While traveling to hazardous environments, a M93A1 Fox is usually assigned, though whether it is armed or weaponless depends upon the degree of personal armaments assigned to the team's personnel.

### Exploration Standard Kit

Backpack

Survival knife

Temperature specific clothing

Tool/utility belt

Digital audio recorder

Digital camera

PDA

AN/PRC-137 HF radio

First aid kit

Multipurpose tool

2 chemical light sticks

Compass

Flashlight & spare batteries

Mesh vest

Sleeping bag

Sufficient trail rations for trip's expected duration plus a few days  
Flare gun  
Ballistic goggles (tinted)  
Browning Mk3 with 4 spare clips and holster

#### Additional Equipment To Be Shared

Tents  
Portable stove  
Dart pistol with 8 tranquilizers

#### Command Ops Kit

AN/PPS-15 Portable Radar  
Thermal imaging goggles  
Binoculars (rangefinding)

#### Medical Kit

2 surgery kits  
Portable, battery-powered fluorescent lamp

#### Recording Kit

Digital video camera  
Parabolic microphone  
Thermal imaging digital video camera  
35mm camera  
Plenty of spare batteries, film, and memory sticks

#### Science Kit

Appropriate professional kit (e.g., botany kit; may require help carrying it)  
E-NBC suit  
Notebook computer

#### Escort Kit

Ranger body armor  
Thermal imaging goggles  
M4A1 SOPMOD (4 spare clips) with laser sight, illuminator, flash suppressor, and Remington 870 shotgun (18 spare shells)  
Taser  
3 fragmentation grenades  
2 stun grenades

#### **Diplomatic (Odyssey Team)**

Diplomatic Odyssey Teams are, by necessity, usually comprised of the same people who are first sent to explore the new worlds probed by Odyssey Prime. A diplomatic team's purpose is to return to a world and develop relations with any civilizations encountered by the exploration teams.

Armaments: Unless dealing with a society that has shown some reason for concern, a diplomatic team will be very lightly armed. At most, a sidearm will be present, though a pair of "honor guards" for any additional diplomats may be permitted to carry something as heavy as a machine pistol, submachine gun, or even an assault rifle.

However, there are situations where even the diplomats have to be loaded for bear. Should a civilization of warriors or paranoid xenophobes be encountered, for instance, they might expect a strong show of force and would be insulted (or suspicious) of anything else. It is also possible that the diplomats are being sent to smooth over a misunderstanding or similarly unfortunate situation that resulted in conflict. Under such circumstances, the diplomatic team will be armed as per an explorer team, or possibly even more heavily.

Gear: Very little in the way of this scientific equipment will be necessary. A diplomatic team may have

certain secondary, scientific objectives, and so may be equipped with a minimum of surveying gear, but their primary concern is developing relations with the locals.

Recording and compact computer equipment shall be in abundance, of course, so long as the locals allow for it (and sometimes even if they don't, so long as the Odyssey Team thinks they can get away with it.) The data recorded by the diplomats will not only help in later developments with that particular society, but it will also aid in training other Odyssey Teams on what to expect while conducting similar operations.

Transportation: The type of vehicles assigned to the team, if any, shall be determined by the terrain and by the alien society's behavior. Some civilizations may be frightened if the foreigners were to show up in massive, hard-scaled beasts, while primitive vehicles that produce such vast amounts of pollutants may simply offend others.

If the situation and environment allows for it, though, the diplomatic team will likely be sent in vehicles more befitting their mission. Stylish vans, luxury cars, or even limousines may be provided, depending upon the impression that is intended and the expected reaction by the locals. It should be noted that the logistics officers always expect the unexpected, so even these "civilian" vehicles will likely be bullet resistant with a few added "special" features.

#### Diplomatic Standard Kit

Backpack  
Leisure clothing  
Dress clothing/uniform  
Tool/utility belt  
Digital audio recorder  
Digital camera  
PDA  
AN/PRC-137 HF radio  
Multipurpose tool  
Notebook computer  
Pathfinder revolver with 2 speed loaders and ankle holster

#### Recording Kit

As exploration team

#### Covert Surveillance Kit

Laser microphone  
Several listening "bugs" and receiver

#### Bodyguard Kit

Web vest  
Concealed vest armor  
Survival knife  
Gyurza P-9 with 4 spare clips  
HK MP5 submachine gun with 6 spare clips

#### **Infiltration (Odyssey Team and/or Dam Con)**

Sometimes an Odyssey Team of explorers encounters a civilization that, for one reason or another, defies easy classification. Perhaps there is a war going on and the explorers were unable to determine which side would be the best to approach, or maybe the explorers found reasons not to make the initial probe themselves. In such instances, when further information is needed on a civilization without them knowing it, an infiltration team is sent in.

It is also possible that infiltrators may be required to follow up on a diplomatic mission. This could be necessitated for any number of reasons. The diplomats may have inadvertently stumbled upon something that they weren't meant to know and need more information before they continue with their own mission, or the diplomats could have been unsuccessful in their mission and Odyssey Prime wants to gather more information before making a second attempt.

Whatever the reason, an infiltration team is created from a team of specialists from amongst the Odyssey Teams. But because Odyssey Team operatives tend to be "bookish" and science types, with a dab



of criminal, military, and other strong-arm elements thrown in for good measure, Dam Con personnel may also be added to keep everyone else safe. If things have progressed to the point where full out, Special Ops-style covert action is required, the infiltration team may even be comprised entirely of Dam Con agents.

Armaments: Infiltrators are meant to be silent and unseen, but they also have to be prepared in case things take a turn for the worse. After all, the very necessity of an infiltration team specifies that the group shall be going where it isn't meant to and conducting clandestine activities that the locals most likely wouldn't appreciate.

To this end, the infiltrators will be armed with compact weapons such as automatic pistols, submachine guns, and machine pistols. Carbines are also preferred, though something as large as an assault weapon is to be avoided as too bulky and clumsy. Almost certainly all weapons will be equipped with sound suppressors.

Explosives may also be required, depending upon what the infiltrators are being called on to do, though usually these are limited to small amounts for breaching doors, safes, and similar obstructions. Any combat explosives or loud weapons, such as shotguns, are carried solely as backup weapons.

Gear: Intelligence gathering equipment, such as audio and video recorders, laser microphones, and communications taps are the most common type of equipment. Scientific gear is rarely carried unless the mission's goal specifically requires it. Even notebook computers will be avoided.

Transportation: If the mission's parameters and environment allows for it, Special Operations vehicles may be provided. This could be anything from a FAV to a powered parachute.

#### Infiltration Standard Kit

- Backpack
- Survival knife
- Temperature and terrain specific clothing
- Tool/utility belt
- Digital audio recorder
- Digital camera
- AN/PRC-137 HF radio with throat microphone
- First aid kit
- Multipurpose tool
- Compass
- Flashlight & spare batteries
- Mesh vest
- Sufficient trail rations for trip's expected duration plus a few days
- Ballistic goggles (tinted)
- Night vision goggles
- Taser
- Glock 18 with silencer and 4 spare clips and holster
- HK MP5 submachine gun with 2 spare clips

#### Command Ops Kit

- Thermal imaging goggles
- Binoculars (rangefinding)

#### Backup Kit

- No HK MP5
- M4A1 SOPMOD (4 spare clips) with laser sight, illuminator, flash suppressor, Remington 870 shotgun (18 spare shells), and reflex sight

#### Overwatch Kit

- No HK MP5
- Thermal imaging scope
- Steyr tactical rifle with 3 clips

## **Black Op (Dam Con)**

Primarily deployed on Earth to contain and restrict (or worse) the activities of anyone who puts the secrecy of Odyssey Prime in jeopardy, such teams are necessarily comprised of Dam Con agents. In fact, this sort of mission is the main reason that Dam Con exists. Few such missions are ever directed against citizens of other worlds, though some have had to be employed against rogue Odyssey agents.

The most common mission types include coercion and blackmail, though “wetworks” (assassinations and other brutal solutions) are not uncommon if the situation escalates enough to warrants it.

Armaments: A black op team could be armed with as little as sidearms, or nothing at all, for operations involving scare tactics or blackmail, or it could require a coordinated team of assassins decked out with remote explosives, high-powered rifles, and silenced submachine guns. Even missions of intimidation sometimes require some impressive firepower; after all, few things scare someone into cooperating as quickly as staring down the business end of a weapon as large as you are.

Still, black op teams usually prefer to travel lightly, thereby increasing their ability to quietly slip in and out of the target zone without arousing any more attention to a situation that they are supposed to diffuse.

Gear: Black ops are tricky in that no operation is exactly like another. One setup may involve complex disguises and false identities, the next lots of hidden listening and recording devices, while yet another involves breaching charges, rappelling ropes, and parachutes. No set equipment list exists for black ops, and operatives often have to make the best of what they have on hand in the target zone.

Transportation: Vehicles are defined by the parameters of the operation. A blackmail operation may require surveillance vehicles disguised as commercial trucks and vans, or luxury autos may be needed to reinforce the opulence of a false identity. For the seedier operations, inconspicuous vehicles that may easily be lost in the bustle of traffic are preferred.

Military vehicles may also be used, from time to time, though these are usually restricted to insertion- and stealth-type vehicles. Only in the most severe circumstances will anything heavier be used, as to do so would likely draw far more attention than the circumstances that the mission was supposed to make disappear in the first place.

### Black Ops Standard Kit

Survival knife

Temperature and terrain specific clothing

Tool/utility belt

AN/PRC-137 HF radio with throat microphone

First aid kit

Multipurpose tool

Compass

Flashlight & spare batteries

Mesh vest

Ballistic goggles (tinted)

Tactical helmet

Ranger armor

Night vision goggles

Taser

Mark 23 Mod 0 SOCOM with 4 spare clips, dual suppressor, and holster

HK MP5 submachine gun with 4 spare clips

Or

OICW with 4 spare 5.56mm clips and 2 spare 20mm clips

### Command Ops Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1

Thermal imaging goggles

Binoculars (rangefinding)

OICW with 4 spare 5.56mm clips and 2 spare 20mm clips

#### Overwatch Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1/OICW

Thermal imaging scope

Barrett Light Fifty with 2 spare clips

or

Steyr IWS2000 with 2 spare clips

#### **Assault (Dam Con)**

This is by far the least common of the mission types employed by Odyssey Prime for a very simple reason: nothing about them is quiet or covert. An assault team of Dam Con agents is usually assembled to deal with something that was randomly transported to Earth through a portal, though there have been instances where they've been sent other worlds to handle a situation requiring a firmer hand than the assigned Odyssey Team could handle. Such situations are usually because the latter have been taken hostage or otherwise detained against their will and all diplomatic attempts to retrieve them have failed.

An assault team has but one purpose: kill its assigned target and smash everything around it into dust, just to be sure. Sometimes such operations can be covered up as terrorist attacks, military maneuvers gone awry, or as a terrible accident or disaster, but they are almost always loud and messy, and quite often public.

Though always necessary, the deployment of an assault team is never to be taken lightly as they represent one of the greatest risks of exposing Odyssey Prime and the existence of Doomsday.

Armaments: Whatever is needed, be it heavy machineguns, rocket launchers, C4, or mortars. You name it, and whatever is deemed necessary to terminate the target shall be used. There has even been one instance of a tactical nuke being required, though that incomparable situation luckily took place in such a remote area that its use was passed off as a weapon's test.

Gear: Assault teams have no interest in science or gathering information. They know what their target is (usually), and they only carry what they need to kill it. This may include protective gear, such as NBC suits, or special sensors to track the target if it is, for instance, invisible to the naked eye (hey, it's happened.) For the most part, though, assault operatives like to reserve all the space they can afford for spare ammunition and things that explode, leaving big, smoking holes in the ground.

Transportation: Unmarked vehicles, including those of the military variety, are most common. If things get bad enough, battle tanks, gunships, or even bombers may accompany the assault team! Such situations are rare, but they do happen.

#### Assault Standard Kit

Survival knife

Temperature and terrain specific clothing

Tool/utility belt

AN/PRC-137 HF radio with throat microphone

First aid kit

Multipurpose tool

Compass

Flashlight & spare batteries

Mesh vest

Ballistic goggles (tinted)

PASGT helmet

Ranger armor with upgrade

Night vision goggles

Mark 23 Mod 0 SOCOM with 4 spare clips, dual suppressor, and holster

M4A1 SOPMOD (4 spare clips) with laser sight, illuminator, dual suppressor, Remington 870 shotgun (18 spare shells), and reflex sight

Or

OICW with 4 spare 5.56mm clips and 2 spare 20mm clips

#### Additional Equipment To Be Shared

AN/-PSC-5 Shadowfire with throat microphone  
4 bandoleers of various 40mm grenades  
2 spare linked ammo belts for the Shrike  
2 M72A3 LAWS

Command Ops Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1  
Thermal imaging goggles  
Binoculars (rangefinding)  
OICW with 4 spare 5.56mm clips and 2 spare 20mm clips

Support Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1/OICW  
Sawed off shotgun  
Shrike with 2 spare linked belts of ammunition

Demolitions Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1/OICW  
Striker shotgun with 36 spare shells  
3 M2 SLAMs  
M79 grenade launcher and a bandoleer of various 40mm grenades

Overwatch Kit

No HK MP5/M4A1/OICW  
Thermal imaging scope  
Barrett Light Fifty with 2 spare clips  
or  
Steyr IWS2000 with 2 spare clips

## The Unisystem Odyssey (18)

Welcome, travelers! You have come far through the Ring to arrive in a whole new realm. This is the realm of the Unisystem game mechanics. With these rules, you can use the Odyssey Prime setting in your Unisystem games. However, this is not a *Conversion*. The information here will allow you to run a game of Odyssey Prime using the Unisystem mechanic. For Conversion material for characters and for skill equivalents, see the Revised Edition of the AFMBE Main Book.

This chapter uses the “Classic” Unisystem rules. To use these rules you will need an AFMBE, Witchcraft, Terra Primate, or Armageddon Main Book. Within this chapter there are suggestions for using the Cinematic Unisystem rules instead, if you prefer.

## The Team (14)

The Odyssey Prime setting suggests creating two characters, one for the Odyssey team and one for Dam Con, though it can be run any way the Director wishes. These characters should be created using the Heroic character type below; however, there is nothing saying that you cannot play a Pre-Heroic character instead. Just remember that the Pre-Heroic character will have to use guile and ingenuity to survive in dangerous encounters.

The end of this chapter has four sample Archetypes as examples of various team members. There are two Odyssey members and two Dam Con members. These characters can be modified to suit the needs of the players, used as a guide for creating other characters, or even used as is.

## The Odyssey Team (12)

These brave men and women have been picked and trained for the ultimate adventure, travel to distant worlds and alternate dimensions. They have been trained as much as possible to be prepared for whatever their destination throws their way. More detailed information on the Odyssey Team member can be found on p.[??].

Odyssey Team members must take the “FEMA” Agent Quality.

## The Dam Con Team (12)

The Dam Con team takes care of all the “dirty work” while the Odyssey team travels through the multiverse. They are the “men in black” that squash stories and investigate possible information leaks when they arise. They investigate problems on this side of the ring and may even perform wetworks, if necessary. More detailed information on the Dam Con Team member can be found on p.[??].

Dam Con Team members must take the “FEMA” Agent Quality.

## Pre-Heroic (12)

[Fiction text]

“They said it was a routine sample collecting trek. Little did I know that they were going to be taking me to another world to do studies on everything from the ground to the air. I only hope the team returns from scouting soon. I swear I heard something out there in the woods.”

[End fiction text]

Pre-Heroic Cast Members are regular, everyday people. They are the store clerks and assistant scientists of the world. Though they are still a little above average, they should not get too cocky. Pre-Heroic characters will have to be smart and work together to survive in hostile environments.

Pre-Heroic characters begin with 15 points for Attributes, 5 points for Qualities (and up to 10 points in

Drawbacks), and 30 points for skills. They also begin the game with 5 Drama Points. Pre-Heroic characters may not take supernatural Qualities, other than Accursed, Good/Bad Luck, and Old Soul.

Heroic (12)

[Fiction text]

“When I joined the military I never thought I’d be walking near blind through a strange portal to another world with a bunch of scientists in tow, but I got to say, it’s been an adventure. From other worlds to other dimensions, everything is new and different. It’s not just a job, it’s an adventure!”

[End fiction text]

Heroic Cast Members are tougher, smarter, and stronger than Pre-Heroic characters. These are the military men and women of the world, or those who have been trained to survive in harsh environments. Most Odyssey Team members and Dam Con team members will be of this type.

Heroic characters begin with 20 points for Attributes, 15 points for Qualities (and up to 10 points in Drawbacks), and 35 points for skills. They also begin the game with 5 Drama Points. Heroic characters may not take supernatural Qualities, other than Accursed, Good/Bad Luck, and Old Soul.

[Sidebar]

If the Director allows, other character types can be used from the various Unisystem books; however, it is advisable to make the more supernatural/magical types from other worlds or dimensions to keep the feel of the setting intact. The Directors may allow Inspired characters from earth, if they wish.

[End sidebar]

Qualities & Drawbacks (12)

Besides the “FEMA” Agent Quality below, here are some Qualities that could be useful for Odyssey Team members. Dam Con members are easier as they are more likely to have many different types of Qualities.

Charisma (for those encounters with other species)

Fast Reaction Time

Hard to Kill

Hyper-Lingual (see the Terra Primate Main Book or Pulp Zombies Supplement for AFMBE)

Military Rank (see the Buffy the Vampire Slayer RPG or the Terra Primate Main Book)

Nerves of Steel

Situational Awareness

New Quality

“FEMA” Agent (5-Point Quality)

Whether a DamCon member or an Odyssey member, the character must purchase this Quality. Being a member has its privileges. The member starts with the Resources Quality at 3 and Status at 5. They are not only compensated well for what they do, but they also have a level of notoriety and authority within the government or the “agency” itself. They are given a certain degree of latitude, if not respected, when it comes to their jobs or lives. However, this is not to say that they can just go off and release their knowledge to the general populace. The agents also have a 3-point Obligation to their job and a 3-point Secret. They could face anything from torture to death if someone knew that they held such a secret. Even worse, another DamCon member may kill them to keep them quiet, if there were no other way to resolve the situation. Even when the agent retires their secrets still remain a matter of national security and completely classified.

Conditioning (3 to 5-Point Quality)

No, this isn't for your hair. Cast Members with Conditioning have undergone a rigorous training regimen and are hardened to various forms of information extraction, including mental probing and physical torture. They have a +2 resistance to pain, a +2 resistance to mental assaults, and a +2 resistance to fear tactics (this stacks with any bonus gained from Nerves of Steel). However, most become Emotionally Detached and some can be Cruel and/or Humorless.

#### New Drawback

##### Thrill Seeker (3-Point Drawback)

Much more dangerous than an individual who is just reckless, a thrill seeker lives for the adrenaline high and will go to great lengths to get it. These are the people who sky dive off of skyscrapers and bungee off of bridges for fun. A thrill seeker knows that one day they may very well die, but they'll have a blast living life in the meantime. If it gets them their adrenaline fix then it's worth trying, even if it could get them dead. Amazingly, thrill seekers sometimes get past the rigorous screening methods used for the Odyssey Project, since a certain amount of bravado is required to toss yourself through a shimmering gate leading to an alien world.

##### Odyssey Stress Disorder (1 or 2-Point Drawback)

Something traumatic has happened on a mission that has damaged the cast member mentally. This could have been the death of their group or extreme torture. Whatever the reason they are now emotionally and mentally scarred. They have the Recurring Nightmares drawback and the Depression drawback. Some may even have a mild Addiction to smoking or alcohol. However, due to their semi-detached state, they also have a +2 Resistance to Pain.

#### Skills (12)

Though both Dam Con and Odyssey team members can have a wide range of skills, here are some recommended skills. Characters are not required to have these skills, but they could be useful.

Climbing (good for Odyssey team members as well as Dam Con)

Craft (Odyssey team members that are caught on a planet for a long time could use this skill)

Engineer (some of these are useful for an Odyssey member, in case they need to tell how safe a structure is)

First Aid (definitely useful for both)

Haggling (Odyssey members may need to haggle with natives)

Humanities (good for studying ancient civilizations)

Research/Investigation (good for both when finding clues or information is necessary)

Sciences (all are useful for explorers to a strange world)

Survival (useful for both types, but moreso for the Odyssey team)

Swimming (good for both teams)

#### New Skills

##### Cryptography (Type)

Cryptography is the art of encryption or decryption using codes or other covert methods. Though Cryptography is a much more complex skill than can easily be rendered here, for simplicity's sake, there are three general types of Cryptography: Electronic, Computer, and Hard Copy. Electronic Cryptography is the use of radio scramblers and de-scramblers. Computer Cryptography uses computers to make complex program messages with hidden messages within them or to decrypt those messages. Hard Copy Cryptography uses written or typed messages and sometimes various pictographs or symbols. Cast Members use Intelligence + Cryptography to encrypt or decrypt a message. Decrypting a message is a resisted roll against the original roll to encrypt the message.

#### Drama Points (12)

In the Odyssey Prime setting Action Points are used for a more cinematic flair. Unisystem has a set of rules as well to add a touch of the cinematic into the game. These are called Drama Points. Drama Points allow the heroes to survive against impossible odds, or perform incredible feats at just the right moment,

especially when it's dramatically appropriate. This affects things beyond deeds. Sometimes the cavalry arrives in the nick of time, or a vital clue is discovered just when the characters need it. In the real world people have a hard time dealing with major wounds and take a long time to recover. Using the Drama Point system characters can escape with little more than a few bruises or a flesh wound in many circumstances. With Drama Points, the Cast can temporarily "short-circuit" reality and perform heroic feats, do the impossible and win the day.

Think of Drama Points as "script aids"-they prevent the heroes from suffering ignominious, meaningless deaths because of bad luck. They do not make the characters unbeatable, however. For one, players get a limited number of Drama Points, so they have to be used with great care or the characters may exhaust their good fortune before the dramatic finale. Also, the bad guys have Drama Points; this allows even a lowly villain to threaten a hero with a lucky punch, or the head villain to escape certain death.

Characters start the game with 5 Drama Points. These points are not regained automatically. Drama Points have to be earned. They may be awarded for performing heroic feats. They are also given as "payment" for the times when tragedy or misfortune strikes the Cast. When bad things happen to good people, the Cast may get some Drama Points as a "karmic payment." Finally, Drama Points are earned when the players help drive the adventure, by helping develop storylines and subplots beyond the basic "kill the monster" scenario.

[begin sidebar]

#### Playing It Straight

The Drama Point System is not for everybody. Some players just don't like thinking in terms of Hollywood heroics, and prefer a more realistic approach. Drama Points encourage a certain degree of metagaming, with the players thinking about the rules of the game instead of the actual story their characters are living. While the results are largely positive-the game is meant to simulate a more cinematic feel-the means may not be to everyone's taste. If you don't like Drama Points, you can always play the game "straight." The characters are on their own, to live and die by their talents and the luck of the dice.

Games without Drama Points are grittier and deadlier. Injured characters may be incapacitated for long periods of time, and death is much more likely even among Heroic characters. As usual, you and the players should talk things over and settle on something that will satisfy the group.

[end sidebar]

#### Using Drama Points (14)

There are five ways in which players can use Drama Points. Used judiciously, they can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. They include Heroic Feat, I Think I'm Okay, Plot Twist, Righteous Fury, and the ever-popular Back From the Dead.

As the Director, you have veto power over the use of Drama Points. Usually, if something bad is slated to happen to the character, using Drama Points won't help her get out of the situation. The consolation prize, however, is that those situations earn the character extra Drama Points. So, if the team leader of the Odyssey team is meant to get blindsided and knocked out by a hidden villain, her player doesn't get to use Drama Points to escape her fate, but instead gets a Drama Point for her troubles.

#### Heroic Feat (12)

Sometimes, a character really needs to land that punch, disarm the time bomb with ten seconds left on the clock, or shoot the oxygen tank in the shark's mouth before it swims over for a bite. When the attempt simply must succeed, invoke the Heroic Feat.

By spending a Drama Point, the character gets a +10 bonus on some value. This can be an attack or defense roll, or any use of a skill, or even for a Fear or Survival Test. The Heroic Feat can also make things hurt



more; the +10 bonus is added to the base damage in addition to any Success Level bonuses (then armor, damage type and other modifiers are applied).

A player has to announce her character is using a Drama Point during the Intentions phase of a Turn (see the Intentions section in any Unisystem Main Book), or before rolling during non-combat situations. Also, only one Heroic Feat may be performed in a Turn. It can be used either for attack, defense or damage, but not for more than one of those in the same Turn.

Example: An Odyssey team member is being attacked by a denizen of another world. In a burst of desperate speed, she kicks it in the groin. The player spends a Drama Point, and she gets a +10 to her Dexterity and Brawling (Kung-Fu for Cinematic Unisystem) roll. Her Dexterity is a 3 and her Brawling a 3. Before the player even rolls the dice, she has a +16 bonus. Not surprisingly, the kick lands, and the creature doubles over with a very surprised expression on its face.

#### I Think I'm Okay (12)

The bullet didn't hit any vital organs. The character rolled with the impact and the baseball bat didn't crush her skull. The spear got caught in the knight's chain mail and no serious damage was done. Somehow, the injuries that should have killed a character or at least put her out of commission are not as bad as she thought they were. Or maybe she got her second wind-a few bandages on her bloody but largely harmless wounds and she is ready to go. Whatever the rationale, I Think I'm Okay allows Heroic and Pre-Heroic characters to get back into action after enduring beatings that would have sent a pro football player to the hospital.

For a mere Drama Point, half the Life Point damage (round down) the character has taken up to that point is healed up. The character is still bloody and battered, but she can act normally. I Think I'm Okay can be used only once per Turn, but it can be used several Turns in a row, each use halving whatever damage remains. If the character had suffered enough damage to be incapacitated or unconscious, however, healing does not necessarily awaken her. You as Director decide if the time is right for the character to revive and join the action. Also, if the injuries were life threatening, you may decide that the character has to go to the hospital at some point, although she can wait until the action or scenario is over.

Example: A sword-wielding maniac from another dimension runs our Odyssey leader through. The wound inflicts 40 points of damage, and the Odyssey member had already been injured for another 26 points previously, so he's in really bad shape. Not wishing to see the end of the character, his player spends a Drama Point. The 66 points of damage are reduced to a "mere" 33 points-not exactly unhurt, but not dying, either. The sword must have missed his vital organs. Next Turn, the player could reduce it even further, to 16 points, and a Turn later, to 8 points. This would take three Drama Points, though-a pretty hefty expenditure.

#### Plot Twist (12)

The killer accidentally dropped a valuable clue at the scene of the crime. When the alien beast is about to finish off our hero, the cavalry shows up in the nick of time. The local medicine man just happened to have the cure for a strange malady picked up on another world. Heroes often find help and information from the most unlikely places or at precisely the right time. Once per game session, each character can spend a Drama Point and get a "break." This is not a Get Out of Jail Free Card. If the heroine stupidly walked into a trap and she is attacked by a group of people bent on obtaining the secrets of Sherman's Ring, a Plot Twist won't allow her to escape unscathed. The group might decide to keep her alive, however (after beating her soundly to gain information), and her fellow Dam Con members might somehow realize where she is and come to her rescue. By the same token, sometimes clues are available, but they cannot be found at that time. If you decide that a Plot Twist is not possible, the player gets back the Drama Point.

#### Righteous Fury (12)

I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore. Nothing is more deadly than a pissed off heroine; even the humblest Pre-Hero can become a fearsome enemy if properly motivated. It takes a lot to drive a

character over the edge, but when it happens most fictional heroes become unstoppable engines of destruction.

By spending two Drama Points, the character gets a +5 bonus to all attack actions, including magical attacks (if magic is being used in the setting), for the duration of the fight. These benefits are cumulative with Heroic Feats, above. Problem is, an appropriate provocation is necessary to invoke the Righteous Fury rule. A player can't decide her character is pissed about the existence of meteorites, or global warming, or even the mystery meatloaf they served in the mess hall that day. She needs to be truly provoked—a brutal attack on a loved one, an unexpected betrayal of trust, or extremely horrible crimes.

#### Back from the Dead (12)

Sooner or later, everybody dies. However, on some rare occasions in the cinema, they come back. It doesn't happen often, but it is possible. There are also ways in which a character remains dead, but she (or somebody much like her) can still be part of the Cast. A character who dies may, by spending Drama Points, make a triumphant return. No return from the grave is without complications, however, and not even Drama Points can erase the problems that result from cheating the Grim Reaper.

The sooner the character is back from the dead, the more Drama Points it costs. Returning for the next session costs five Drama Points. Bypassing death in the same session as one's demise costs 10 Drama Points. If the Cast Member did not have enough Drama Points to spend, she can pay in installments—all Drama Points she has now, and any Drama Points the character gets in later sessions, until the debt is paid. Spending the points is not enough; you and the player need to work out the details behind the resurrection. Some possible explanations follow.

Miracle at the ER: The hard-working docs at HQ got that heart pumping after some electro-shocks, heart massage, and pure force of will. Or, some strange alien device heals the body and returns the character to life. The character might have seen visions of the future or the past, spoken to dead friends and relatives, or undergone some type of Profound Mystical Experience during the brief time she was dead.

Ghost with the Most: The character is dead and buried, but her soul lives on, and she's not going anywhere. Maybe some mystical force brings the character back as an undead instrument of vengeance (maybe named after a black carrion bird?), or they still help out as a being of pure energy. The character gets at least 10 points' worth of new Qualities, and possibly more. Those ain't free, and must be paid for with unspent experience points (see the Experience Points section in any Unisystem Main Book), or paid in installments with earned experience points.

Greater Power: Perhaps some greater power (Gods, aliens, strange entities from another dimension) decides that the character has not fulfilled her destiny yet. The reason for the return could be unknown to the character for a while, and thus unexplainable to her companions. The downside is the greater power's motivation. Depending on what's expected from the resurrected, it might be better to have stayed dead . . .

Twin Sibling: At the character's funeral, before you can say Laura Palmer, there she is, looking sad but perfectly alive! Well, it's not really her, just her long-lost sister/cousin/clone/alternate dimension stand-in/so on and so forth. The character should be adjusted somewhat, to reflect the different life story (some skills or Attributes might be modified).

All these options could be very useful to generate drama. How will the character's miraculous return affect the Setting? How will the rest of the Cast react? What terrible price must be paid for the life that has been given back?

[begin sidebar]

#### Spending Drama Points: Some Guidelines

So a character has 5 shiny Drama Points, and is ready to do the impossible. How many should be spent in an Episode? What happens if the player runs out? While the answers will vary from one gaming group to

the next, here are some rules of thumb for both you and the players.

If the player spends all her Drama Points, she may not have them when her Cast Member really needs them. And if she tries to hoard them greedily, her character may get her butt kicked on a regular basis (which may force the player to spend Drama Points to nurse her back to health). It's a balancing act.

Ideally, players should spend no more (and hopefully less) Drama Points than they earn in the game session. That way they have a nice stash saved up for the Final Showdown or some other dramatic moment.

During the typical session, players should probably not spend more than three Drama Points apiece. But that's in a "fair" fight. If a group of four Pre-Heroic characters tries to take a couple of powerful creatures, they are in trouble, and may end up spending Drama Points like crazy just to survive. In those cases, it's better to use one Drama Point for a Plot Twist to stop the fight. If you want to keep up the pressure and constantly put the Cast in dangerous situations, then players may end up spending 5 or more Drama Points per session. In that case, you are going to have to make good those expenses by giving out more Drama Points than normal.

Players should not use Drama Points frivolously-save them for a fight with the Finale or the main villain of the session. However, the Director must remember to scale the enemies to the abilities of the characters.

So, as a rule of thumb, characters should have a maximum expenditure of three Drama Points per game session. If all the players are spending more than that amount on a regular basis, you may need to turn down the heat a bit. If only one player is overspending, then it's probably her problem and not the game's.

[end sidebar]

#### Earning Drama Points (14)

Once a player spends her Drama Points, they are gone for good. To get more, she is going to have to work for them. Fortunately, they can be obtained in a number of ways. Directors should try to keep a rein on how many Drama Points they hand out. A good ceiling (but not necessarily a maximum) is around 15 Drama Points.

#### Experience Points (12)

Characters can use experience points (see p. [?]) to buy Drama Points. Heroes and Pre-Heroes can buy them at the rate of two experience points for each Drama Point. This is the most mechanical way to gain more Drama Points, and can result in characters that improve very slowly.

#### Heroic Acts (12)

Stomping on villains does not constitute a Heroic Act-it's part of the usual job description for the Cast. To earn Drama Points, a character needs to perform acts of self-sacrifice for the good of others. The sacrifice should be significant-serious risk of death or injury, or some personal loss. This type of act should get one or two Drama Points, depending on how serious the sacrifice was.

#### When Bad Things Happen To Good People (12)

Sometimes, the plot may require that something bad happen to the Cast Members. Someone sneaks up behind the character and clobbers her from behind; the escape car refuses to start; a freak accident allows a villain to escape. This shouldn't happen often, or the players are going to feel railroaded. When it does, you should "pay" for the privilege by giving the affected characters one to three Drama Points. When this rule is invoked, the players cannot use Drama Points to undo the results-if the villain is meant to get away this time, she has to get away. Ditto if this is their turn to end up as hostages. The more unfair the situation is, the more Drama Points they get, up to three Drama Points for situations where the characters are totally getting hosed by life.

## Using DAR (14)

[Sidebar]

### DAR & Drama Points

Directors should be cautioned against using both DAR and Drama Points in the same game as it can skew the successes in the game too far in one direction or the other and would make Drama expenditures too high in some cases.

[End Sidebar]

The Odyssey Prime setting introduces the Dramatic Action Resolution rules for Directors to use to influence the scenes of their game (see p.??). The table below follows the Base Modifiers Table, which can be found in any Unisystem Main Book, and gives a simple set of modifiers that a Director can use in a Unisystem game to spice up the action or the drama a bit.

In a Unisystem game, an action that is merely average has a bonus on the Base Modifiers Table. Challenging represents an attempt with no bonuses or penalties, which is closest to the Average Difficulty when the action attempted is Neutral to Plot/Drama (see p.??). For this reason, the Difficulty names have been changed from those represented in the DAR section of this book.

Though some may call DAR railroading or metagaming, it is merely a tool that can be used to enhance a scene to make it more dramatic or harrowing. The bonuses and penalties below are used against the die roll of the player (or even the villains) during times of high drama where the outcome could be important either way.

### Dramatic Action Resolution (12)

Difficulty	Enhances Plot	Neutral to Plot	Detracts Plot
Challenging	+3	-	-3
Very Difficult	+6	-3	-6
Heroic	+9	-6	-9

## Tools of the Trade (14)

Many of the weapons in this book may simply use the Unisystem equivalents and are not duplicated here. The 9 mm, .45 caliber, 7.62 mm, .22 caliber, and 5.56 mm, are treated in the Firearms section of many of the Unisystem Main Books. Those that do not have equivalents are treated in this section. All weapons that can fire bursts follow the rules for bursts in any Unisystem Main Book. Weapons labeled as *machine pistols* are handguns in Unisystem that can fire bursts.

Only gear that has stats or game mechanics has been added in this section. The costs of other gear in this book can be estimated by comparing the numbers from the items that have been added here to those that have not.

[Sidebar]

Weapons in Cinematic Unisystem use the average of the damage (the number in parentheses) instead of rolling the die. For example, the PSS Silenced Pistol below would do 12 points of base damage, while the Survival Knife would do 2 x Strength base damage. Explosive burst radius' uses the averages as well.

[End sidebar]

### Special (12)

Dart Pistol	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
Damage					

D4(2)                    3/10/20/60/120                    1                    2/1    \$200    U  
 Tranquilizer: Narcotic, Strength 3. Causes unconsciousness if the Simple Constitution test is failed (see the Poisons section in any Unisystem Main Book). Each dose raises the effective Strength of the tranquilizer by 1. Thus a second dose requires another Simple Constitution test, but against a narcotic Strength of 4. The victim will remain unconscious for 4 hours, minus 1 hour for every two Constitution points the victim has.

Tracers and Poisons can also be injected with the dart. See p.[??] for information on Tracer darts. See the Poisons section in any Unisystem Main Book for information on poisons.

Dart Rifle  
 Damage                    Range                    Cap                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D6(3)                    10/50/150/600/1000                    1                    8/4                    \$300                    U

Throwing Dart  
 Damage                    Range                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 (D4-2) x Strength                    3/5/8/10/13                    .25/.125                    \$15                    C

Stun Grenade  
 Damage                    Range                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D8 x 2(8)                    3/7/10/13/20                    1/1                    n/a                    R

When anyone enters the radius of the field (2 yds/m) they take the listed damage and must make a Difficult Constitution Test or be paralyzed for 6 turns minus 1 for each point of Constitution the victim possesses. The grenade continues to energize the field for 30 seconds, or until destroyed (10 DC, 5 AV). The grenade is a small target to hit and as such has a penalty of -4 to hit with ranged weaponry and -2 with hand weapon attacks. If fired from a launcher, the range becomes 30/50/100/200/350.

Handguns (12)

SPP-1 Underwater Pistol (4.5 mm SPS)  
 Damage                    Range                    Cap                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D4 x 4(8)                    Special                    15                    2/1                    \$1,300                    U

Ranges for the weapon are as follows:

Depth                    Range  
 Surface                    2/5/10/15/20  
 5 yd/m                    2/4/8/11/15  
 10 yd/m                    2/4/6/8/10  
 40 yd/m                    1/2/4/6/8

PSS Silenced Pistol (9 mm)  
 Damage                    Range                    Cap                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D6 x 4(12)                    3/10/20/60/120                    6                    1/1                    \$1,200                    R

Cast Member must roll Perception + Notice at -3 to notice this weapon being fired, due to its flash suppression and its "silent" round. See p.[??] for more information on this weapon.

Zip Gun (.22 cal.)  
 Damage                    Range                    Cap                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D4 x 2(4)                    3/10/20/40/60                    1                    1/1                    \$5                    U

The range is usually much shorter on these homemade weapons than a normal handgun and they don't always fire. Regardless of the final attack roll, a 1-3 on the die is an automatic misfire. A Mechanic + Intelligence roll or Craft (Gunsmith) + Dexterity roll is needed to make a zip gun.

Rifles (12)

APS Underwater Assault Rifle (5.66 mm SPS)  
 Damage                    Range                    Cap                    EV                    Cost                    Avail  
 D6 x 4(12)                    Special                    26                    6/3                    \$3,000                    U

Ranges for the weapon are as follows:

Depth	Range
Surface	4/15/30/60/100
5yd/m	4/10/15/20/30
20yd/m	4/8/10/15/20
40yd/m	2/4/6/8/10

Steyr IWS2000 (15.2 mm AMR)

Damage	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
D10 x 6(30)	15/75/225/900/1000	5	40/20	\$14,000	R

OICW (Objective Individual Combat Weapon 5.56 mm)

Damage	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
D8 x 4(16)	10/50/150/600/1000	30	16/8	\$10,000	R

The OICW has a +1 bonus to attack rolls due to its targeting system. See p.[??] for further information on the OICW rifle.

VAL AS 6P30 Silent Assault Rifle (9 mm)

Damage	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
D6 x 4(12)	10/50/150/600/1000	20	6/3	\$3,000	R

Cast Member must roll Perception + Notice at -3 to notice this weapon being fired, due to its flash suppression and its “silent” round. See p.[??] for more information on this weapon.

Machineguns (12)

M240 medium machinegun (7.62 mm)

Damage	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
D8 x 5(20)	10/150/300/1000/4000	*	26/13	\$5,000	R

OSCW (25 mm heavy machinegun)

Damage	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
D10 x 5(25)	10/150/500/2000/4000	75	72/36	\$25,000	R

Laser Rangefinder and Sight: +1 bonus to the attack roll when using the sight.

Explosives (12)

Explosive Areas of Effect Table (12)

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Maximum Range
60 mm HE Shell	3	8	15
40 mm White Phosphorous	1	6	10
BGM-71A TOW missile	1	5	10
BGM-71C ITOW missile	1	5	10
BGM-71D TOW 2 missile	1	5	10
M2 SLAM	1	4	6
Stinger Missile	1	2	5

Damage (12)

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Maximum Range
60 mm HE Shell	D8 x 10(40)	D8 x 8(32)	D8 x 4(16)
40 mm White Phosphorous	D6 x 8(24)	D6 x 6(16)	D6 x 2(6)
BGM-71A TOW missile	D10 x 30(150)*	D6 x 10(30)	D4 x 10(20)
BGM-71C ITOW missile	D10 x 30(150)*	D6 x 10(30)	D4 x 10(20)
BGM-71D TOW 2 missile	D10 x 30(150)*	D6 x 10(30)	D4 x 10(20)
M2 SLAM	D8 x 10(40)@	D8 x 8(32)	D8 x 4(16)
Stinger Missile	D10 x 10(50)@	D10 x 2(10)	D6 x 2(6)

## Explosive Weapon Table (12)

Weapon	Range	Cap	EV	Cost	Avail
Thrown Grenade	3/7/10/13/20	1	1/1	\$100	R
Grenade Launcher	30/50/100/200/350	1	4/1	\$600	R
60 mm HE Mortar Shell	100 to 3500	1	40/20	\$5000	R
BGM-71A TOW	65*/4000	1	56/28&	**	R
BGM-71C ITOW	65*/4000	1	56/28&	**	R
BGM-71D TOW 2	65*/4000	1	56/28&	**	R
Stinger Missile	100*/500/1000/2000/2500	1	25/12	**	R

\* Guided missiles have a minimum range, instead of Point Blank. This is the minimum distance the missile must travel before its guidance system works.

\*\* These weapons are not normally available for purchase on the open market. Black marketers charge whatever they can get.

& This is the weight of the missile only. The launcher for the missile weighs a minimum of 200 lbs (100 kg) and it usually mounted on a large tripod or a vehicle.

### 20 mm Tear Gas grenade

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
See Text	See Explosive Weapon Table	1/1	\$250	R

Burst radius for this weapon spreads out per turn. The cloud disperses after ten turns, but a moderate wind can disperse it in 4 turns and a strong wind can disperse it in 1 turn.

Turn 1: 1 yd/m rad.

Turn 2: 2 yd/m rad.

Turn 3: 4 yd/m rad.

A victim caught in the gas must make a Simple Constitution Test against the Simple Strength Test of 5 for the Tear Gas or be incapacitated with nausea. The effect lasts for as long as the victim is in the cloud and for 6 turns, minus 1 turn for each point of Constitution the victim possesses, after leaving the cloud. Those who succeed must still continue to make tests until they are clear of the cloud. A gas mask will protect against Tear Gas and a wet cloth held over the eyes, nose and mouth will give a +2 bonus to the Constitution Test. Cost is for a box of 6.

### 20 mm Shotshell

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
D8 x 4(16)	10/30/50/100/200	.5/.25	\$80	R

Reduces the range penalties by 1 (see the Ranged Combat Modifiers Table in any Unisystem Main Book). Thus, at medium range there is no penalty and at long range the penalty is only -2. However, starting at medium range, the die roll for damage is dropped by 1 per range increment, to a minimum damage roll of 1. Thus, at medium range the die modifier is -1 and at long range, the die modifier is -2. Cost is for a box of 6.

### 25 mm HE

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
D8 x 6(24)	10/100/300/1000/3000	.25/.125	\$2,000	R

This is actually a round that is used in the OCSW (see p.[??]). It is an airburst capable round and as such, has a burst radius. The Burst radius for this round is 1 yd/m. Cost is for a box of 75 rounds.

### 40 mm Shotshell

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
D8 x 6(24)	10/30/50/100/200	1/1	\$100	R

Same as the 20 mm Shotshell. Cost is for a box of 6.

### 40 mm Smoke grenade

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
See Text	See Explosive Weapon Table	1/1	\$120	R

Burst radius for this weapon spreads out per turn. The cloud disperses after ten turns, but a moderate wind can disperse it in 4 turns and a strong wind can disperse it in 1 turn. Cost is for a box of 6.

Turn 1: 1 yd/m rad.  
Turn 2: 3 yd/m rad.  
Turn 3: 5 yd/m rad.

#### 40 mm Tear Gas grenade

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
See Text	See Explosive Weapon Table	1/1	\$300	R

Burst radius for this weapon spreads out per turn. The cloud disperses after ten turns, but a moderate wind can disperse it in 4 turns and a strong wind can disperse it in 1 turn.

Turn 1: 2 yd/m rad.  
Turn 2: 3 yd/m rad.  
Turn 3: 5 yd/m rad.

A victim caught in the gas must make a Simple Constitution Test against the Simple Strength Test of 5 for the Tear Gas or be incapacitated with nausea. The effect lasts for as long as the victim is in the cloud and for 6 turns, minus 1 turn for each point of Constitution the victim possesses, after leaving the cloud. Those who succeed must still continue to make tests until they are clear of the cloud. A gas mask will protect against Tear Gas and a wet cloth held over the eyes, nose and mouth will give a +2 bonus to the Constitution Test. Cost is for a box of 6.

#### 40 mm White Phosphorous grenade

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
D6 x 8(24)@	See Explosive Weapon Table	1/1	\$500	R

In addition to the listed damage, the victim suffers D4(2) points of fire damage per turn until the flame is put out. The grenade also creates a cloud of smoke. Treat the smoke as a smoke grenade, but the radius for the smoke is only in 1 yd/m. Cost if for a box of 6.

#### 60 mm Smoke shell

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
N/A	See Explosive Weapon Table	8/4	\$120	R

Burst radius for this weapon spreads out per turn. The cloud disperses after ten turns, but a moderate wind can disperse it in 4 turns and a strong wind can disperse it in 1 turn. Cost is for 1 shell.

Turn 1: 2 yd/m rad.  
Turn 2: 4 yd/m rad.  
Turn 3: 7 yd/m rad.

#### Missiles and other Ordinance (12)

BGM-71A TOW missile, BGM-71C ITOW missile, and BGM-71D TOW 2 missile

Due to a better targeting system than its predecessors, the 71D gets a +1 bonus on the attack roll.

#### M2 SLAM

Damage	Range	EV	Cost	Avail
D12 x 6(36)	-	2/1	\$600	R

When the mine is able to strike a target's most vulnerable area (undercarriage, etc.) it divides the AV by 3 before the damage is applied. All other targets caught in the burst radius use their full AV.

#### Stinger Missile

The missile is a "fire and forget" missile and grants a +2 to the attack roll due to its targeting system.

#### Ammunition (12)

Most of the ammunition in this book is pretty self-explanatory and as such has not been duplicated here. Only the ammunition that has specific differences to the ammunition in the Unisystem books has been treated.

#### Shotgun APDS (Armor Piercing Discarding Sabot)

This is an Armor Piercing slug for a 12-gauge shotgun. See the Special Weapon Types and Damages



section in any Unisystem Book for rules on Armor Piercing rounds.

#### Shotgun, Dragon's Breath

See p.[??] for a full description of this round.

Damage	Range	Cost
D6 x 4(12)	4/15/30/60/100	3/\$20

The damage is mostly fire damage. Also, anyone hit with the initial blast is "engulfed" in flames and takes D6 damage each turn after the first until the flames are extinguished.

#### Shotgun, Flare

The flare burns for a few seconds and illuminates an area 5 yds/m to either side of its path. Being shot with the flare does D6 x 2(6), but there is a -1 to the attack roll. Cost is \$30 for a box of 10.

#### Shotgun, FSF (Fin Stabilized Flechette)

In Unisystem this round has the same damage and range as a slug. The round is considered to be a light armor piercing round and drops the AV of armor by one-quarter. Cost is \$65 for a box of 10.

#### Ammunition Traits (12)

Some of the ammunition types are not treated here as they are mentioned already in the Unisystem rules. Only those types that have abilities beyond those in the Unisystem books are treated here. HAP rounds use the standard Unisystem Armor Piercing round.

#### AM (Anti-Material) Rounds

Use the Armor Piercing round from any Unisystem Main Book.

#### LAP (Light Armor Piercing) Rounds

Drop the AV or BV of a target by one-quarter.

#### Riot Rounds

These do Endurance damage. One LP of real damage is done for every 4 points of Endurance Damage. See p.[??] for a description of these rounds.

[Sidebar]

The Endurance score is not used in the Cinematic Unisystem, so the Knockout Combat Maneuver is used instead. The attacker makes the attack roll as normal. Any weapon that does Endurance damage here will do half damage in Cinematic Unisystem, but the victim must make a Constitution (doubled) roll with a penalty equal to the success levels of the original attack roll. Failure indicates that the attack has rendered the victim unconscious.

[End sidebar]

#### Shotshell

Reduces the range penalties by 1 (see the Ranged Combat Modifiers Table in any Unisystem Main Book). Thus, at medium range there is no penalty and at long range the penalty is only -2. However, starting at medium range, the die roll for damage is dropped by 1 per range increment, to a minimum damage roll of 1. Thus, at medium range the die modifier is -1 and at long range, the die modifier is -2.

#### Subsonic

Cast Members must roll Perception + Notice at -3 to hear the weapon report. However, subsonic rounds do less damage than normal bullets do (-1 on the damage multiplier).

#### Tracer

See p.[??] for a full description of these rounds. The attacker gains a +2 to the attack roll when using Tracer rounds staggered with normal rounds. However, it is much easier to spot the attacker who is using the tracer rounds and those who are looking for the attacker make a Perception + Notice roll at +5.

### Wadcutter

See p.[??] for a full description of these rounds. These rounds grant a +1 cumulative attack bonus in regards to range penalties for ranges beyond short range. Thus, there is no penalty at Medium range, -1 at long, and -3 at extreme range. However, due to the fact that the rounds are lighter than a normal round they have a -1 penalty on the damage die, to a minimum die roll of 1. For example, a weapon that does D6 x 4 would do (D6 -1) x 4. Also, the ranges for a weapon using this round drops by the following numbers: 1/3/5/10/20.

### Weapon Accessories (12)

Only those items that have bonuses or statistics that need to be changed into a Unisystem format have been added here.

### Bipod/Tripod

Using a Bipod or Tripod in Unisystem allows the attacker to fire a large or cumbersome weapon with no additional penalties beyond those gained for distance or other factors. Using a large or cumbersome weapon without a Bipod or Tripod will result in a -2 penalty to the attack roll on top of any normal modifiers. Using a Bipod or Tripod on a lighter weapon will grant the attacker a +1 bonus to the attack roll. Cost is \$50 for a bipod and \$100 for a tripod.

### Dual Suppressor

Minus 3 penalty to Notice + Perception tests to notice the firearm going off. Cost is \$300 for a handgun and \$600 for a rifle.

### Extended Magazines

The numbers on the table below are added to the weapon's normal capacity, unless there is no +.

Extended: More difficult to conceal. Works as stated on p.[??]

Hi-Capacity: Works as stated on p.[??] for the most part, except, Sleight of Hand tests to conceal the weapon is -3 for drums of less than 100 and -4 for drums of more than 100.

Type	Extended	Cost	Hi-Cap	Cost	Notes
<b>Handguns</b>					
9mm	+5-10	\$30	+20	\$40	
machine	+5-10	\$30	+30	\$40	
10 mm	+5-10	\$40	-	-	
.32 cal.	+10	\$30	-	-	
.45 cal.	+5	\$30	-	-	
Mk23 SOCOM	+15	\$40	-	-	
machine	+20	\$40	-	-	
.50 cal.	+5	\$40	-	-	
<b>Submachine Guns</b>					
9 mm	+15-20	\$30	+100	\$55	Colt Model 635 cannot have hi-cap
Uzi	+15-20	\$30	+200	\$55	
<b>Shotgun</b>					
12 Gauge	+4	\$30	-	-	not on "double-barrel" models
<b>Assault Rifles</b>					
5.56 mm	+20	\$30	+60	\$40	
heavy drum	-	-	+250	\$55	
Shrike	+50	\$30	90	\$40	the Shrike is belt fed. The drum has 90 rounds max
7.62 mm	+50	\$30	+500	\$70	
<b>Sniper Rifles</b>					
7.62 mm	+5-10	\$30	-	-	
15.2 mm	+4	\$30	-	-	
<b>Machine Guns</b>					
25 mm (OCSW)	+75	\$55	-	-	

### Flash Suppressor

Imposes a -2 penalty to Notice + Perception tests to notice the firearm going off by sight. Cost is \$150 for handguns and \$250 for rifles.

#### Laser Targeting Sight

Grants a +1 bonus to attack rolls. Cost is \$350.

#### Ready Magazine

Can be reloaded without incurring a multiple action penalty. However, only one can be loaded in this manner per turn. Cost is \$70.

#### Reflex Sight

Grants a +1 to attack rolls within Medium range or closer. Cost is \$150 for handguns and \$200 for rifles.

#### Tactical Holster

Imposes a -3 to any grapple tests to grab the weapon from its holster. Cost is \$50.

#### Close Combat Weapons (12)

##### Garrote

Damage	EV	Cost	Avail
2 x Strength (End.)	-	-	U

If the target is surprised he does not get a dodge or parry roll (Situational Awareness negates this). The attacker must roll a Hand Weapon (Garrote) + Dexterity roll to get the garrote secured around the victim's throat (see the Targeting Body Parts section in any Unisystem Main Book for modifiers to attacking the throat and modifiers to the damage for blunt weapons against the throat). The weapon does Endurance damage; however, the garrote does 1 LP for every 4 Endurance damage done to the victim. When the victim's Endurance reaches 0 he is in danger of going into unconsciousness (see the Effects of Endurance Loss in any Unisystem Main Book). He also begins losing LPs instead of Endurance as long as the garrote is still being applied. The victim must succeed in an opposed Difficult Strength Test to break free with a -2 penalty if the attacker is behind him.

##### Survival Knife

Treated as a Large Knife in Unisystem, this item grants the wielder a +1 bonus for Survival tests, due to its meager supplies within its hilt. Cost is \$75.

#### Armor (12)

See the D20 Modern Book (Chapter 4: Equipment) or the PH (Chapter 7: Equipment) for the many of the following armor equivalents.

D20	Unisystem Equivalent
Padded Armor	Padded/Quilted Cloth Armor
Leather Jacket	Leather Jacket
Leather Armor	Leather Armor
Undercover Vest, Jump/Tactical Helmet	Class I
Chainmail	Chain Mail
Concealable Vest, PASGT helmet	Class IIa
Light Duty Vest, PASGT vest	Class II
Tactical Vest, Ranger Body Armor	Class IIIa
Half-Plate	Plate and Mail
Full-Plate	Plate Armor
Special Response Vest, Ranger Upgrade	Class III
Forced Entry Unit	Class IV
Shields	
Large Shield	Riot Shield

## Clothing (12)

### E-NBC (Enhanced Nuclear Biological Chemical) Suit

Treat as the Radiation Suit from the Scientific Gear section in any Unisystem Main Book.

### Fade Suit

See p.[??] for more information on this item. A Unisystem character can run 10 to 60 yds/m in one turn (5 seconds), depending on their Speed Attribute (see the Secondary Attributes section in any Unisystem Main Book for more information on Speed).

Movement Rate	Stealth Bonus
Stationary	+10
Slow (1/4 total yds/m per turn)	+8
Moderate (1/2 total yds/m per turn)	+5
Fast (total yds/m per turn)	+2

The suit's chameleon ability is highly susceptible to electricity and has a 5% chance of failure for each point of electrical damage done to the wearer. The suit will cease to function for D4 + 4 turns. Strong electromagnetic fields will cause the chameleon effect to shimmer or flicker, if it is within 10ft., causing the Stealth bonus to drop by 2 for a light field, 4 for a moderate field and 6 for a strong field, to a minimum bonus of +0.

### Force XXI Land Warrior II system

See p.[??] for more information on this system. The goggles have a -2 penalty for all Notice checks requiring vision, due to restricted peripheral vision. +1 attack bonus due to Laser Sight. -1 Dodge penalty due to weight and distribution of the backpack and gear.

### STEPO (Self Contained Toxic Environment Protection Outfit)

Use the Biohazard Suit from the Scientific Gear section in any Unisystem Main Book.

## Communications Gear (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

### AN/PRC-137 HF Radio

Imposes a -4 penalty against any attempts to decrypt or jam the signal. Cost is \$2,000.

### AN/PSC-5 Shadowfire Radio

Imposes a -6 penalty against any attempts to decrypt or jam the signal. Cost is \$3,000.

### “Shadow” Phone

Imposes a -4 penalty against any attempts to decrypt, trace, or jam the signal. Cost is \$500.

## Computers & Consumer Electronics (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

### Break Alarm

Perception + Notice roll at -2 to notice the small wire. Cost is \$50.

## Surveillance Gear (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

### Acoustic Ground Sensor

Anyone attempting to move through its area without being noticed must roll a Dexterity + Stealth roll at -5.

People in vehicles cannot make Stealth rolls. Cost is \$500.

#### AN/PAQ-3 MULE (Modular Universal Laser Equipment)

A Simple Dexterity Test must be rolled to “paint” the target, if the target is stationary. The operator need not make another check unless they are ducking for cover or otherwise dodging enemy fire. In this case, roll a Difficult Dexterity Test to keep the target “painted”. If the target is moving, the operator must make a Difficult Dexterity Test each turn to keep the target “painted”. Cost is \$200,000.

#### AN/PPS-15 Portable Radar

The AN/PPS-15 has a maximum detection range of 1800-yd/m against personnel and 3300-yd/m against vehicles. It detects by making a Simple Perception test with a Perception of 6. The roll can be contested by a Dexterity + Stealth roll for those ducking behind and weaving through cover. Certain circumstances can make success more difficult or simpler for the device. Cost is \$5,000.

Circumstances	Modifier
Light cover	-3
Medium cover	-5
Heavy cover	-8
Total cover	-10
Per 300-yd/m away	-1
Moving faster than 5-yd/m (2 MPH) per turn	+5

#### Laser Microphone

When pointed at an acoustic-friendly surface, such as a windowpane, allows the user to make an Electronic Surveillance + Intelligence roll to listen in on any sounds or conversations that might be vibrating through the material. Cost is \$2,500.

Range: 150 yd/m

#### Laser Sensor, Portable

A successful Electronics + Intelligence roll and a Demolitions + Intelligence roll is needed to set up a mine or similar device as a booby trap using the portable laser sensor. Cost is \$500 per set.

#### Night Vision Goggles

Use the night vision goggles from any Unisystem Main Book for these. Anyone attempting to drive while wearing night vision goggles suffer a -2 penalty to the task, due to a severe loss of depth perception.

#### Parabolic Microphone

The parabolic microphone can pick up and amplify sounds at up to 300 yds/m away. A successful Intelligence + Electronic Surveillance roll must be made to successfully pick up coherent sounds. The microphone is also able to pick up sounds through windows and sometimes walls, but these sounds tend to be muffled, especially at distance (-1 penalty to the roll per 50 ft (approx. 16 yds/m) away). The GM can assign further penalties to the roll depending on obstacles and obscuring noise. Cost is \$500.

#### Pheromone Sensor

The sensor detects targets within a 165-yd/m radius with a Simple Perception test. The Perception of the sensor is 5 for purposes of detection. The target does not contest the roll; however, certain circumstances can make success more difficult or simpler for the device. Cost is \$5,000.

Circumstances	Modifier
Target sweating	+5
Wearing antiperspirant	-2
Wearing Perfume	+3
Wearing sterile environmental clothing	-10
Sensor is downwind	+2
Sensor is upwind	-2
Sensor is upwind, high wind conditions	-8
Masked with animal scent	-5

#### Thermal Imaging Goggles

Use the Infrared Goggles from any Unisystem Main Book for these. Below are suggestions for modifiers against Notice or Perception rolls due to heat variances.

Condition	Example	Notice
Extreme temp. variance	warmth against a snow field	+4
Much temp. variance	warmth against a grass field on a cool evening	+2
Moderate temp. variance	warmth against a structure's interior wall	+1
Negligible temp. variance	warmth against a sandy desert at noon	-
Poor weather	Light rain or mild snow	-2
Extreme weather	A deluge or snowstorm	-4
Per interceding thin obstacle	wall made from plywood or drywall	-2
Per interceding thick obstacle	16-wheeler truck or reinforced wall	-4

### Survival Gear (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

### Water Distiller

In Unisystem, poisons and contaminants have a Strength rating to determine how powerful the toxin is (see the Poisons section in any Unisystem Main Book). When contaminated liquid is placed in the distiller the contaminant must make a Difficult Strength Test at -5. Success means that the contaminant is still present, but only has a strength of 1 per Success level of the Strength Test. If failed, the contaminant is no longer present. Cost is \$600.

### Water Purification Tablets

In Unisystem, poisons and contaminants have a Strength rating to determine how powerful the toxin is (see the Poisons section in any Unisystem Main Book). When a pill is placed into contaminated liquid the contaminant must make a Difficult Strength Test at -3. Success means that the contaminant is still present, but only has a strength of 1 per Success level of the Strength Test. If failed, the contaminant is no longer present. Cost is \$70 per 50 tablets.

### Using Computers (14)

There are three important skills in Unisystem for computer operation. These are Computers, Computer Hacking, and Computer Programming. These skills can be found in the Skills section of any Classic Unisystem Main Book. The Computers skill is the basic knowledge and understanding of the use of a computer and any of its peripheral parts. Computer Hacking is using a computer to break into a computer's programming to gain access to its files. Computer Programming is the creation of computer programs through the use of various code types, called languages.

Most routine computer operations do not need a roll to succeed. However, the more complex the operation, or the more unfamiliar the system is, the more likely the cast member may need to make a roll to succeed.

[Sidebar]

Cinematic Unisystem uses fewer skills and all computer-based skills are lumped into one skill called Computers. Anytime a Computer Programming or Computer Hacking roll is required, just use the Computers skill.

[End sidebar]

### Locating Files (12)

Unless a file is protected or hidden in some way, the person looking for the file should only need to roll an Intelligence + Computers task roll. If the file is hidden or protected, or is on another system entirely, they will need to use an Intelligence + Computer Hacking task roll to break through the security or to access the remote system. Locating files in larger systems takes more time and is more difficult to do.

Size	Diff.	Time
Personal Computer	-	1 turn
Small Office Network	-1	2 turns
Large Office Network	-2	1 minute
Massive Corporate Network	-3	10 minutes

### Computer Hacking and Defense (12)

There are generally two methods for accessing a site. The first is by physically accessing a computer that is connected to the site. The second is by accessing it remotely through the Internet. If the site is not connected to the Internet, then the only way to access the site is by using a computer that is connected directly to it. If the site is accessed through the Internet, the hacker must first find it, requiring an Intelligence + Research/Investigation roll or Intelligence + Computers roll to locate the site. Once the site is located, the hacker must hack into it.

Hacking into a system requires an Intelligence + Computer Hacking task roll with all appropriate bonuses or penalties applied to the roll. When attempting to hack a monitored system where the administrator is actively looking for hackers, the roll is a contested roll between the hacker's Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll and administrator's Intelligence + Computers roll with all appropriate bonuses and penalties added. If the hacker wins, he has escaped the notice of the administrator. If the hacker fails, the administrator may attempt to lock the hacker out or even try to get a location or name for where the hack is coming from. However, this requires another contested Intelligence + Computer's roll against the hackers Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll. Hopefully, the hacker has covered his tracks and made the hack more difficult to trace.

If the hacker is attempting to hack through an automated security system he simply rolls an Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll with all appropriate bonuses or penalties added and attempts to get more successes than the Strength of the security system. In other words, if a security system has a Strength of 3, the hacker must get a minimum result of 15, which is 4 success levels (see the Outcome Table in any Unisystem Main Book), to beat the security system. If the hacker gets as many successes as the security system he still gets through, but the security system has found the hack and alerted any administrators that may be watching the system. If the hacker fails to get enough successes to hack through, the security system boots them and does whatever it is programmed to do in that instance (i.e., contact administrators, trace the hack, lock out the hacker, etc).

An administrator that is aware of a hacker and has successfully traced the hacker may attempt a counter-hack if they have the Computer Hacking skill. In this instance, the original hacker now becomes the administrator and must defend his system as above.

### I'm In (12)

Once the hacker has successfully hacked a system he may attempt to locate specific files or even change or delete files. Locating files is done with an Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll with any bonuses or penalties applied. Some files may be hidden or have their own security and will have their own difficulties depending on the program used. See below for more information on specific programs.

If the hacker wishes to modify, delete, or download a file, he must make an Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll against the Strength of the security, if any. If he wishes to modify an entire program he must make an Intelligence + Computer Programming roll. Any failure will alert any Security system that may be in place or the administrator if she is actively searching the system. A hacker may also attempt to access any remote devices that may be operated by the computer system by rolling an Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll. This includes things like door locks, security cameras, alarms, communications, etc that are tied into a computer system.

Programming can be damaged by the hacker, which will impose a -4 penalty on any actions performed with the damaged computer. Repairing the damage to a computer's programming requires a minimum of one hour and an Intelligence + Computer Programming roll greater than the hacker's Intelligence + Computer

Programming roll that was used to damage it. Failure means the programmer must take another hour and make another roll until the program is repaired. At the Director's option the programmer can accumulate successes each roll, as long as he scores over a 9.

#### Covering your Tracks (12)

A clever hacker can cover their activities and make their actions more difficult to track. Certain programs can create dummy sites and relay points that can lead an administrator around in circles. The hacker can also make an administrator's job more difficult by changing their identifying information. The hacker can roll an Intelligence + Computer Programming roll to alter their identifying information, which will impose a -1 penalty on the administrator's roll for each Success achieved.

A hacker can also attempt to crash the system, which will greatly hamper any tracking efforts. This will take time however, about a minute, but does lock up the system so that an administrator cannot use it until they re-boot. Crashing the system is generally not too difficult and is not a contested roll, but imposes a -4 penalty on the hacker's roll.

#### Programming (14)

When a computer programmer creates a program the resulting software has a Strength rating based on the total success levels the programmer achieved. The programmer must roll an Intelligence + Computer Programming roll to create a program.

In other words, a programmer who makes a computer virus gets a 14 on a Computer Programming roll. In Unisystem this would be 3 success levels (see the Outcome Table in any Unisystem Main Book). The computer virus that is created would have a Strength of 3. This Strength is compared against the Strength of any security a computer or program may have. If the virus and security is completely automated, the higher Strength wins. If the Strength is the same, a D10 is rolled for both and the higher roll succeeds.

The Strength rating of the program is it's ability to do its task effectively, or the bonus it grants the user. The Strength rating is much like the Strength of a human in what it can do.

Level 1: This program is really sub-par. It is the bargain shelf style program and is not very good for much.

Level 2: This is an average program, one that could be bought in a store for home use. Though not a powerhouse, it could protect from certain basic viruses or offer other "standard" functions. A virus of this level is generally a nuisance bug.

Level 3: This program is above average, but still not the top shelf stuff. It is one of the better levels of security to have for home use and is commonly seen, but many hackers could still break through it relatively easy. A virus of this level could be a problem for some home computers.

Level 4: This program is pretty high end. It is the top shelf stuff for home use and many companies also use programs of this caliber. A virus of this level is usually a difficult one to stop.

Level 5: Many large organizations will have this program type running. Viruses of this type are real corporation stoppers.

Level 6+: This is the type of program found in high security sites like military or high-end government locations or secret organizations. Viruses of this caliber are generally devastating to most systems and are usually employed by masterminds or powerful organizations.

The Director may impose penalties to the programmer's roll depending on what the programmer wants the software to do. The programmer must specify the level of Strength the program is to have before rolling, which sets the difficulty. If the programmer does not get at least as many successes as the specified Strength of the program then the program does not work properly. The Director may decide that the program does not work at all, or add some glitches or problems to the program, depending on how evil the



Director wishes to be. As an aside, the Director may allow a programmer to accumulate success levels for very difficult programs, with an addition of two hours per roll.

The chart below gives approximate times for each Strength level. More than one programmer working on the same program can cut the time down by one hour for each additional programmer; however, the time can never go below 30 minutes. Each programmer working on a program adds +1 to the project administrator's programming roll if they score over a 9 on their own programming roll.

Strength	Base Time
Level 1	1 Day
Level 2	3 Days
Level 3	5 Days
Level 4	7 Days
Level 5	9 Days
Level 6	11 Days
+1	+2 Days

#### Software (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??]. The costs of the programs below are on average. The programs can be cheaper or more expensive, depending upon who is selling them.

#### Anti-Virus (Automated)

Automated anti-virus software is only as good as its programming. Though many anti-virus programs on the market allow for upgrades, not every virus is covered and occasionally one gets through. Anti-Virus software has a Strength rating based on the Success levels of the programmer that created it. The GM can assign Strengths to any commercial anti-virus software they wish to have in their game.

If a virus is blocked by the software, the virus is deleted and that virus cannot be tried on the same computer again until it is modified or upgraded. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Encryption (Automated)

Anyone attempting to break the encryption must roll enough successes to beat the Strength of the encryption. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Infiltrator, Hunter (Automated & Assist)

The program has a Strength rating equal to the Success levels of the programmer that created it. It can either work on its own to seek out files in another system or be used to assist the hacker. If it runs on its own it uses its Strength rating against any security systems that may be in place. If it is used to assist the hacker its Strength rating is the bonus that is added to the hacker's roll.

Hunter Programs are designed to escape notice; thus an operator actively searching for foreign software must roll as many successes as the Strength of the program and has a -2 penalty to do so. However, if the operator is using a security system that assists in the search she gets a bonus equal to the strength of any security program she is using at the time. An automated program actively searching for foreign software must have a Strength greater than the Strength of the Hunter program. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Infiltrator, Relay (Automated)

Relay Infiltrator Programs are designed to escape notice; thus an operator actively searching for foreign software must roll as many successes as the Strength of the program and has a -2 penalty to do so. However, if the operator is using a security system that assists in the search she gets a bonus equal to the strength of any security program she is using at the time. An automated program actively searching for foreign software must have a Strength greater than the Strength of the Relay program.

If the infiltrated system's operator wishes, she can attempt to track where the information is being relayed by making an Intelligence + Computer Hacking roll with a -1 penalty for each relay the hacker has set up.

She must get more successes than the Strength of the Relay program. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Security (Automated)

Security software is only as good as its programming. Anyone attempting to hack through a security program or sneak something through it must roll more success levels than the Strength of the program. Failure means that the hack or program has been detected and the Security program does what it is supposed to do in that instance. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Spyware Program (Automated)

Spyware can be hacked into a system or picked up by accident. If it is hacked into a system the hacker must first get enough successes to defeat any security the system may have. If successful, the hacker can leave the program. Anyone actively searching for foreign software must roll a Perception + Computers roll at -5. Anyone with both Computer Programming and Computers can first attempt a Computer Programming roll with the usual base 9 to succeed. Each success level in the roll is a bonus on the Computers skill roll. If the searcher is using a program to assist in the search, the Strength of the program is also added to the roll. If the searcher gets a 9 or greater after all bonuses and penalties, they find the program. Cost is \$40 per Strength rating.

#### Stealth (Automated)

A Stealth program imposes a penalty of -1 against any searches for the program this code is attached to, for each Success level made on the Computer Programming roll to create it. Cost is \$40 per Strength rating.

#### Task (Automated)

Grants a +1 bonus to any skill the Task program is supposed to help in, for each Success level on the Computer Programming roll used to create it. Thus, a program that helps with Electronics rolls would add a +1 bonus for each Success level the programmer achieved, to someone who is using the program in concert with their Electronics skill roll. Some Task programs can actually walk a person through certain procedures and could even be used as a skill if the user does not have one. Cost is \$40 per Strength rating.

#### Virus, Penetration (Automated & Assist)

A Penetration Virus adds its Strength as a bonus to any rolls to defeat the security of the system or file it has infected. An operator or Security program must be actively searching for foreign software to notice it. However, it is fairly easy to locate and the operator rolls with a +2 bonus. A Security system actively searching for foreign software will attempt to do so with a +1 to its Strength rating. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

#### Virus, Predator (Automated)

The Predator Virus works like the Infiltrator program, but once it finds the file, it performs whatever function it was specified to do, then destroys or damages the file. It must defeat any security that may be on the file or system first, but if successful, can destroy the file or program it was intended for. This could damage a system as mentioned in the "I'm In" section on p.[?]. It is ultimately up to the Director as to whether a file destroyed in this manner can be recovered. As an aside, depending upon the file type, the Director may allow the operator to search for copies of a deleted file by rolling an Intelligence + Computers roll against the Strength of the Predator Virus. Failure means that the file is gone permanently. Cost is \$30 per Strength rating.

An operator or Security program must be actively searching for foreign software to notice it. However, it is fairly easy to locate and the operator rolls with a +2 bonus. A Security system actively searching for foreign software will attempt to do so with a +1 to its Strength rating.

#### Vehicles (14)

See p.[?] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[?].

#### Aircraft, Military (12)

#### Parachute, Circular

EV: 24/12                      DC: 10  
Speed: see below              AV: 1  
Max Load: 500/250            Cost: \$600  
Avail: U

The speed at which the parachute descends is based on the load it is slowing. Five hundred pounds (250-kg) will fall at a rate of 110-ft (36 yd/m) per turn, which is roughly 22-ft (7 yd/m) per second. The table below shows the descent rate in feet and yards or meters per turn. Divide by 5 for the rate per second.

Load	ft per turn	yd/m per turn
500 lbs	110 ft	36 yd/m
400 lbs	95 ft	31 yd/m
300 lbs	80 ft	26 yd/m
200 lbs	65 ft	21 yd/m
100 lbs	50 ft	16 yd/m

#### Parachute, Steerable

EV: 24/12                      DC: 10  
Speed: see below              AV: 1  
Max Load: 450/225            Cost: \$2,000  
Avail: U

The speed at which the parachute descends is based on the load it is slowing. Four hundred-fifty pounds (225-kg) will fall at a rate of 100-ft (33 yd/m) per turn, which is roughly 20-ft (6 yd/m) per second. The table below shows the descent rate in feet and yards or meters per turn. Divide by 5 for the rate per second. This parachute can be steered by rolling a Simple Dexterity test for long, lazy turns, and a Difficult Dexterity test for short, sharp turns. Failing the roll means that the parachute failed to turn in the desired direction. If the die roll is a 1 the Rule of One is used. Any final result of 1 or lower is a critical failure and the chute becomes entangled and collapses.

Load	ft per turn	yd/m per turn
450 lbs	100 ft	33 yd/m
400 lbs	95 ft	31 yd/m
300 lbs	80 ft	26 yd/m
200 lbs	65 ft	21 yd/m
100 lbs	50 ft	16 yd/m

#### Powered Parachute

EV: 103/51.5                  DC: 25  
Speed: 40                      AV: 2  
Max Load: 950/475            Cost: \$5,000  
Avail: R

The powered parachute travels at 100 yd/m per turn (approximately 40 MPH) while carrying up to 200 lbs. Lower the maximum speed per turn by 5 yd/m per 50 lbs (25 kg) of weight over 200 lbs (100 kg) carried, to a maximum weight of 950 lbs (475 kg). Thus, a fully loaded powered parachute moves at only 25 yd/m per turn or approximately 10 MPH.

#### Military Vehicles, Ground (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

#### Chenoweth Desert Patrol Vehicle (DPV)

Weight: 2700                  DC: 75  
Speed: 70/50                  AV: 4  
Acceleration: 30              Accuracy: n/a  
Range: 200                      Cost: n/a  
Toughness: 4                  Availability: R  
Handling: 4

Armament:

MK-19 .40 mm Grenade Launcher or M2HB .50 cal.

MK-19 Range: 30/50/100/200/350, Damage: D6 x 12(36)/D6 x 10(30)/D6 x 4(12)

M2HB Range: 15/200/400/2000/6000, Damage: D10 x 6(30), Cap: 100

M-60 Machinegun

Range: 10/150/300/1000/4000, Damage: D8 x 5(20), Cap: 100

M1043 HMMWV

This is the typical military "hum-vee" detailed in the Vehicles section in any Classic Unisystem Book.

M151 Fast Attack Vehicle (FAV)

Weight: 1000 DC: 60

Speed: 70/50 AV: 4

Acceleration: 20 Accuracy: n/a

Range: 300 Cost: n/a

Toughness: 4 Availability: R

Handling: 3

M93A1 Fox NBCRS (Nuclear Biological Chemical Recon System)

Weight: 35,000 DC: 400

Speed: 65/30 AV: 75 + D10 x 2(85)

Acceleration: 20 Accuracy: n/a

Range: 320 Cost: n/a

Toughness: 4 Availability: R

Handling: 3

Armament:

M240 Machinegun

Range: 10/150/300/1000/4000, Damage: D8 x 5(20), Cap: 100 (more with linked belts)

Smoke Grenade Launcher

Range: 30/50/100/200/350

The NBCRS is 23-ft long, 9-ft wide and 8-ft high. The vehicle's interior is fully resistant to all but the most tenacious NBC agents. The Fox is equipped with twin propellers and is waterproof, allowing it to travel on the water at 10-yd/m per turn or about 5 MPH. The vehicle must move slowly to accurately assess an area, at an average speed of 12 MPH (about 25-yd/m per turn) in 1000-yd/m intervals. The NBCRS is armed with a top-mounted M240 machinegun and two smoke grenade launchers.

Drones (12)

See p.[??] for a full description of these items. Only those items that have stats are listed here. Otherwise, they still work as described on p.[??].

BQM-147A Dragon

Weight: 65 (90) DC: 20

Speed: 100/50 AV: 2

Acceleration: 30 Accuracy: n/a

Range: 75 Cost: n/a

Toughness: 3 Availability: R

Handling: 3

The BQM-147A has a wingspan of 8-ft and is 5-ft long. The payload is usually one of the following and raises the weight of the drone to 90 lbs.

Digital zoom video with night vision capabilities (as Night Vision Goggles)

Digital zoom video with thermo-imaging capabilities (as Thermo-Imaging Goggles)

Laser designator (Range: 10/150/300/1000/4000)

Electronics jammer (disrupts radio communications in a 2.5-mile radius; -5 to Electronics rolls to unjam)

## Unisystem Odyssey Archetypes (14)

### Odyssey Team Leader

<FEMALE PIC>

Str 4 Dex 3 Con 3  
Int 4 Per 3 Wil 3  
LPs 47  
EPs 35  
Spd 12  
Essence 20

#### Qualities/Drawbacks

“FEMA” Agent (5)  
Fast Reaction Time (2)  
Hard to Kill 3 (3)  
Military Rank (Lieutenant) (3)  
Situational Awareness (2)  
Honorable (-1)  
Tragic Love (-4)

#### Skills

Brawling 3  
Climbing 2  
Computers 1  
Dodge 3  
Driving (car/military) 2  
First Aid 1  
Guns (submachine gun) 4  
Guns (handgun) 3  
Hand Weapon (knife) 2  
Martial Arts 2  
Notice 3  
Stealth 3  
Tactics (Small Unit) 2  
Surveillance 2  
Survival (forest) 2  
Swimming 1  
Throwing 2

#### Gear

Family photo, gold coin depicting the Santa Maria, whatever the assignment calls for

#### Personality

I wanted to join the military for the possibility for adventure. Against urgings from family and my fiancé, I joined the military academy. I never did well in the academy. It wasn't that I couldn't handle the material, far from it. What they threw at me wasn't challenging enough. I needed a challenge; I needed adventure.

I did my best to keep up, but my mind was always on other things. My papers were...interesting, and my instructors gave me flak for my attitude. Then there was that fight with a senior. I told the board that he shouldn't have been picking on an underclassman, but they weren't going to listen this time. I'd caused too much trouble too many times.

That was when *he* showed up. He told the board that they were looking for people with talents like mine; people with my personality and zeal. Under his recommendation I was to be kept on and then when I finished I was to be placed in his group. Then he took me to where he was stationed and showed me my

destiny.

I married my fiancé while I was in the academy, who had been taking care of my daughter while I was there. Six months before graduation, they were in a car accident and killed. I took some time off and then continued my training.

I graduated with top honors and officially joined FEMA. However, unofficially I am part of something much bigger, something top secret. I am part of an Odyssey team; a group that explores worlds and dimensions through a thing called Sherman's Ring. I carry two reminders with me wherever I go now. A picture of my family to remind me of what we're doing this for and a commemorative coin of the Santa Maria. Much like Columbus, we're looking for the New World, and we dare not falter.

#### Quote

"Alright people, this is a quick sample gathering operation. I want a perimeter sweep every three hours and the scientists need to stay in camp unless you have an escort. Is that clear?"

#### Odyssey Team Scientist

<MALE PIC>

Str 3 Dex 3 Con 3  
Int 4 Per 4 Wil 3  
LPs 40  
EPs 32  
Spd 12  
Essence 20

#### Qualities/Drawbacks

"FEMA" Agent (5)  
Hyper-Lingual +3 (3)  
Hard to Kill 2 (2)  
Nerves of Steel (3)  
Photographic Memory (2)  
Honorable (-1)  
Impaired Senses (vision; wears glasses) (-1)  
Obsession (learning of other cultures) (-2)

#### Skills

Brawling 2  
Climbing 1  
Computers 3  
Dodge 2  
Driving (car/military) 1  
First Aid 1  
Guns (handgun) 2  
Guns (submachine gun) 1  
Hand Weapon (knife) 1  
Humanities (archaeology) 3  
Humanities (anthropology) 3  
Language (Latin) 3  
Notice 3  
Research/Investigation 3  
Sciences (physics) 3  
Sciences (biology) 3  
Stealth 2  
Survival (forest) 1  
Swimming 1

#### Gear

Glasses, steno-pad & pen, dictation machine, charcoal, loose paper, whatever the assignment calls for

#### Personality

My theories have never been very popular in the scientific circle. My belief is that aliens visited earth millions of years ago and may have even lived here for a time. I have been called everything from a nut to other not so nice terms. It was my research that had me out in England at an archaeological site.

We were digging around in a place my research had led me to, a place not far from another old dig site I happened upon in my reading. Professor Rudell Sherman, who was looking for evidence of Camelot, had been there in 1923. The books said that he found nothing at the site, but I had found too many discrepancies in that story to wash with me, so I started on my own quest for the truth.

I searched and eventually found buried references here and there about strange writings passed off as runic script. Eventually, my persistence paid off as I found some markings that were strange to me. They were not runic script, but something even older. However, as I began checking into these markings in more detail I became aware of new people in the area. It was not long after that I was contacted by these people.

I was taken somewhere in secret and spoken to by a man named Smith. We talked at length about my research, and then he asked me if I wanted to know more. Intrigued, I listened. What he explained to me made my head swim. Then he said he needed good scientists in the organization. Well I right sure jumped at the opportunity.

Now I travel through Sherman's Ring with a team of explorers, hoping to find clues to who built the ring or to find the means to the salvation of the human race. It is a scientists dream come true.

#### Quote

"Wait, wait, wait! This is fascinating stuff! This has been here for millions of years! I have to find out why the race that lived here died out!"

#### Dam Con Team Leader

<MALE PIC>

Str 3 Dex 3 Con 4

Int 3 Per 4 Wil 3

LPs 38

EPs 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

#### Qualities/Drawbacks

"FEMA" Agent (5)

Conditioning (humorless and emotionally detached) (4)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill 3 (3)

Military Rank (Sergeant) (1)

Honorable (-1)

Obsession (finishing the job) (-2)

#### Skills

Brawling 3

Climbing 1

Dodge 2

Driving (car/military) 1

Electronic Surveillance 2

First Aid 1  
Guns (submachine gun) 3  
Guns (handgun) 3  
Hand Weapon (knife) 1  
Intimidation 2  
Martial Arts 2  
Notice 2  
Questioning 2  
Stealth 3  
Surveillance 2  
Swimming 1  
Tactics (guerrilla/small unit) 3  
Throwing (sphere) 2

#### Gear

Whatever the mission calls for

#### Personality

I was placed in Black Ops sometime in '98. I hadn't really been through many operations, but the ones I did participate in I completed. I think it was my track record that prompted the meeting by a man known as Mr. Smith.

Smith was smooth. He was the kind of guy that could get a person talking. He told me the score. I listened. I stared. Then I joined up. I'm sure he was probably pretty certain that I would accept, or he wouldn't have contacted me in the first place.

Now I cover up stories for the organization called FEMA. Of course, FEMA is just a cover for something much bigger. Forget Roswell and all you ever thought you knew about conspiracies. This is the real thing. And we are the front line of defense. To keep worldwide chaos from ensuing, we must not falter in our duties. Security must be maintained.

#### Quote

"I want a full perimeter sweep. No one gets out of that building, got it?"

#### Dam Con Hacker

<MALE PIC>

Str 2 Dex 3 Con 3  
Int 5 Per 4 Wil 3  
LPs 30  
EPs 29  
Spd 10  
Essence 20

#### Qualities/Drawbacks

"FEMA" Agent (5)  
Contacts (hacker community) (2)  
Resistance (fatigue) (2)  
Good Luck 2 (6)  
Fast Reaction Time (2)  
Clown (-1)  
Delusions (grandeur) (-2)  
Showoff (-2)

#### Skills

Brawling 2



Bureaucracy 2  
Computer Hacking 5  
Computer Programming 3  
Computers 4  
Dodge 2  
Drive (car) 1  
Electronics 3  
Guns (handgun) 2  
Notice 2  
Research/Investigation 3  
Sciences (mathematics) 3  
Smooth Talking 2  
Stealth 2  
Streetwise 2

#### Gear

Laptop deck, VR wear, whatever the mission calls for

#### Personality

Life is funny, ya know? Oh I used to be a conspiracy theorist. I used to think all the rumors were true. Then one day I found some information in a chat room pertaining to some project within the FEMA organization. Well, to be honest, it *was* encrypted, but that's neither here nor there.

It was a message to someone about something that needed covered up. I dug deeper, backtracked the messages through various firewalls and security networks and found the Holy Grail. At least, I thought it was. I didn't even get out the door before a bunch of people in black suits came and paid me a visit.

The suits took me in for "questioning". They claimed what I knew was a matter of "world security". Not national, mind you, but *world* security. Then they told me I had a choice. The choice was, keep my mouth shut where I'd probably be kept under surveillance for the rest of my life, big brother is watching and all that, or sign on. They said they needed people with my particular...talents to keep those things that the populace shouldn't know a secret. With what they were willing to pay me, how could I refuse?

I took the job. I'm not a total dweeb. And I've learned that there are definitely things out there that the general populace should never know. And those truths are even worse than the rumors out there now.

#### Quote

"So, lemme get this straight. You want me to find out who the hacker is, track 'em down, find out what they know and then make sure their information disappears. And I thought it was going to be difficult. I'll be done with this by lunch!"

When planning an otherworld scenario for an Odyssey Team, it can be useful to break the scenario into five phases: Entrance, Exploration, Conflict, the Trip Home, and Debriefing. The actual meat of the adventure can actually come in any of the five phases, but the Conflict phase so often comes in the middle that this basic structure works for most scenarios.

### Entrance

After entering a new world, an Odyssey Team needs to perform a few basic tasks, which will be much easier with help from the DM. Several entries from the Odyssey Evaluation Log can be filled in by players based directly on descriptions in this phase of the mission. A DM should take the opportunity right after the Team enters the new world to describe the new locale. A good way to organize the description is based on the PCs five senses.

Sights include the local terrain and weather, flora, and fauna if visible. Another distinctive feature is the sky, whether it is a different color than Earth's, or has any number of other strange features. The sound of the entrance location will be based on several factors; if the terrain is similar at all to terran environments, the sound of the area can be put in that context. Forests rustle, birds (or birdlike aliens) chirp, rivers churn and wind blows. Perhaps more eerie is the chance that the native wildlife senses the presence of the Team and is completely silent. If the Team comes out near an inhabited area, sounds of civilization can give an early indication of the technology level of the environment.

Smell and touch can factor into the initial impression as well, although generally not as significantly as sight and smell. Smells can indicate the presence of nearby pollution from an industrial civilization, the sulfur stench of nearby volcanic activity, or the briny scent of an ocean. Touch factors in a little less, but describing the burning sensation of a searing sun (or a freezing wind), the grains of sand stinging from a desert whirlwind, or perhaps the itching caused by a reaction to alien microbes in the air could all either lend to the sense of atmosphere, or provide clues. If your PCs begin tasting things after exiting the Sherman Ring then maybe they've been affected by the aforementioned microbes, but it's possible there's something truly pungent in the air that leaves a taste on the tongue.

The sensory information relayed to the players is of course dependent on the environment outside the portal. Of course the panoply of terran environments are available for a given alien world: swamp, forest, desert, badland, you name it (see Table XX for a list of terrain types). Once the basic environment is described, any alien elements should be described. Are there differences in the flora and fauna, like walking plants or group organisms? Any unique weather conditions like storms of parasitic spores or acidic fog clouds? Any signs of intelligent life, whether primitive like rope bridges or thatched huts, or advanced like roadways or cars flying overhead? Maybe the flying cars *are* the intelligent life!

Once the team makes it through the Ring, there's probably a lot of protocols that are followed by the PCs. Samples are retrieved, initial reactions are recorded, and last minute equipment requests can be processed. Nothing major is likely to be adjustable, but the five minutes before the portal closes gives the DM and PCs an opportunity to adjust for their initial impressions. In general, this preliminary activity can be glossed over. However, while this phase of the adventure is usually just a prelude or introduction to establish context for upcoming events, it's possible that the conflict of the scenario is made evident immediately after the team comes through the Ring. Hostile creatures attacking the PCs, being thrust into the middle of a raging battle between two armies (whether primitive horse-riding barbarians or speeder-riding storm troopers), or some *thing* flying over head towards a distant smoking ruin can all shortcut the Exploration phase of the adventure and move right into the primary Conflict phase.

### Exploration

This phase of an off-world adventure has the PCs wandering about looking for evidence of inhabitants, hostile environments, threats, and in the optimal case, the lack of all of the above. If there was no Conflict in the scenario, this phase would take the whole week the team has available to them. Since the DM has glossed over those trips, however, most likely the adventure's primary conflict will take place after only a couple days. The DM can adjust the length of the Exploration phase to produce the desired amount of time pressure if the Trip Home is supposed to be a chase or struggle against time. Otherwise, one to three days provides ample opportunities for adventuring. If there are sentients involved in the scenario, this is the phase where their language is studied for the purpose of communication. Of course, often the aliens are presented as fine and welcoming, only to have obscure cultural features that make them incompatible with human cohabitation (like eating the person who tells the funniest joke at dinner to truly share the humor). Alternately they might be enslaved, or under oppression by a different race/culture/species. These hooks provide the backstory for the third phase and arguably most important phase of the scenario, the Conflict.

## Conflict

This is the meat of the adventure, for which everything else laid the groundwork. Because Project Odyssey supports just about any genre or plot, we'll just throw some examples out there for DMs to chew on. The conflicts can be broken into a few categories:

**PCs vs. the Environment:** In this conflict, the environment is the primary threat. Maybe the PCs are infected by a poisonous compound during the Exploration Phase and have to research a cure in less than 7 days before they can return home (while being attacked by velociraptors, of course). Or maybe the coordinates where the portal opens is now located under 20 feet of granite after a massive earthquake causes an upheaval and the Team needs to create a primitive lathe to make explosives from local saltpeter and charcoal... you get the idea.

**PCs vs. the Natives:** The natives of an alien world could be near-animal in their behavior like the gorillas from "Congo", or sentient and hostile like the Cro-mags from "Sliders". (The monkey similarity is a coincidence, although check out Eden's Unisystem corebook "Terra Primate" for more alternate monkey-world ideas.) The inhabitants could also be entirely alien (illithids) or entirely human (humans).

**PCs vs. the Oppressors:** This plot usually involves the PCs hooking up with a resistance movement of some sort to help the friendly natives gain their freedom, overthrow an oppressive government, or defeat an overwhelming animal threat. "Reign of Fire" pits humans against dragons, while "Planet of the Apes" pits humans against sentient apes. (Seriously, pick up "Terra Primate".) If the team wins, this gives Earth allies in the future if they're needed, and possibly a potential world to put a colony on. If the team can't find a way to deal with threat, the world is marked as "off-limits" and is closed off until more help can be mustered. After all, the last thing Project Odyssey wants to worry about are dragons or oppressive sentient apes accidentally coming through a Sherman Ring. Of course, what are you going to do if a PC falls in love while on the other side and can't resist the temptation to reopen the portal...

**PCs vs. native Culture:** Pick your typical "Star Trek" episode where they say they can't break the Prime Directive, and then proceed to break it, and you have a plot of this type. The story could revolve around defending humanity's right to exist (or to share space on the world), or maybe convincing an alien culture that eating your comedians *isn't* funny. Finding "Nazi World" and trying to sow the seeds of good old fashioned democracy would be another example. Success in this arena is similar to success vs. the Oppressors, with the oppressed being future allies. On the plus side this one gives the opportunity for the PCs themselves to plant the seeds of an Oppressors scenario they have to resolve later.

**PCs vs. The Conspiracy:** While the PCs are gone on another world, some funny business happens back in the Od Cell. In this type of scenario, phases one through three are glossed over and take up almost the entire week, and the Trip Home becomes the source of the conflict. The details of the conspiracy really are going to be custom to an individual campaign, but whatever it is, Dam Con should be able to come through and pull the Od Team's fat out of the fire.

**PCs vs. Earthlings:** What do you mean there's a secret Brazilian base on this planet, taken over by puppeteers? A Colombian drug cartel found an ancient ring still functioning in the Amazon basin and is making new super-addictive drugs from alien flora? The amount of conspiracy the GM decides for his campaign can decide the amount of this element that shows up in a campaign, but an enemy from Earth could always develop/steal their own Ring, find legacy technology, or maybe even gain access to a different form of dimensional travel. (Apparently there's a some world called Toril with a handle on this.) This type of conflict is a jurisdiction gray area, to boot; it's feasible that Dam Con could be sent in just as soon as an Od Team.

**PCs vs. Other:** Read some books, watch some TV and B-grade sci-fi, check out a comic or two. Project Odyssey can handle anything you want to throw at your PCs.

## The Trip Home:

This phase of the adventure is when final readings are taken, samples are collected, good-byes are said, and the trip back to the portal is made. If the conflict phase of the scenario is completed, this should probably be

a brief, roleplay oriented segment. However, it's quite possible to throw some conflict into this phase, such as having a tarrasque chasing down the group at 150ft per round, alien soldiers holding the Od Team hostage until Earth lets them through the Ring, or Dam Con waiting back on the other side to take you down because of a frame-job, or lava is rushing down the volcano to the *precise* location the portal is going to open. Any race against time to get back to the portal is a great way to spice up this portion of the mission even if it isn't part of the main scenario conflict.

#### Debrief:

This sometimes-optional phase is used for roleplaying with NPCs around the Od Cell. Sometimes time is needed for dealing with personal and personnel matters, bringing up the case of why your alien lover on Planet 766AG should be allowed to move to Earth, or dealing with fallout from the Chinese threat of nuking D.C. because of the clear buildup of arms using alien technology on the planet dubbed "Omega 13". PCs have to deal with consequences of their actions during missions during this phase, or the stresses of their job. If the thrust of your campaign is the other-world scenarios, this phase could be considered bookwork and done behind the scenes.

The Debrief phase also has the potential for crossover with Dam Con missions. Results from an off-world mission, such as new technology, the existence of friendly alien species, or perhaps even the new homeworld of humanity could easily tip members of the Project over the edge and send them to the public. Games that don't have Dam Con PCs could have the Odyssey Team deal with these threats just as well. It's also possible that there are threats in the Od Cell from a foreign world, hiding out or controlling members of the Project, ranging from android imposters to mind flayers to doppelgangers. While this is certainly the Conflict phase of another scenario, the Debrief phase is the perfect opportunity to drop clues and foreshadow the conflict.

#### Entrance Tables

##### Sky Color (1d10)

1	Cyan
2	Blue
3	Green
4	Teal
5	Dark Red
6	Pink
7	Orange
8	Amber
9	Violet
10	Brown

##### Sky Features (1d10)

1	Overcast
2	Powerful electrical storms
3	One or more large planets or moons
4	Aurora borealis (or other shimmering lights)
5	Comets or meteor showers
6	Thick Fog (roll on the Sky Color table for color)
7	Smog (roll on the Sky Color table for color)
8	Orbital/Atmospheric Construct (e.g. floating castle, giant space station)

##### Terrain (1d10)

1	Temperate
2	Tropical
3	Aquatic
4	Desert
5	Plains
6	Forest
7	Hill

- 8 Mountains
- 9 Swamp
- 10 Underground

**Hostile Complications (1d8)**

- 1 Underwater
- 2 Tectonic upheaval (earthquake/volcano)
- 3 Dinosaurs (or other hostile creatures)
- 4 Barbarians
- 5 Raging Battle
- 6 Storming weather
- 7 Magical phenomenon (e.g. manastorm)
- 8 Space/time distortion

Exploration Tables

**Inhabitants (1d10)**

- 1 No Life
- 2 Small game and plants
- 3 Hostile fauna and/or flora
- 4 Primitive culture (high = peaceful, low = hostile)
- 5 Advanced ancient culture (like Mayans, Egyptians, etc)
- 6 Medieval culture
- 7 Contemporary culture
- 8 Dark Future culture
- 9 Bright Future culture
- 10 Hyper-advanced culture

**Alien-ness**

Roll 1d10, 1 indicates very similar to humans, 10 indicates very alien. This result is added to the DC of linguistics checks.

---

## Time Line

---

### **ANCIENT ERA (AE)**

**Year 6,278** Illithid found Penumbra I (Location: Penumbra I, Dark Zone)

**Year 5,223** The Fraal discover the Crystal Consciousness (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 5,160** Activation of the Crystal Consciousness (Location: "Psi-Space")  
"The Psionic Awakening" (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 5,000** Creation of the Z'Rykles Aspect of the Primordial Evil (Location: The Abyss)

**Year 4,681** Founding of the Clans of the Talaire (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 3,400** The Gith enslaved by the Illithid (Location: Unknown)

**Year 2,632** Gith Rebellion (Location: Penumbra I, Dark Zone)  
Fall of the Penumbra I (Location: Penumbra, Dark Zone)

**Year 2,530** Illithid survivors rebuild their systems inside the Dark Zone (Location: The Dark Zone)

**Year 2,010** Illithid start search for new homelands (Location: Various)

**Year 1,500** Arrival of the Sharn and Phaerimm on the Prime (Location: Unknown)

**Year 1,460** Beginning of the Phaerimm/Sharn War (Location: Antares System)

**Year 1,143** Birth of King Khelorn (Galador, Arlant System)

**Year 1,036** Beginning of the Talaire Civil War (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 983** Forongorn Confederation launches first interplanetary starship (Location: Aranal, Gulinar System)

**Year 924** End of the Talaire Civil War (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 921** Forongorn Confederation launches first inter-system starship (Location: Aranal, Gulinar System)

**Year 918** First contact made by Forongorn Confederation (Location: Irindul III)

**Year 880** Founding of the Diamond Knights (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 875** Founding of the Galactic Republic of Talaron (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 864** Founding of Special Outlands Army Recon - SOLAR (Location: Galador, Arlant System)

**Year 854** Illithid ship from the Dark Zone attack Forongorn Confederation and its allies before it is vanquished (Location: Irindul III)

**Year 843** First Contact between the Talaire and the Fraal (Location: Pentara System)

**Year 832** Beginning of the Inter-Human Wars (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 680** End of the Inter-Human Wars (Location: "Psi-Space")

Founding of the United Republics (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 660** Founding of the Star League (Location: Aranal, Gulinar System)

**Year 583** King Khelorn founds the Royal Exploratory Service (Location: Scion III, Draconis System)

**Year 543** Destruction of Antares Prime (Location: Antares System)  
 Creation of the twin planets Caledon and Lorestin (Location: Antares System)  
 Imprisonment of the Phaerimm (Location: Caledon, Antares System)

**Year 456** High Antareans settle Caledon and Lorestin (Location: Antares System)

**Year 385** Dragons cause civil unrest throughout the Star League (Location: Star League)

**Year 351** Founding of the Twin Kingdoms of Qesemet and Asamet (Location Scion III, Draconis System and Thormorath, Heridor System)

**Year 350** The Star League slowly dissolves (Location: Star League)

**Year 345** Imprisonment of Z'Rykles (Location: The Astral Plane)

**Year 267** The Gem Dragon Retreat (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 241** House Osorus and Church of the Reaper found Eternal Order of Night (Location: Thormorath, Heridor System)

**Year 242** Battle of Meniach (Location: Meniach System)  
 Beginning of the Great War between qesemet and Asamet (Location: All of the later Dragon Empire)  
 Imprisonment of the Phaerimm (Location: Caledon, Antares System)

**Year 240** House Noros founds the Adamantine Order (Location: Morngond, Karlain System)

**Year 150** Founding of the Empire of Antares (Location: Antares System)

**Year 70** The Elemental Orders begin their intergalactic campaign (Location: Unknown)

**Year 12** Invasion of Krellis by House Handor and House Aranath (Location: Krellis, The Black Rift)  
 Destruction of Krellis (Location: Krellis, The Black Rift)  
 Beginning of armistice between qesemet and Asamet (Location: Scion III, Draconis System)

## **IMPERIAL ERA (IE)**

### **Gold Age**

**Year 1** Khelorn becomes Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)  
 Scion III renamed to Draconis Prime (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)  
 Beginning of armistice between qesemet and Asamet (Location: Scion III, Draconis System)

**Year 29** The Fraal join the United Republics (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 111** First Contact between the Kureshim and the United Republics (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 502** The Order of Fire launch their first registered terrorist attack on Imperial facilities (Location: Ambrant, Magrant System)

**Year 468** The Kureshim join the United Republics (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 754** Construction of the Psi-Gate Network begins (Location: Varies)

## Silver Age

**Year 1,000** Alarion become Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)

**Year 1,428** Alarion abdicates as Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)  
Daernatha becomes Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)

**Year 1,470** Illithid arrive in Psi-Space (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 1,474** First Contact between United Republics and the Illithid (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 1,476** Illithid settle the rims of Psi-Space (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 1,488** Illithid founding of Penumbra II (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 1,501** First Contact between the Neogi and the Illithid (Location: "Psi-Space")  
Creation of the Feeding Chain (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 1,891** First Beholder Nations arrive in Psi-Space (Location: "Psi-Space")

## Bronze Age

**Year 2,001** Othilian becomes Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)

**Year 2,070** Beginning of the Beholder/Illithid War (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 2,356** First United Republics Civil Wars (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 2,440** Destruction of the last Beholder Nation in Psi-Space (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 2,635** The United Republics dissolved (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 2,715** Birth of Kaled Laterri (Location: Caledon, Antares System)

**Year 2,767** Beginning of the Antarean Civil War (Location: Antares System)

**Year 2,988** Battle of A'Nama (Location: A'Nama, "Fraal" System)  
Illithid steal Crystal Consciousness (Location: A'Nama, "Fraal" System)

## Brass Age

**Year 3,033** Kaled Laterri creates the World Seal (Location: Caledon, Antares System)

**Year 3,034** Destruction of Caledon (Location: Caledon, Antares System)  
Death of Kaled Laterri (Location: Caledon, Antares System)  
The World Seal shattered (Location: Antares System)

**Year 3,066** Disappearance of Lorestin (Location: Lorestin, Antares System)



**Year 3,130** The Shadow King assumes leadership of the Lorestani (Location: Plane of Shadow)

**Year 3,131** Founding of the Empire of Shades - the Lorestani become the Shadevari (Location: Plane of Shadow)

**Year 3,212** Illithid assault Talaron (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)  
Beginning of the Last Stand (Location: PsiSpace)

**Year 3,879** Destruction of Kuresham (Location: Kuresham, Kureshemi System)  
Disappearance of the Kureshim (Location: Unknown)

**Year 3,910** Z'Rykles essence freed (Location: Astral Plane)

**Year 3,912** Aran Mathonveil possessed by Z'Rykles (Location: Astral Plane)

**Year 3,913** Z'Rykles re-manifests as the mortal Zarrock (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)

## Copper Age

**Year 4,212** Founding of Hellgate Keep (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)

**Year 4,324** Beginning of the Siege of Talaron (Location: Silithian System)

**Year 4,333** Fall of Talaron (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)  
Destruction of the Silithian Sun (Location: Silithian System)  
Destruction of Penumbra II (Location: Unknown)

**Year 4,334** Beginning of the Migration of the Talaire (Location: Talaron, Silithian System)

**Year 4,336** Decline of the Second Illithid Empire begins (Location: "Psi-Space")

**Year 4,436** Birth of Karon Morden, Godson of Zarrock (Location: The Abyss)

**Year 4,721** Birth of Mithrallar Lystillis (Location: Lestene, Arivanti System)

**Year 4,765** Birth of Zulkir Goran Trol (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)

**Year 4,889** Birth of Kailen "Bow" Lystillis (Location: Lestene, Arivanti System)

**Year 4,950** Birth of Warr Tarshnir (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)

**Year 4,954** Birth of Jollbrock Tosh (Location: Minauros Prime, Minauros System)

**Year 4,957** Birth of Xeron Laterri (Location: Rock of Kaled, Legacy System)

**Year 4,962** Birth of Terin Zarn (Location: Eye of Talris, Talrisian System)

**Year 4,965** Construction of the Outlands Stations (Various systems)

**Year 4,966** Birth of Herod Travers (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 4,970** Bazzrit takes control of the Black Hole Syndicate (Unknown)

**Year 4,976** Birth of Jeremiah Ericsson (Location: Mercon II, Mekara System)

**Year 4,981** Birth of Pergon Farellt (Location: Galianus V, Topira System)

**Year 4,983** Birth of Claron Benegan aka "Blade" (Location: Unknown)

**Year 4,984** Birth of Geltheck Crow (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 4,986** Birth of Fletcher Kristian (Location: Coruntari, Genaia System)

**Year 4,989** Birth of Ryelen Corrde (Location: Yullum IV, Verdantis System)

**Year 4,994** Birth of Creylon Crow (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 4,995** Birth of Cedric Clarûn (Location: Corm, Compira System)

**Year 4,996** Jeremiah Ericsson joins the Imperial Police (Location: Zedanthu, Endragar System)  
Birth of Kevin Kronдор (Location: City of Sigil, The Outlands)

**Year 4,998** Birth of Casur "Darkeyes" Tarshnir (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)  
Birth of Que'Telis Lystillis (Location: Lestene, Arivanti System)

**Year 5,000** Jeremiah Ericsson joins the Anti-Terror Police Directorate (Location: Zedanthu, Endragar System)

## Red Age

**Year 5,001** Birth of Coren Darkstalker (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
Birth of Les Lakula (Location: Tulwari, Makabi System)  
Mezzenbone becomes Emperor of the Golden Throne (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)

**Year 5,002** Restructuring of the PsiCorps begins (Location: Draconis Prime, Draconis System)

**Year 5,003** Birth of Ceridan "Stardice" Laterri (Location: Ilsensine's Realm, The Outlands)  
Death of Xeron Laterri and Mithrallar Lystillis (Location: Ilsensine's Realm, The Outlands)

**Year 5,004** Captain Shed Mallegan of the Royal Exploratory Service discovers Terminus Delta (Location: Terminus Delta, System WV09)

**Year 5,006** Birth of Pasha Jekos (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
Founding of PSI-INQ (Location: Arangorn, Andragus System)

**Year 5,008** Discovery of the Spell Weave (Location: Unknown)

**Year 5,011** Cedric Clarûn expelled from the Radiant Dragons (Location: Corinthia, Corinth System)

**Year 5,012** Jeremiah Ericsson assigned to Mercon (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,014** Birth of Chevriille D'Astar (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,018** Ceridan Stardice joins the Imperial Police (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
Rise of the Tormentor entity (Location: The Abyss)  
Death of Geltheck Crow (Location: False Gold (moon), Mekara System)

**Year 5,020** "Blade" appointed Yakuza President of Mercon (Location: Takara Prime, Takara System)  
Fletcher Kristian appointed First Air Marshal of Mercon (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
Captain Seanian discovers the Primogen System (Location: Primogen System)

**Year 5,021** Warr Tarshnir appointed CO of the Mercon Enclave (Talros, Talrisian System)  
 Beginning of the First Syndicate War (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Karon Morden joins the Black Network (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,022** Creylon Crow returns to the Black Network (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Activation of the "Golden Gate" (Location: Golden Gate, Mekara System)  
 First contact with the Imperial League of Minotaurs (Location: Mekara/Minauros Systems)  
 The "Hellions" wiped out (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,023** Zarrock assumes control of the Black Network (Location: Unknown)  
 Genomancer/Black Network Alliance formed (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Battle of Odon (Location: Rock of Odon (moon), Mekara System)  
 Death of Cedric Clarûn (Location: Rock of Odon (moon), Mekara System)  
 Casur Darkeyes joins the Genomancers of Talros (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,024** Death of Karon Morden (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Haunting of Cedric Clarûn (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,025** Death of Warr Tarshnir (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)  
 Destruction of Mercon City core (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Return of Cedric "Celestius" Clarûn (Location: Unknown)

**Year 5,026** Long Night falls on Mercon (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Battle of Mercon City (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Death of Herod Travers (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 End of the First Syndicate War

**Year 5,027** Beginning of the Fiendish Invasion (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)  
 Imprisonment of Kailen Bow (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)

**Year 5,028** End of the Fiendish Invasion (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)  
 World Seal assembled (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)  
 Ascendancy of Jollbrock Tosh (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)  
 Ascendancy of Kevin Krondor (Location: Zahasthri, Forbidden System)

**Year 5,029** Casur Darkeye assumes leadership of the Order of Fire (Location: Pyre, the Ashen System)  
 Possession of Casur Darkeye by the Baatezu (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)  
 Ceridan Stardice appointed General Director of the Mercon Imperial Police (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,030** Birth of Fenian Targas (Location: Unknown)  
 Beginning of Yakuza Civil War (Location: Variant Systems)

**Year 5,031** Death of Kailen Bow (Location: The Iron City of Dis, Nine Hells of Baator)  
 Death of Que'Telis (Location: The Iron City of Dis, Nine Hells of Baator)  
 "Birth" of Quan Lystillis (Location: The Iron City of Dis, Nine Hells of Baator)

**Year 5,032** Chevrlle D'Astar joins the Blackguards of the Destroyer (Location:)

**Year 5,036** Morgan Vestas, foreman of the Insurrection goes into hiding (Domain of Golion)

**Year 5,037** Birth of Mara Crow (Location: Outlands)

**Year 5,038** Chevrlle D'Astar leaves the Blackguards and starts his one-man crusade (Location:)

**Year 5,039** Birth of Cazer and Travers Laterri (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,040** THE PRESENT DAY IN STANDARD CAMPAIGNS

**Year 5,041** Founding of the Celestial Knights (Location: Celeste, Shining System)  
 Celestius assumes leadership of the Celestial Knights (Location: Celeste, Shining System)

**Year 5,044** Ceridan grants legitimacy to the Free Republican Movement (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Re-manifestation of Karon Morden (Location: The Abyss)

**Year 5,045** The ISPD assume full control of Mercon (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Ceridan appointed Imperial Ambassador of the Minotaur League (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,046** Thenolia invade the Imperial League of Minotaurs (Location: Imperial League of Minotaurs)  
 Fall of the Red Minotaur (Location: Minauros Prime, Minauros System)  
 Imprisonment of Krondor (Location: Ardanos Secundo (moon), Ardo System)  
 Birth of Lyta Laterri (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,047** Death of Wulgreth the Lich and Destruction of the Necrosis Sphere (Location: Ardanos, Ardo System)  
 Death of Pasha Jekos Laterri (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Death of Jeremiah Ericsson (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Destruction of Zulkir Goran Trol (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)  
 Disappearance of Casur Darkeyes (Location: Talros, Talrisian System)

**Year 5,048** Destruction of Karon Morden (Location: The Abyss)  
 Re-Ascendancy of the Red Minotaur (Location: The Abyss)  
 Re-Ascendancy of Krondor (Location: The Abyss)

**Year 5,057** Death of Les Lakula (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,058** Declaration of the "Free Republic" (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)

**Year 5,059** Open Rebellion on Mercon crushed (Location: Mercon, Mekara System)  
 Free Republic goes into hiding (Location: Variant)  
 Return of Casur Darkeyes (Location: Unknown)

**The Future**

**Year 5,060** Destruction of Imperial AstroLab Facility 4571 (Location: Dargos, Behemoth System)  
 Travers Laterri joins Celestial Knights (Location: Celeste, The Shining System)  
 Chevrielle D'Astar begins construction of the Abyssal Gate (Location: Antrokles, Gehenna System)

**Year 5,061** Year of the "Righteous Crusade" (Location: Antrokles, Gehenna System)

**Year 5,062** Ceridan Stardice activates the World Seal and becomes Arcanox (Location: The World Seal shattered (Location: Death of Terin Zarn (Location: Galaxy (space station), Sûl System)

**Year 5,063** Arcanox goes on a rampage killing off several elder dragons, destroying one Imperial Dreadnought in the process

**Year 5,064** Destruction of the Imperial Core World of Adamus (Adamus, Grigari System)

**Year 5,065** Destruction of Arcanox (The Astral Plane)  
 Death of Ceridan "Stardice" Laterri (The Astral Plane)

