

MACHINATIONS

OF THE SPACE PRINCESS



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A Word in Your Shell-Like

What is a Role-playing Game?

A question that every role-player dreads with every throbbing fibre of their being is:

“So, what is one of these role-playing games exactly?”

Pretty much every time that I write a game I feel that I have to tackle this question and I still haven't found what I think is a remotely adequate description. It's something you really have to *do* before you can 'grok with fullness'. Still, here's my best attempt at answering that question for today:

Role-playing games are make-believe for adults with some rules and a referee to avoid the 'Bang! You're dead!', 'No, I'm not!' arguments from when you were six.

This doesn't really do them justice, but it does give people an idea of what's involved.

Essentially what it boils down to is this; one player takes the part of the referee, moderator and story-teller (called the Games Master) and the other players take the parts of the heroes of the story.

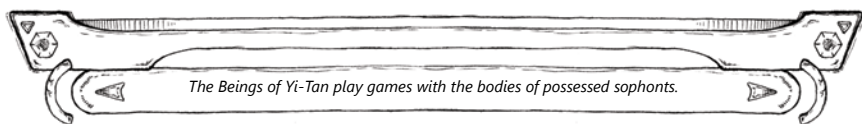
They make up these heroes themselves – names, appearances, strengths and weaknesses - and they can do anything at all during the game.

They're limited only by their imagination, the rules, and the agreed upon characteristics of the game as a whole. All this without leaping off the climbing frame and breaking your arm or having the piss taken out of you by the older kids who 'grew out' of playing soldiers.

Nobody grows out of playing soldiers, or princesses, or James Bond. They just get ashamed to do it. Which sucks balls because playing is fun, stimulating and educational - even if you're getting paunchy and grey.

If you've ever watched a film and opined on what you would have done in the main character's place then you're a role-player at heart. It's that simple. You say what your character does, the Games Master interprets that through the rules (dice taking the place of the fickle favour of that notorious whore, Dame Fortuna) and then describes what happens. Then you do something else, they tell you the result and so it continues until your time is up or you're too intoxicated and full of snacks to continue.

Role-playing is a game, but it is also deeper than that. You and the other players create your own memories, abiding stories and personal mythology.





Role-playing is escapism, art, play and a great excuse to hang out with your friends, get drunk and stoned, eat vast quantities of junk food and talk complete rubbish for hours - or even days - at a time.

That has to be more fun than a lot of the other things you could be doing. Right?

Machinations of the Space Princess

Machinations of the Space Princess is a Science-Fantasy role-playing game. That means it's very much about style over substance, mixing science-fiction, magic and psionics in a game world that owes much more to *Metal Hurlant* and *Star Wars* than it does to *2001* or Bova's *Grand Tour*. This is a game of strangeness and fun, of space pirates and beautiful alien princesses, of living planets and robot hordes, of blasters at noon. This is what I'm calling 'Sexy, sleazy, swords and sci-fi'.

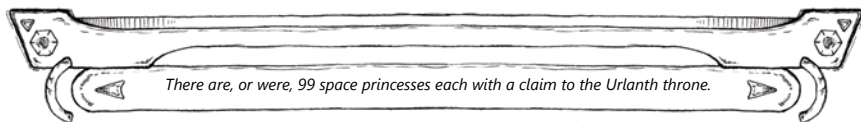
You'll take the role of heroes (at least in stature, if not behaviour) navigating their way through this universe from score to score, job to job, leaving a swathe of bodies and disrupted planetary governments in their wake as they make their mark on the cosmos. Just about anything goes and the game is designed to be simple, familiar, quick and open to easy improvisation and customisation.

You are positively encouraged to fuck with it, make up your own shit and sell it or give it away. If you want the things you've made up to get a boost, send them to me and I'll give you an official 'seal of approval' if I think they're great.

Machinations' heritage comes from *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* an 'Old School' game from which its rules are modified. *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* is in turn is one of a score of retro-clones of *Dungeons & Dragons*, most based around the 'Red Box' edition from 1983.

For some of these games its an act of nostalgia, for others (*LotFP* included in my opinion) it's about going back to the beginning and building up again with the benefit of thirty years of perspective and games development. *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* was also as much about style and how its author - James Raggi - runs games as it was about the rules and that is the main cue that *Machinations of the Space Princess* is taking from it. I hope this book will impart some of my thirty years experience of playing and writing games to you and that you nail it so hard when you run your own games that you'll punch the air.

Machinations is my attempt to reconcile the Old School and Indie movement of gaming and take what works best from both. None of this will mean anything to you if you're a new player, but it's still worth mentioning for those of you who are not.





Machinations is written in a conversational and grown-up tone (that means swearing and colourful language) so as to be more of a fun read for you. The rules will have quick reference sheets at the back of the book for ease of use during play but it should remain a fun book and an object that you'll want to dip into time and time again.

Postmortem Studios

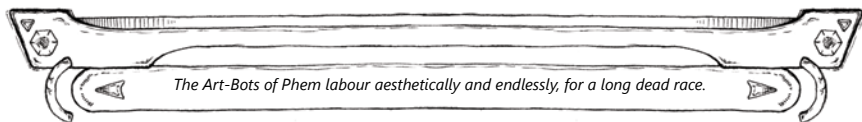
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Satine Phoenix

Model, Artist, Gamer and perhaps one of the most awesome collections of carbon-atoms since the velociraptor, Satine Phoenix was hand-picked to work on *Machinations of the Space Princess* to give it its distinctive look and feel. Satine can be found at random points all over the world and the internet, doing stuff or at home with her cat and dog (also doing stuff). She could easily be a Space Princess herself.

SatinePhoenix.net





Example of Play

The best way to understand a game is to see it played. You're not going to be able to see *Machinations* played until you play it yourself or meet someone else who is playing it. The next best thing is for me to write a little example of how a play session of *Machinations* might go.

So here it is:

Jim (the Games Master): The message the street-kid gave you told you to meet your contact at the Ghee Club. It's a strip-joint of sorts, a dive down in the lower decks of Mercy Station. Down here it's dark, the lights and atmosphere processors frequently go on the fritz and that sends confusing, dancing shadows in all directions. The Ghee Club is wedged between two pawn shops and is heralded by a flickered neon hologram of a tri-breasted dancer, the name of the place spelled out in Sentaran pictograms. You're not entirely sure what Ghee means in Sentaran but judging from the writing it's something filthy. The doorman is a hulking, crab-like creature who narrows his myriad eyes at you suspiciously and folds three sets of arms across his chitinous chest.

Julie (Playing Stabitha): I roll my eyes and strut up to the doorman. "Hey, we're supposed to meet someone inside. Get out of the way would you?"

Games Master: He blinks his eyes in series and flexes his chitinous armour, blowing an exasperated sigh out of his spicules in a shower of salty froth. Then he speaks in a wheezing voice. "You ain't comin' in dressed like that and you ain't comin' in with your weapons."

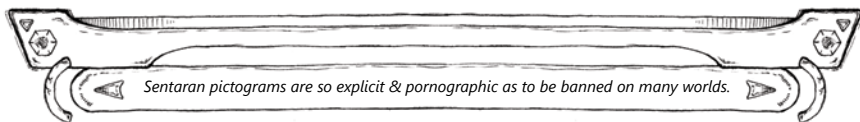
Stabitha: "And just what's wrong with how I dress?" I growl and move my hand to the hilt of my plasma-machete.

Games Master: "Nothing. If you were on stage. As to the weapons, the problem is obvious." He rattles his hindlimbs against his shell aggressively as you touch your machete.

Dave (Playing Molok-Re): I move in front of Stabitha and smile my best smile, projecting authority that comes from once being of the palace guard. Even if I am in disgraced exile. "I'm sure both problems are things that can be overcome, stout fellow. We have plenty of money to spend after all." I'll back up my point by jangling my money bag.

Games Master: OK, make a Charm save, with a bonus of +1 for the money.

Molok-Re: I roll a 4, my Charm with the bonus is 10.





Games Master: The crab-thing seems to deflate slightly and then makes a shrugging gesture with his too-many arms. "Don't cause any trouble and make sure you spend a lot of that inside, or else." He flips up the sides of his sort of kilt-thing that he wears, revealing a brace of ugly Sauroson 900 Flesh-Ripper blaster pistols.

Stabitha: "Oh sure, we'll be good." I'll give him a proper smile and we'll duck inside.

Games Master: It's a dive. A pit. A scumhole. The floor is bare - but suspiciously stained - hull-plating. The interior's curved walls are painted with lurid murals of inter-species eroticism. There are scattered tables and a curved bar. Each table has a pole stretching up to the ceiling and each pole has an exotic dancer writhing and twisting around it - or in one case sticking to it with gummy suckers. The air is thick with the smoke from a dozen narcotics and the drink of choice seems to be blue-milk in an opaque glass. There's no sign of the Cynoid contact who sent you that note - at least not yet.

Molok-Re: "Back in the guard they would send temple-dancers to amuse us." I'll keep our promise to the door-crab and spend a goodly portion of my chits to be entertained by one of the dancers. The one closest to my own species.

Stabitha: I'll take up a watchful position at the bar, keeping an eye on the entrances and exits. I'll grab a glass of blue-milk as well, for myself. I need something to take the edge off.

Games Master: OK. Molok, you take your seat at one of the tables. The chair is still warm from the previous occupant and the blue-skinned dancing girl twists and writhes around the pole offering one high-heeled foot to a patron on the other side of the table until she hears your stack of chits hit the table. Then she's all yours, gyrating and grinding before you at the edge of the table and showing off the goods.

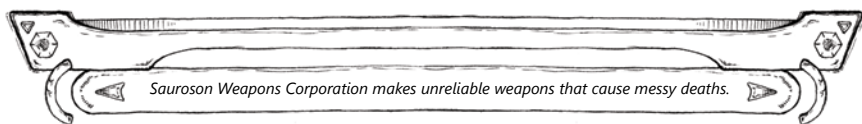
Stabitha: "Men... ugh."

Games Master: Stabitha, you get your blue-milk from the barmaid, a busty and tattooed pure-human. She seems to be similarly as cynical as you, nodding with a smirk at your words. The milk has a chemical tang, treated to be long lasting - and cheap - but it does give the world an agreeable fuzzy-edge. Right up until some drunken patron, his breath stinking of cheese, slaps a four-fingered hand against your rump. "Hey girl, you work here? Want to earn some extra chits?"

Stabitha: "Take your fucking hand off me before I break it off and shove it up your arse. Creep." I turn and give him my most menacing stare.

Games Master: "Interesting thing about my species..." the patron tells you "...that's not just my hand."

Stabitha: Ugh, fucking gross. Alright, I'm going to live up to my name and stab a bitch.





Games Master: OK, you've got surprise. Especially since there aren't supposed to be any weapons in here. That means his defence against a melee attack is only 12. Go for it.

Stabitha: I'll make it a power-swing. I have a base melee attack of +4 and a Power Swing skill of +1, so no modifier. I roll... 14.

Games Master: Alright, that's a hit, so damage?

Stabitha: D6+6 in total. I get... 10.

Games Master: More than enough to take out some bit-part alien sleazebag. You lop off his grasping hand-cock at the wrist and it falls flopping to the floor. He screams and passes out. Thankfully the plasma blade cauterised the wound so he won't bleed out. He'll live. If he gets medical attention and if you can even call it living. The doorman bursts back in through the door at the first sign of battle and roars: "Not even a single rotation and you're already fucking shit up! What did I say?"

Molok: This is nothing to do with me. I'm just going to ignore it and concentrate on enjoying my dance.

Stabitha: I'll hold my blade ready in case this crab-guy tries something. "You think you can take me crabcakes?"

Games Master: Molok, the girl's a professional. She doesn't even flinch at the violence and now you reckon a lot of the stains on the floor must be blood. Stabitha, the crab-thing sets his hands to his pistols but before he can start off your contact slides in behind him, crest up on his feathered head and flashing a station security badge. "There's no need for that. I'm sure this is a misunderstanding. Let me handle this, you go back to the door." They glower at each other a moment before the crab backs down, heading back outside.

Stabitha: Well, Molok seems busy suffocating himself in that dancer's mammary glands, so I guess I'll start the meeting. I step forward and offer the guy my hand to shake...

And the adventure continues...

The collapse of the Urlanth Matriarchy has thrown so much of the former empire into chaos that many worlds and many populations have been cast into abject poverty.

Once-gleaming cities of marble and silver are now smoking, blackened, half-ruined sleaze-pits where the mighty have been brought low and the low made mighty.

World, and people, desperate to continue making a living turn to smuggling, crime, murder, prostitution, drugs and scams just as they ever have in any civilisation suffering a setback.



The Fall of Empire

For a thousand years the Urlanth Matriarchy has controlled vast swathes of known space, demanding tithes of money, soldiers for its legions and total obedience. The Urlanth waged a constant war of expansionism as the males of the species tried to prove their worth to be taken as a husband and father by one of the ruling female elite.

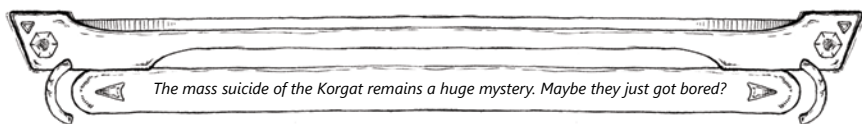
The Urlanth Matriarchy was only the most recent of many empires that have taken control of huge areas of space over the aeons and, like all the others, it was only a matter of time until it fell. Would they suicide en masse like the Korgat? Perhaps they would fall to a hungrier, younger race as the Urlanth had displaced the Xanian Commonwealth that came before them? In the end it was a civil war that broke the Urlanth rulership. The Empress Caldo was assassinated by members of her inner guard and no clear successor to her position was obvious. The ninety-nine daughters of Caldo fell into immediate and bitter infighting, splitting and dragging the forces of the Empire with them into balkanised regions of mutual hate.

Guilds and corporations took the opportunity to reassert their own power and rebellious systems grasped eagerly at the chance to throw off the Urlanth that they had chafed under for so long.

Even elements of the Urlanth fleet rebelled under a form of radical masculinism and turned against their former mistresses in the name of male liberation.

Now the empire is split amongst squabbling powers and those who are trying to grab what they can before the collapse goes much further. There is still time for one of the princesses to establish herself as a true power and to reunite the empire but that grows less and less likely with every passing moment. It's a time of violence and opportunity; new heroes and villains are rising to take their place in the pantheon of the new gods. A sentient being with ambition, drive and luck could even become a ruler themselves, warlord, president or even emperor of a new star empire.

Starships battle in the void. Whole planets are swallowed up by war. Piracy, slavery and exploitation are rife and criminals are becoming kings. The ruins of the past, the tomb worlds, the caches of ExoTech are ripe for the taking for those bold enough to do so but even surviving day to day is a challenge for most. As lines of supply are cut off and ships are destroyed in the fighting whole planets starve or succumb to plague. This is the universe in which you find yourselves, a chaotic whirl of violence and opportunism.



The mass suicide of the Korgat remains a huge mystery. Maybe they just got bored?



Implicit Vs Explicit

Machinations of the Space Princess does have a setting and a background, but it is *implicit* rather than *explicit*. That is to say that you won't find pages and pages of names, dates, calendars, star maps and potted histories of major races. That would be an *explicit* game background with a load of tedious lore and canon that you'd have to memorise. Rather the background of *Machinations of the Space Princess* is largely *implicit*. It's a loose framework of ideas and assumptions that should come across through the game material, rules, adventure seeds and all the rest.

I'm going to spell out a couple of these assumptions in more detail here but make absolutely no mistake. Once you bought this book you bought the right to do whatever the hell you want to do with it or its contents. This is *your* game, *your* universe, these are just my ideas on how I think it works best and the ideas and archetypes that I find interesting.

The Universe of Machinations

I'm going to try to avoid the temptation to fill this book with quotations (that's so nineties) but there's one that sums up the primary thought behind absolutely every aspects of *Machinations of the Space Princess*.

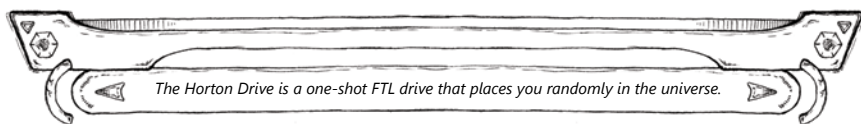
Here it is:

"Space is big. You just won't believe how vastly, hugely, mind- bogglingly big it is. I mean, you may think it's a long way down the road to the chemist's, but that's just peanuts to space."

- Douglas Adams, The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

Space, absolutely, is big. Best estimates we have at the moment guess that our galaxy has some three hundred billion stars. The rate at which we're discovering extrasolar planets (which have to have particular characteristics and orbits) suggests that there are a huge number of planets out there, meaning that there are many times that number of planets in our galaxy. It's not like our galaxy is alone either. There are something like a-hundred-and-seventy billion galaxies in the observable universe and many of these are much, much larger than our own galaxy. These figures are from when I wrote this book and they seem to be going up all the time.

The universe may not be infinite but the point here is that it's pretty damn huge with plenty of room for all kinds of peculiar weirdness. Playing at this galactic scale means that things don't have to be as plausible or scientifically 'hard' as they might in a smaller, tighter setting. *Machinations of the Space Princess* presents a universe of wild and crazy adventure, space battles, rebellions, bounty hunting and exploration that is intended only to be bounded by your imagination and not by science.





Big and Old and Full of Life

As well as being inordinately massive, the universe is also very old; somewhere around thirteen-point-seven billion years according to the best estimates. Ironically this is something both Scientologists and fundamentalist Christians can get in a tizzy about together, albeit for different reasons.

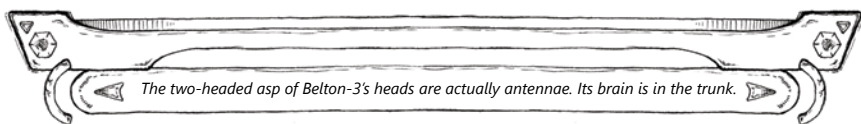
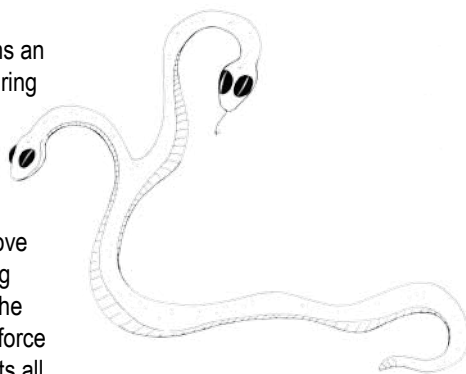
There is plenty of time and space for empires to rise and fall, for many different intelligent species to take their turn hauling ass out of the primordial muck and having a go at being interstellar traders and empire builders for a while and all without necessarily bumping into each other. The universe may be full of these kinds of goings on, but it's also so massive as to allow for backwaters where primitive planets go unmolested and pocket empires of several stars cling on, thinking themselves to be masters of the universe.

Some kind of intelligent being rises, forms an empire, sweeps across the stars conquering and inhabiting everywhere it goes then dies back or transcends leaving behind their archaeological ruins, strange art, stranger puzzles and technological artefacts from a level of science way above the up-and-coming species that are rising to take their place. They squabble over the remnants, fight and struggle until a new force becomes dominant and the process starts all over again.

Layer upon layer of history and magical-seeming technology in an unending chain from the dawn of the universe through to its cold, dark end.

Life is found everywhere that it has even the slightest chance of coming about. There are millions of intelligent starfaring species each with their own proud history, story and accomplishments. Where these species and their ships come across each other the universe is cosmopolitan. You could see a new intelligent species every day of your life and still not have witnessed them all. Given time, engineering and seeding, life can be found even in the most inhospitable places such as airless asteroids, radiation storms, the thin wisps of interstellar gas.

It's a big, crazy universe full of wonders, profit and dangers and it's all yours.



The two-headed asp of Belton-3's heads are actually antennae. Its brain is in the trunk.



Kick-Ass Heroes

If you're going to play *Machinations of the Space Princess* then you're going to need a kick-ass hero into whose shoes you can step to take part in your adventures. Your character is your alter-ego in the game world, your avatar in the virtual world of the mind that your gaming group is going to create together. Besides all the rules stuff, there's some things you should keep in mind when you're creating your character:

1. Be Interested: Your character should be interesting to you. Don't play something boring. Play something that captivates or excites you. It's important to the quality of the game that you're invested in what you do and in what happens to your character as a result.

2. Be a Team Player: Your character is only one of a group. Try to fill a skill/power/emotional gap that isn't served by the other players. This is a negotiation, obviously, and there's no huge problem with replicated effort. It's just something to keep in mind. The temptation to play the taciturn loner or the thieving dickwad is strong, but usually makes for a bad game for everyone else. Don't be that guy.

3. Be Ready to Die: Have an idea for your next character ready. Character death is - and always should be - a real possibility in a game. The threat of it can add some spice and tension to your encounters. It can also be a heartbreaker, but it's still important.

4. Have an Idea Who you are: A character should be more than a collection of numbers and a list of equipment. Think about who they are, where they come from and what they want to do with their lives. This can emerge during play, rather than you having to write *The Silmarillion* before rolling a dice, but you should still have some idea.

Birth of a Hero

It's best if you make up your character step-by-step, section by section. Each step builds upon the previous one and, at the end, you have your character all ready to kick ass, take names and carve themselves a place in a hostile universe.

Here's your checklist:

- 1. Concept:** Who is this person? What is it that they do? What do you want them to be good at?
- 2. Abilities:** Roll your ability traits. These typically range from 3-18 (three six-sided dice totalled).



3. Race Traits: What kind of strange alien species does your character come from? Maybe they're just a purebred human? You can pick up to three of these with no penalty. A fourth costs you -4 Charisma and each extra one after that -4 to another Ability. You can mix and match traits from any type or even roll them randomly.

4. Class: Pick one of the classes for your character. Psion, Killer, Scholar or Expert?

5. Skills: Work out how many skill points you have and spend them to raise or buy new skills. You work out your Skill Points from your class and your Intelligence and Wisdom modifiers.

6. Saving Rolls: Each of these corresponds to one of your Abilities but can be modified by skills and racial traits. Work out what these all are. They start at half the corresponding Ability, rounding up. You roll under your Saving Roll to spare you a terrible consequence.

7. Gear: Work out how much money you have and then spend it!

Sum of its Parts

Any character, indeed any person, is the result of a number of different factors; their outcome in the genetic lottery, their upbringing, their culture and so on. For a game character this is similar, but the influences are much more formal and down to a literal, rather than a metaphorical roll of the dice.

Player choices are also very important, rather than the capricious fortune of fate. You get to play what you want to play. Leave yourself a little wiggle-room though.

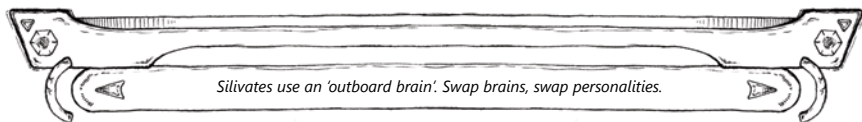
Ability Scores

Ability scores represent your natural talent and potential. They are representations of how strong, how tough, how fast and how smart you are. Ability scores are your inherent capabilities, the things you can do without any training, teaching or experience. They're not directly used very much but they influence a lot of other things – such as your Saving Rolls, combat capabilities and how many Psi Points you have (whether you're psychic or not). Ability scores aren't the absolute limit of your character but they're the first inkling of who and what they might be.

Race Traits

The universe is full of all kinds of alien beings and you're one of them. While humans are one of the most prevalent species in know space there are plenty of others. Race Traits help define what sort of 'thing' you actually are.

Not only do they help describe your appearance (furry, chitinous, fanged) but they also give you a few little bonuses here and there to represent what your particular race is good at. When it comes to humans, they're good at learning and being adaptable and that's reflected in Skill Points. You can pick Race Traits from any 'type' and mix and match them.





If you want to be a robo-frog nothing is stopping you, but you can only take three Race Traits before you start getting penalised for trying to cheat the system. The categories are just suggestions and one way to look up and pick out the traits you want.

Class

Your Class is a broad category that describes in very general terms 'what you do'. There are four basic classes. The Psion, the Killer, the Scholar and the Expert. You can fit different character concepts under each category easily. The Killer might be a simple mud-stomping grunt or an elite assassin. Both concepts are entirely viable.

Skills

Your skills represent your training. These are your special qualities and education that let you do things well or do things that others can't. You can accomplish these things with a particular degree of facility. Skills can represent special forms of attack, areas of specialist knowledge or hard, physical training designed to make you stronger, tougher or better able to exercise your other Abilities. Skills are where you can truly customise your character to fit the concept you want and compensate for any weaknesses.

Saving Rolls

Saving Rolls are passive defences that kick in when you come under particular forms of attack or to give you a last-ditch attempt to save yourself.

The Games Master can also call for a roll against them when nothing else seems to fit. Each one is coupled with a particular Ability Score but can be modified, separately in a number of different ways. Your Reflex Save, for example, represents how quick your reactions are. If you failed a Climb skill roll and toppled from a cliff your Reflex Save might give you a chance to grab an outcropping or a root rather than falling to your death. Your Saving Rolls start at half the score of the Ability that governs them, rounding up. You roll under your Save score to succeed. A '20' is always a failure, a '1' is always a success.

Roll High

Some people prefer to roll-high on their Saves as this is more familiar to them from other games. If you prefer this, roll a d20 and add your Save score. If you get over 20 you succeed. In this case a '1' is always a failure and a '20' is always a success!

Movement

Humanoid species typically have a movement of ten metres per round, which represents a fairly leisurely pace. You can boost this with traits or argue the toss with the Games Master about whether your character should be a bit faster or a bit slower.

Gear

Your equipment doesn't necessarily define you but many great characters in fiction and games have signature weapons and gear.



The equipment you choose at the start may become some of the defining characteristics of your character.

History

It's a good idea to have some clue as to where your character has come from. Their home planet, their family and what they've done with their lives up to this point. This can explain their Ability Scores, Skills and other factors. It's also a good idea to have some concept of how you came together with the other characters in the group - unless the Games Master has a plan for bringing you all together into something resembling a team.

Ability Scores

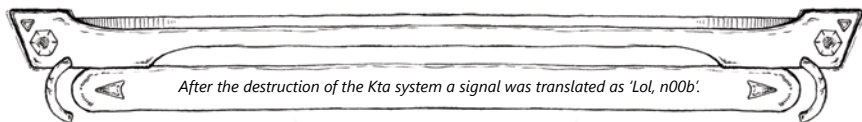
Your Ability Scores are broad categories of natural capability. You determine what these are by rolling dice. There are a number of different ways that you can do this to get the end scores

The known races of the universe tend to be roughly comparable in technological accomplishment and physiological capabilities to one another. Why this should be the case nobody knows but various groups have ventured suggestions from 'gods' to 'this universe is all a game of higher beings designed for balance and fairness'. All these ideas seem unlikely.

- 1. Pussy Mode:** Roll 4d6 and drop the lowest one. Add together the rest. Do this seven times and then assign the scores to the Abilities you want to, you wuss.
- 2. Easy Mode:** Roll 4d6 and drop the lowest one. Add together the rest. Assign these to your Abilities in order.
- 3. Normal Mode:** Roll 3d6 and add them together. Do this seven times and then assign the scores to the Abilities you want.
- 4. Hardcore Mode:** Roll 3d6 and add them together. Do this for each Ability in order.

The score of your Abilities grants certain bonuses or penalties to different actions in the game:

Ability Score	Bonus
2-3	-4
4-5	-3
6-7	-2
8-9	-1
10-11	+0
12-13	+1
14-15	+2
16-17	+3
18-19	+4
Every +/-2	+/- 1





Example:

Erin is rolling stats for her character. She decides to go 'Hardcore' and rolls the following:

Charisma: 13 +1

Comeliness: 5 -3

Constitution: 8 -1

Dexterity: 10 +0

Intelligence: 8-1

Strength: 8-1

Wisdom: 7-2

She instantly regrets her decision but no amount of crying and pleading will get the Games Master to let her roll up another character.

Charisma

Your Charisma is a measure of your force of personality. This can be expressed in a number of different ways. Perhaps your character has a degree of natural authority or command presence. Perhaps they are charming and witty. Maybe they're laid back and easy to get along with. Equally, a low Charisma can have many different causes from social anxiety and inexperience to gruff manners or a tendency to shout and scream.

Charisma Bonus: Your Charisma Bonus is added to your Social Reaction score.

Comeliness

Your Comeliness is a measure of your physical attractiveness. Just as with Charisma this can come from a variety of different sources. It may be something in the way you carry yourself, it may be a winning smile or it may be conventional beauty. A low score doesn't necessarily mean that you are ugly, but rather - perhaps - that you are scarred or have a bitter, distant set to your mouth. An ice princess, however physically beautiful, might have a low Comeliness (and Charisma) score.

Comeliness Bonus: Your Comeliness Bonus is added to your Social Reaction score.

Constitution

Your Constitution is a measure of your physical robustness. It represents your health, your bulk, your grit. Constitution is your ability to keep on going despite tiredness, infection, poison or raw physical damage. As with the other statistics this toughness can be represented in different ways, it doesn't mean you have to be a big slab of meat. You just might be tough, strong-willed or able to cope with pain.

Constitution Bonus: Your Constitution Bonus is added to your Hit Points at each level and is used to work out your Close Defence.



Dexterity

Your Dexterity measures your hand-eye coordination and reflexes. It is how 'handy' you are. It reflects your aim, your general agility and how quickly you can respond to a changing situation. Dexterity is a very important combat statistic reflecting your ability to avoid attacks and to hit at range.

Dexterity Bonus: Your Dexterity Bonus is added to your Ranged Attack and Ranged Defence scores.

Intelligence

Your Intelligence measures how quick on the uptake you are, how easily you acquire new information and your capacity for learning. Intelligence is a guide to insight, problem solving and rationality. Intelligent characters tend to be highly skilled and deeply knowledgeable. Intelligence is a valuable trait in a universe filled with puzzles, traps and esoterica.

Intelligence Bonus: Your Intelligence Bonus gives you a one-time bonus to Skills and Psi Points at Character Creation.

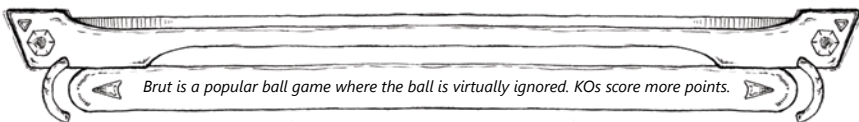
Humanoid intelligence is still greatly valued despite being utterly outstripped by many artificial intelligences.

The problem with AI is that nobody really trusts mechanical intelligence as they're simply not concerned with the kind of things that worry puny flesh-bags.

Strength

Your Strength is a measure of your physical power and how strongly you can exert yourself upon your environment. This needn't mean that you're a giant, muscle-bound ox of a person, it may simply mean that you have learned how to most effectively apply the strength that you have in a given situation. Even a wizened old Martial Arts master might have a high Strength simply because he knows how to precisely apply the power that he does have.

Strength Bonus: Your Strength Bonus is added to your Close Attack and Close Damage Bonus.





Wisdom

Wisdom is a fairly broad measure of your 'awareness'. This is both self awareness and situational awareness, that which you might also call perception. Wisdom covers instinct, keenness of senses and intuition. A high Wisdom needn't mean you're a spiritual person, you might just have keenly trained and honed senses. Equally, a low Wisdom doesn't necessarily mean you're an ignorant, unenlightened lump. You may simply prefer to go by evidence and analysis (Intelligence) over instinct (Wisdom).

Wisdom Bonus: Your Wisdom Bonus gives you a one-time bonus to Skills and Psi Points at Character Creation. It also provides your Ranged Damage Bonus.

Race Traits

The universe is a big place and full of all sorts of alien species. On some space stations you'd be hard pressed to find two people of the same species standing next to each other. A formal set of races is, then, not really very useful to us (though it provides an excuse to bilk you for an alien-races book later) and, instead we have 'race traits'. Is your character going to be a bird-like alien? Pick yourself a couple of avian traits. Maybe there's something about them reminiscent of a frog? Well then, pick an amphibious trait. Perhaps it's some kind of winged toad? Take a few from each.

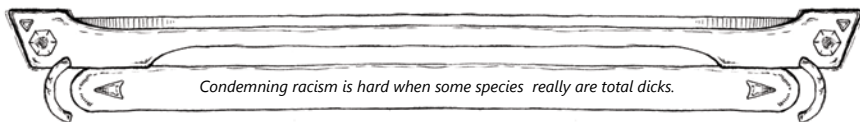
You can take up to three race traits before you start taking penalties - the more alien you are the less easy it is to relate with and cope with interstellar society. If you take a fourth - or more - your Attributes start to take a hit. You lose four points of Charisma for your fourth trait and after that another -4 to another Attribute for every additional trait. You can't take more than -8 away from any single Ability though.

Example:

Joe is playing a human being called Dazz but he wants to make him the subject of a scientific experiment to produce a new breed of hyper-skilled human being. Joe takes the Humanoid trait 'Adaptable' five times, giving him an additional five skill points on his new character.

He has to take two penalties and decides to take them all on Charisma reducing his Charisma score from 11 to 3. He reasons that the experimental skill induction techniques rendered Dazz uncommunicative and functionally autistic. This is a small price to pay - in his opinion - for a bunch of extra skill points.

The only set race is humans, who are found throughout the galaxy, like rats, due in no small part to their relatively high breeding capacity and year-round pregnancy options. Needless to say, this means some other species regard humans as vermin, dangerous, loose, sex-obsessed or morally repugnant.





Humans

Description: Humans are bipedal, upright-walking humanoids of primate descent. There is a lot of variety amongst humanity and they can be found in a bewildering array of skin and hair varieties. Humans breed quickly and their sexual capacity makes them one of the most experimental, intermixing species in the known universe. Genetically unremarkable humans lack decent senses or any particular outstanding quality. They have only two manipulative limbs, their feet having atrophied into simple walking lumps. Where humans shine is in their adaptive intelligence and use of technology. They use this adaptability and technology to make up for their species' drawbacks in other areas.

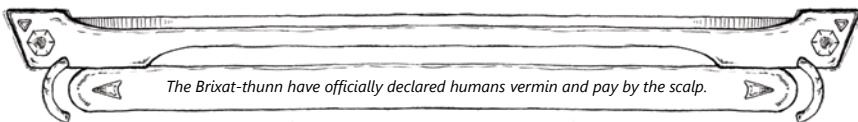
Adaptable: Humans have the trait Adaptable three times, giving them +3 Skill Points as their racial advantage.

Notes: Humans are adaptable and fast-breeding community builders. They are gregarious, empathic and can find a niche for themselves just about anywhere. Humans use technological and social adaptation to fit in to all manner of societies and environments and are the most ubiquitous and common intelligent species in known space, though they have never managed to accumulate any sort of racial power due to fractious infighting over peculiar ideas like 'ideology' and 'religion'. Many species regard humans as sub-sentient vermin due to their prodigious numbers and lack of unity.



Other Race Traits

This looks like a pretty intimidating list, but you only have to look through it once during character creation. This list of racial traits is organised by type, but there is a separate list of all the individual traits in greater detail in the back of the book. This section is intended as a quick reference by type to make it easier for you to pick the traits you want but you can mix and match as you like.





Ammonia-Based (Exotic)

Ammonia is a possible alternative to water as a catalyst for complex organic molecules to develop and evolve. Ammonia based life would need to be cold (below -34 degrees C) and would most likely develop in and around gas giants. Ammonia-based life will need special food and special 'encounter suits'.

Frozen: You take half damage from cold-based attacks and double damage from heat-based attacks.

Gasbag: You may not take 'humanoid'. You can fly at walking pace. Your hit-points are reduced by half.

Slow Metabolism: You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

Amoeboid (Species)

Amoeboid covers any creature that is a slime, goop or single-celled organism without essential and individual organs and other points of weakness. Amoeboids tend to be somewhat slow-witted, but durable.

Limited Shapeshifting: You can fit through a hole or gap the size of a fist without having to make a roll, slip bonds and otherwise ooze and slop around.

No Vitals: Half hit-points. Take only one damage from physical attacks. Take normal damage from energy attacks.

Amphibian (Species)

Amphibious species are adapted for life both in and out of the water. They may resemble frogs, newts or even fish.

Swimming: You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).

Aquatic (Species)

Aquatic species are adapted for life under water (or whatever liquid is prevalent on their planet). They may resemble fish, crustaceans, isopods or any other aquatic creature - or they may be something entirely new. Aquatic species require water-breathing apparatus or encounter suits to exist out of the water.

Bioluminescent: You can cause yourself to glow, casting light up to five metres away.

Electrosense: Even in total darkness you can sense electrical signals and patterns as though you could see them. Devices and the bioelectrical current in living things.

Night Vision: You can see in reduced lighting as normal, but not in total darkness.

Swimming: You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).



Austere (Culture)

An austere culture makes do with little and values restraint, selflessness and strength of will. Flagrant displays of wealth and consumption are frowned upon.

Ascetic: Begin play with a free point in the Investment skill.

Strong Willed: Increase your Will Save score by +2.

Tough: Increase your Toughness Save score by +2.

Avian (Species)

Avian species are bird-like, though this need not mean that they can fly. They may have light bodies, wings (atrophied or not), beaks, claws and excellent vision.

Flight: You can fly at double your normal ground speed.

Keen Sight: You can see an extra 50% as far in all conditions than normal sight and your Search skill is increased - for free - by +1.

Light Body: You may trade Constitution for Dexterity on a one-for-one basis but cannot lower that Ability beneath 2.

Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

Boron-Based (Exotic)

Boron is extremely rare and comes about through the bombardment of cosmic rays. Boron-based life would only be found in cold, rocky, radioactive environments. Perhaps they might be found inhabiting ring-systems around radioactive gas giants, or rocky planets with little or no magnetic field.

Frozen: You take half damage from cold-based attacks and double damage from heat-based attacks.

Radiation Resistant: You take half-damage from energy attacks.

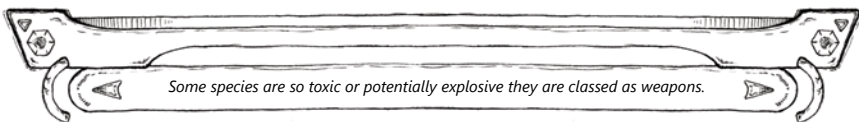
Rocky: Your armour rolls have a +1 bonus.

Slow Metabolism: You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

The Urlanth Matriarchy, for all its faults, worked to make a lot of special accommodations for species with 'special needs' such as those made of exotic materials or who required particularly exotic gaseous mixtures to breathe.

Urlanthian climate control technology was high maintenance and very expensive and much of it has been destroyed or has broken down in quite a short period of time.

Sophonts with special needs are, these days, advised to make sure they always bring an environment suit and the materials to sustain themselves as these can no longer be guaranteed save on the most high-tech and civilised worlds.





Canine (Species)

Canine species resemble terrestrial dogs, wolves or foxes and share many of their behaviours.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Acute Sense of Smell: You can detect the tiniest variations in scent and even track people by it. Your Survival and Search skills start one point higher.

Fur: A thick pelt gives you +2 to your Toughness saves to resist harsh weather.

Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

Pack Mentality: You may claim a free +1 to any roll (including skills) a number of times equal to 1+Charisma Bonus. The minimum is 1 and it must be when helping/assisting others.

Caste (Species)

Some species divide themselves into different castes with different duties and specialisations. Your species has carried this over and up into life as an intelligent starfarer. Those of a lower caste are often socially looked down upon by both members of their own species and other, non-caste, species.

Consort: A fertile male and companion to the queen. +1 Strength, +2 Constitution, -1 Intelligence, -1 Wisdom.

Queen: A fertile female, larger than most other castes, progenitor of the whole colony. +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, -1 Dexterity, move reduced to 75% of normal.

Soldier: An infertile male specialised for combat and defence. Natural weapons D4 damage, +1 Strength, +1 Constitution, -1 Intelligence, -1 Wisdom.

Worker: An infertile female genetically adapted for general colony duty. +1 Skill point, +1 Constitution.

Caste systems needn't fit into anything so obvious as those of hive creatures that resemble ants and other eusocial creatures from human myth and history. Castes can also be divided up by job, duty, area of responsibility and even much more esoteric and minor things.

The Gifani, for example, choose their ruling caste, management caste, working caste and under-caste according to rather esoteric interpretations of their ladybird like spot patterns. Unsurprisingly their religious caste, that interprets the dots, seems to have many of the best, most intelligent, strongest and most ruthless amongst its number.

Funny that.



Cephalopod (Species)

Your species resembles a squid or octopus and may have some of the capabilities relating to those species.

Camouflage: Adaptive skin lets you change your colouration and even texture providing a +2 bonus to your Stealth skill when naked.

Defensive Cloud: Once per day you can release a cloud of ink, smoke, dust or similar to obscure you as if you were hiding in a smoke cloud.

Limited Shapeshifting: You can fit through a hole or gap the size of a fist without having to make a roll, slip bonds and otherwise ooze and slop around.

Swimming: You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Tentacles: Your grapple attacks gain a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. Trying to break free is penalised by -1.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).

Cetacean (Species)

An atmosphere-breathing aquatic, the cetacean resembles a whale or dolphin and may share traits with those species. Cetaceans do not need water to breathe but do need to be kept wet and may require an encounter suit for normal interactions.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises at greater distances with greater clarity.

Echo-Location: You can use sound to 'see' up to fifteen metres in all directions by sending out a pulse. This is not normally audible to other species.

Swimming: You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Chemosynthetic (Exotic)

Chemosynthetic organisms gain energy from chemicals such as methane or hydrogen-sulphide. On Earth they are found around hot-springs and hydrothermal vents deep in the oceans. Chemosynthetic aliens draw their energy from chemical reactions rather than from consumption of other organisms or sunlight. Chemosynthetic aliens may be found on volcanic or toxic worlds.

Chemical Feast: You eat noxious gases and substances rather than food.

Poison Resistant: Against poisons your Toughness is increased by +5.

Boiling: You take half damage from heat-based attacks and double damage from cold-based attacks.

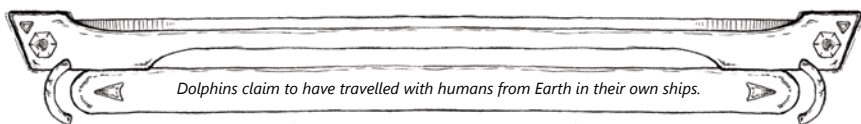
Chiropteran (Species)

Chiropterans are bat-like species with leathery or scaly wings - even if these are vestigial and not fit for purpose. They are often nocturnal and may fill the same ecological niches as birds or rodents and many are nocturnal.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Echo-Location: You can use sound to 'see' up to fifteen metres in all directions by sending out a pulse. This is not normally audible to other species.

Flight: You can fly at double your normal ground speed.





Cnidarian (Species)

Resembling the Terran jellyfish, Cnidaria are jelly-like creatures often armed with stinging tentacles and often aquatic. They may require encounter suits to interact normally with other species. Non-aquatic Cnidarians are usually gasbags.

Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

No Vitals: Half hit-points. Take only one damage from physical attacks. Take normal damage from energy attacks.

Tentacles: Your grapple attacks gain a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. Trying to break free is penalised by -1.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).

Criminal (Cultural)

Some societies form along criminal lines. They might be raiders, thieves, pirates or bandits. Something in their culture allows them - morally - to take from others and even lauds it as an accomplishment, rite of passage or part of a mating ritual.

Ambush: Your Sneak Attack is raised by +1.

Intrusive: Your Security skill is raised by +1.

Sneaky: Your Stealth skill is raised by +1 for free.

Tech-Savant: Your Tinker skill is raised by +1 for free.

Wary: Your Reflex and Logic saves are raised by +1 each.

Cyborg (Exotic)

Whether through medical procedures or through a species-wide requirement, parts of you are replaced with synthetic substitutes which may or may not be better than the real thing.

Cybernetics: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take Cybernetics you get a free, basic, cybernetic augmentation.

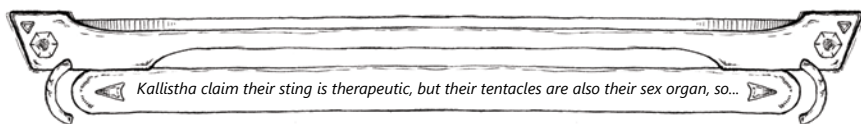
Dead (Exotic)

You, perhaps your whole species, are dead. You are kept alive somehow whether through dark magic, psionics, technology or some natural ability to persist beyond death. Needless to say, this creeps a lot of people out. You cannot be healed by conventional or psychic means, only 'naturally'.

Dead Flesh: The material that you are made of is dead, insensate, tough. Your Hit Points are doubled.

Fear Attack: You can make a Charm save, once per encounter, to make a fear attack. Enemies within fifteen metres of you must make a Will save or flee.

Immaterial: You cannot directly interact with much in the physical world but are immune to physical attacks.





Decadent (Culture)

A decadent culture may be on the decline or may be at its height. It is a culture of plenty, of excess, of narcissism and selfishness, of indulgence, fashion and passion. Decadent cultures often lead interstellar trends and spend their wealth on extravagant projects that will be mysteries to future species.

Confident: +2 Will Save.

Excess: Increase Constitution by +2 and reduce Wisdom by -1.

Fashionable: +1 to Looks and Charm Saves.

Defensive Adaptation (Species)

Many species have defensive adaptations to protect them from the environment or from predators. Some sapient species carry these adaptations forward into their dominance as an intelligent creature.

Defensive Cloud: Once per day you can release a cloud of ink, smoke, dust or similar to obscure you as if you were hiding in a smoke cloud.

Rapid Reaction: Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Shell: You have a natural armour of D4. This can be taken multiple times, increasing the dice size (D6, D8 etc).

Spines: You are covered in thick spines. Anyone hitting you in close combat must make a Reflex save or take D4 hit points of damage.

Detached (Culture)

You know little of other cultures and have been detached from them up until recently. Perhaps you are one of the last of a dying and ancient race, an envoy from a distant galaxy, have recently been awoken from a thousand-year cryonic slumber or suspended animation, perhaps you're part of an experiment to bring back the dead, possibly you've approached or broken the speed of light or collided with a wormhole and you've travelled forwards or backwards or sideways in time and arrived in another dimension or timeline. Either way, you know little about the universe and it knows little about you.

Tourist: +1 to Exotech or Xenoarchaeology. You tend to know things that others don't.

Linguist: +1 to Languages or Xenopsych. You've had to spend a lot of time learning how to communicate all over again, and you've gotten pretty good at it.

Duplicitous (Cultural)

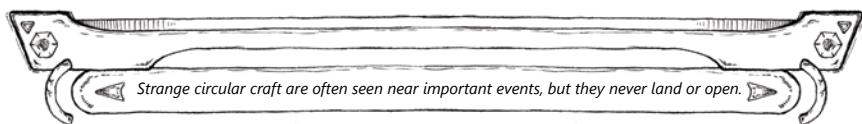
A duplicitous culture values lies, underhanded deals, backstabbing and sneakiness. It is a Machiavellian knot of plots, schemes and plans and only the very best rise to the top. Your culture may not be trusted by other cultures - and with good reason.

Cunning: +1 Wisdom.

Self-Protecting: Your Logic and Will Saves are raised by +1 each.

Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence.

Wary: Your Reflex and Logic saves are raised by +1 each.





Elemental (Exotic)

Elemental beings are more supernatural than natural, perhaps due to the presence of magic, perhaps due to some channelled life force. These are the classical elements, rather than elements as we think of them today. An Elemental trait counts as two traits.

Air: +1 Dexterity, +2 Reflex Save. You are surrounded by wind and may seem partly transparent.

Earth: +1 Constitution, Armour rolls are increased by +1. Your body is made of stone, craggy and tough.

Fire: Your hand-to-hand attacks do D4 fire damage and anyone hitting you in close combat must make a toughness save or take D4 fire damage. You take half damage from heat based attacks and double damage from cold based attacks.

Water: +1 Constitution, +1 Strength. You constantly appear to be wet and flowing.

Energy (Exotic)

You are a being of pure energy. You have no physical body, rather a shell of energy that can interact with the physical world.

Bioluminescent: You can cause yourself to glow, casting light up to five metres away.

Energetic: You take half damage from energy attacks and double damage from physical attacks (normal if immaterial).

Immaterial: You cannot directly interact with much but are immune to physical attacks.

Power Up: You may sacrifice a hit point to recharge an energy weapon. You may sacrifice more hit points to charge/jump-start other devices at the Games Master's discretion.

Engineer (Cultural)

The culture of your species is one of doers, makers, builders. Some deep-seated imperative or social development has fixated your people upon engineering.

Tech-Savant: Your Tinker skill is raised by +1 for free.

Tech-Zen: Your Experimental Tech skill is raised by +1 for free. This can take it over 6.

Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence.

Throughout the universe strange, gigantic artefacts are found in all manner of places. The devices all seem to work, in that they power up, move and otherwise seem to operate but their true purpose is always opaque.

It is speculated that some psychologically driven engineering species of old fulfilled their desire to create with stranger and larger projects - simply for the sake of it - and that these gigantic and impenetrably complex machines are what remains of their efforts.

Occasionally a machine will go wrong (or possibly right) when it powers up. This happened with the gas giant in the B'toxa system, which was eaten by a machine and transmuted into an enormous belt of 'glitter'.



Exotic Attack (Exotic)

You have access to a special, exotic attack, unique to your species which you can use once per encounter.

Dart: You can shoot a dart or quill from your flesh as a ranged attack with a range equal to your Strength in metres. It does D4 damage. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage and to increase the range by 2 metres each time.

Electroshock: You can discharge an electric shock through your body. This is a Hand-to-Hand attack, resisted by a Toughness Save. If they fail they are stunned for 1d6 turns.

Fire Breathing: You can breathe a plume of fire up to five metres. This does D4 damage to anyone hit by it. They can make a Reflexes Save to dodge. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage.

Sonic Boom: You can discharge a powerful sound at a range of up to five metres. This does D4 damage to anyone hit by it. They can make a Toughness Save to resist the effect. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage.

Toxic Gas: You can expel a cloud of toxic gas two metres around yourself in every direction. Those in the cloud must make a Toughness save or take D4 damage. You can step this up by taking it multiple times. You are unaffected by the cloud and it can last several turns.

Feline (Species)

Feline species resemble Terran cats. They are often individualistic and aloof and can also seem cruel to other species.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Graceful: +1 Dexterity.

Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

Night Vision: You can see in reduced lighting as normal, but not in total darkness.

Rapid Reaction: Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Wary: Your Reflex and Logic saves are raised by +1 each.

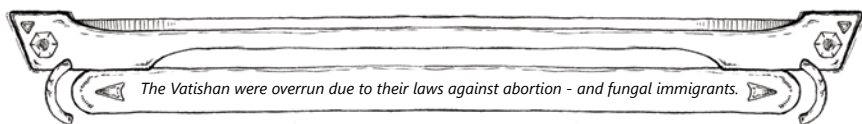
Vibration Sense: You can sense movement that disturbs that atmosphere ten metres in all directions if your whiskers are exposed to the air.

Fungal (Species)

Fungal sapientes are closer to animals than plants and are often parasitic, infesting other mobile creatures and using their bodies for transportation.

No Vitals: Half hit-points. Take only one damage from physical attacks. Take normal damage from energy attacks.

Slow Metabolism: You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.





Giant (Species)

Most intelligent species seem to range between two feet and eight feet in average height. Some few others are much, much bigger. Large creatures may find it hard to get equipment sized for them.

Enduring: +1 Constitution.

Large: Reduce your Ranged and Close defence by -1. You gain an additional +1 Hit Point per level and do an additional +1 damage in close combat.

Resilient: Increase Toughness and Power Saves by +1 each.

Strong: +1 Strength.

Herbivore (Species)

Herbivorous species are often peaceful and dull-witted, though this is not always the case. They often have a deep-seated fear and revulsion directed towards carnivorous species.

Enduring: +1 Constitution

Fearful: Your Reflex and Will saves are raised by +1 each.

Herd Mentality: You may claim a free +1 to any roll (including skills) a number of times equal to 1+Charisma Bonus. The minimum is 1 and it must be when helping/assisting others.

Rapid Reaction: Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Strong Stomach: You can subsist on food matter that other species could never consider.

High Gravity (Species)

Species from high-gravity worlds have adapted, physically, to the rigours that these place upon their bodies.

Very Strong: +2 Strength, -1 Dexterity

Very Tough: +2 Constitution, -1 Dexterity

Hi-G Adapted: +2 Power Save, +2 Toughness Save, -2 Reflexes Save

Humanoid (Species)

The majority of successful species in the galaxy are humanoids and thanks to science and suspicious similarities in genetics many of these species can interbreed. Humanoid species benefit from being adaptable and gregarious.

Adaptable: +1 Skill Point that can be spent anywhere.

Hunter (Cultural)

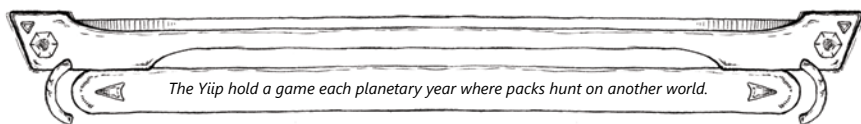
Hunter cultures value the hunting skill above all others and consider it an important cultural artefact. Even advanced species can glorify the hunt as a rite of passage or a connection to their more primitive forebears.

Warrior: +1 Close and Ranged Attack.

Weapon: +2 Skill levels with a particular type of weapon.

Survival: +1 level to Survival skill.

Stalker: +1 level to Stealth skill.





Insectoid (Species)

Insectoid species often have multiple limbs, a hard, chitinous outer shell and venomous bites or stings. They are often divided into castes and many of them have a selfless, eusocial, communistic viewpoint. Many non-insectoid species have an instinctive, hostile reaction towards insectoid species.

Chitin: Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Extra Action: Your multiple limbs allow you to make an extra attack - or similar action - each turn.

Faz: You can sense movement that disturbs that atmosphere ten metres in all directions if your antennae are exposed to the air.

Flight: You can fly at double your normal ground speed.

UV Vision: You can see into the near ultraviolet which can let you see tracks and traces, patterns and lights that others cannot.

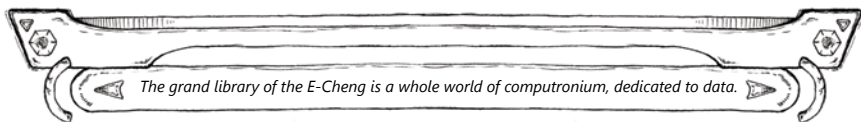
Intellectual (Cultural)

Your species places a great deal of cultural emphasis on learning, consideration and academic pursuits.

Educated: Spend a free skill point on a Lore skill.

Mindful: Add +1 to your Logic and Will saves.

Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence





Libertine (Cultural)

You come from a culture that accepts and embraces freedom and unrestrained sexuality in a way that few others do. For whatever reason - and scientific developments are as common as any other reason - your culture's social mores are far more accepting than others.

Beautiful: +1 Comeliness.

Charming: +1 Charisma.

Gregarious: +2 to Charm Save.

Sexy: +1 to Looks and Charm Saves.

Low Gravity (Species)

Your species originates on a low-gravity world with little strain upon the body. Your biology has developed and adapted accordingly. You are often tall and thin and can seem fragile compared to other species.

Light Body: You may trade Constitution for Dexterity on a one-for-one basis but cannot lower that Ability beneath 2.

Flexible: Your Reflex and Toughness saves are increased by 1.

Artificial gravity allows most species to settle into an acceptable amount of weight without the many problems that come with prolonged access to zero gravity, or the other way around.

For those that have to there are plenty of medical supplements that prevent long-term zero-gravity (or gravity) exposure from doing lasting harm.

BoneRegain is one of the most popular and sponsors many space sports.

Metal-Oxide Based (Exotic)

Metal-Oxide life can exist in high temperatures where carbon or ammonia based life cannot. It is likely to come about on metallic planets and planetoids with close orbits to their star. These life forms will need special encounter and life-support suits.

Boiling: You take half damage from heat-based attacks and double from cold attacks. Unusual Chemistry: You gain a +5 bonus to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

Shell: Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Radiation Resistant: You take half-damage from energy attacks.

Methane-Based (Exotic)

Like ammonia-based life, methane-based life exists at colder temperatures than carbon based life. Ammonia based life feeds on hydrocarbons either directly through a form of chemosynthesis or by predateding/grazing on simpler forms of life that do. Methane-based life might exist on the moons of gas giants.

Frozen: You take half damage from cold-based attacks and double damage from heat-based attacks.

Fuel-Eater: Your metabolism can digest hydrocarbon fuel such as oil, gas and petroleum.

Gasbag: You may not take 'humanoid'. You can fly at walking pace. Your hit-points are reduced by half.

Slow Metabolism: You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.



Molluscan (Species)

Gastropods (like snails) and bivalves (like mussels) but excluding cephalopods which have their own entry above. Molluscs are slow and often stationary species given to strong defensive capabilities and a slow and considerate intelligence.

Mindful: Add +1 to your Logic and Will saves.

Shell: You have a natural armour of D4. This can be taken multiple times, increasing the dice size (D6, D8 etc).

Slow: In place of taking a hit to an attribute for taking multiple traits you may halve your speed, you may do this twice.

Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence

Shell: Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Nocturnal (Species)

Nocturnal species are adapted to the night, a period when stealth and senses compete with each other.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Infrared Vision: You can sense heat and see in the dark up to fifteen metres.

Night Vision: You can see in reduced lighting as normal, but not in total darkness.

Stalker: +1 level to Stealth skill.

Ophidian (Species)

Ophidian species are snake-like. Long, tubular organisms. Ophidian sentients are typically very flexible - able to use their own bodies as manipulative limbs, or have rudimentary limbs, an agile tongue or technological assistance to do so. Ophidians are often venomous.

Coils: Your grapple attacks gain a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. Trying to break free is penalised by -1.

Infrared Vision: You can sense heat and see in the dark up to fifteen metres.

Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

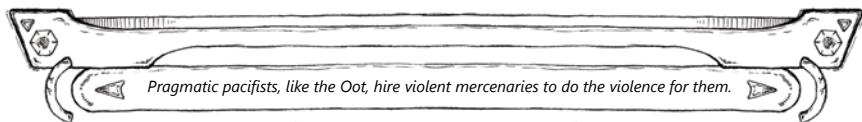
Narrow: You can fit through a fist-sized hole or gap.

Pacifistic (Cultural)

For religious, ideological or other reasons your species is a peaceful one given to a culture of contemplation and non-confrontation. You needn't be like this, but it has influenced you.

Serene: +1 to Charm and Will Saves.

Non-Combat: You may reduce your Close and Ranged Attack by -1 instead of taking an Attribute penalty. You may only do this twice. This takes the place of normal statistic reductions for taking extra traits. You *must* take Serene to access this trait.





Parasitic (Species)

Parasitic species latch onto and use - even control - other, larger host organisms. A parasitic sentient cohabits a body from another species but can move from host to host.

Parasite: You can latch onto another's body and move it around but not access any of its special capabilities. While attached to a host you use your statistics, but their hit points. You die when the host dies (unless you take 'live on'). You can only infect hosts in the general, humanoid range of size.

Host Powers: Latching onto a host you can use one of their traits or special attacks as your own. You must have the Parasite trait first.

Live On: Even if your host dies you can move on to another one. When your host is killed (reduced to -10 hit points) you may pull free of your host (at 1 hit point) and try to find another. You keep the same statistics from host to host, a reflection of your demands and capabilities on the body.

Mind Control: You can not only directly control your host but also partially infect other hosts with a melee attack, taking control of them - if they fail a Will save - for 1d6 hours. They can make the save again if you cause them to self-harm or engage in suicidal actions.

Photosynthetic (Species)

Your species is capable of producing its own food and energy through sunlight and carbon dioxide. This is most often found in plant life but can be found in other species supplementing or replacing the way that they otherwise feed.

Fruiting: You can store excess energy in your body and offer it to others as food.

Self-Sustaining: You do not need to be fed provided there is sufficient light.

Piscean (Species)

Fish-like species are most frequently aquatic and breathe fluid rather than air. They are well adapted to deal with high-pressure environments and may have other adaptations for life in deep, dark, liquid.

Bioluminescent: You can cause yourself to glow, casting light up to five metres away.

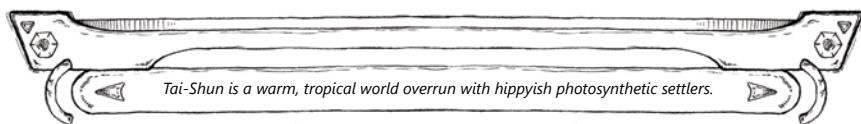
Electrosense: Even in total darkness you can sense electrical signals and patterns as though you could see them. Devices and the bioelectrical current in living things.

Night Vision: You can see in reduced lighting as normal, but not in total darkness.

Scales: Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Swimming: You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).





Plant (Species)

Plants are often - but not always - photosynthetic. Plant-like species often have a branching structure and are in a constant state of growth and die-back.

Flowering: Increase your Comeliness by +1.

Fruiting: You can store excess energy in your body and offer it to others as food.

Intimate of Nature: Your close connection with planetary cycles and life grants you a +1 bonus to your Survival skill.

Regeneration: You regenerate one hit-point every turn.

Self-Sustaining: You do not need to be fed provided there is sufficient light.

Slow Metabolism: You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

Poisonous (Species)

Your flesh, blood or other effluvia are poisonous to creatures not of your species. This may have evolved as a defensive mechanism or have been induced by genetic engineering. It may simply be the result of unusual biochemistry in your species. Whatever the case, your flesh and blood are toxic to other creatures. You may be brightly coloured or patterned to warn others of this.

Poisonous: Any enemy or creature biting you must make a Toughness save or take D6 damage. You can coat your own weapons with your toxin by cutting yourself, taking 1 hit point of damage. This lasts for a single hit.

Warning Sign: Your colouration, scent etc mark you out as something 'not tasty'. Wild animals target you last for attacks.

Predator (Species)

Your species retains its carnivorous and predatory instincts and may still prefer live prey to prepared meals.

Acute Hearing: You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Acute Sense of Smell: You can detect the tiniest variations in scent and even track people by it. Your Survival and Search skills start one point higher.

Fast: Your movement speed is 20% faster.

Keen Sight: You can see an extra 50% as far in all conditions than normal sight and your Search skill is increased - for free - by +1.

Killer Instinct: +1 bonus to your Close Attack.

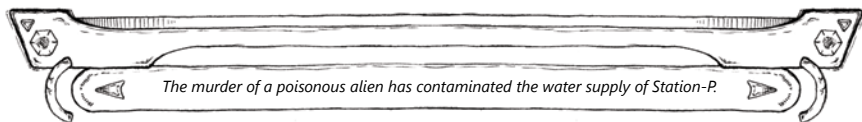
Natural Weapons: You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

Primate (Species)

While many humanoid species share primate traits, primate species retain traits such as tails and gripping feet that humanoids lack.

Foot-Hands: Gain a +1 bonus to your Climb skill. You can also use your feet with equal dexterity to your hands.

Tail: +1 to Reflex save (from balance). If taken twice you can hang from the tail and leave your hands free. If taken three times the tail is also prehensile and can wield weapons for an extra attack.





Psychic (Exotic)

Your species has a naturally developed acuity for psychic capability.

Psi Power: You have an extra Psi point to spend to activate powers.

Psi Talent: You have an extra point with which to buy psychic powers, even if you're not a Psion.

Reptilian (Species)

Reptilian species are generally egg-laying, scaled and cold blooded. There are reptile-like species that have different traits but these are the most common.

Cold Blooded: +1 to Will and Toughness Save.

Infrared Vision: You can sense heat and see in the dark up to fifteen metres.

Scales: Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Robotic (Species)

Your species is artificial. Constructed from metal and plastic rather than flesh and blood. Robotic species do not originate naturally but may develop naturally once they achieve self awareness. Individuals with large amounts of cybernetics may also develop robotic traits.

Interface: You can directly jack in to computers and other devices to control them. Your Security skill gains a boost of +1.

Brother Machine: As a machine yourself you have an intuitive understanding of other machines. Gain a boost of +1 to your Tinker skill.

Painless: You gain an additional Hit Point per level and your Toughness save is increased by +1.

Engineered: Gain a +1 to any Attribute.

Avatar: You can pair up with a particular machine or ship and act as its Avatar. This is permanent bond but anything you roll or do to do with that ship, vehicle or device is at +1 and can be done at a remote distance.





Rodentine (Species)

Rodent-like species are characterised by sharp, gnawing teeth, tails and high metabolisms. They often live relatively short - but action-packed - lives.

Fast Metabolism: Your Dexterity is increased by +2 but you suffer a -5 penalty on Save rolls against poison and disease.

Rapid Reaction: Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Tail: +1 to Reflex save (from balance). If taken twice you can hang from the tail and leave your hands free. If taken three times the tail is also prehensile and can wield weapons for an extra attack.

Scavenger (Species)

Scavengers live on the leavings of other species. The rotten, the seemingly inedible and the waste of others. There is considerable prejudice against intelligent scavenger species.

Enduring: +1 Constitution

Strong Stomach: You can subsist on food matter that other species could never consider.

Tough: Increase your Toughness Save score by +2.

Sessile (Species)

Sessile species are immobile. They require an encounter suit or special vehicle to which they can attach themselves in order to move and possibly to manipulate things around them, though they may have manipulative limbs of their own.

Cannot Move: You have to take this trait and it means you cannot move unassisted. It counts in place of reducing an Attribute to take positive traits.

Colony: Any attack that is not an area effect or ongoing damage (such as fire) can only ever do you a maximum of one Hit Point of damage. However, a loss of a part of you is a loss to the whole. For every 10 Hit Points you take you take a -1 penalty to every roll.

Shell: You have a natural armour of D4. This can be taken multiple times, increasing the dice size (D6, D8 etc).

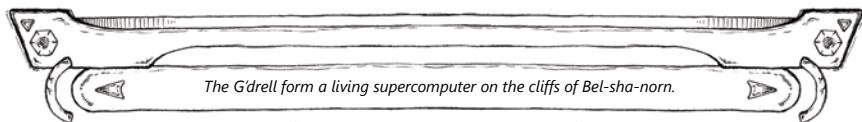
Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence.

Tough: Increase your Toughness Save score by +2.

Sessile sophonts tend to have a crappy time of it and many species wonder if they can truly be intelligent.

Enterprising sessile creatures pair up with more mobile partners or even weld themselves to, or grow into, a consenting symbiotic friend.

Silicon-based entrepreneur Jox-na-foy carries his entire board of directors with him on his back, making instant business decisions a lot easier.





Shapeshifter (Exotic)

Limited Shapeshifting: You can fit through a hole or gap the size of a fist without having to make a roll, slip bonds and otherwise ooze and slop around.

Shapeshifting: You must have Limited Shapeshifting. You can now alter your appearance into a perfect physical disguise or to hide yourself. Gain +1 to your Stealth skill.

True Shapeshifting: You must have Shapeshifting. This is a free +1 bonus you can shift around your body wherever you want. You can manifest any trait you want or give a +1 to any statistic or skill. It takes you a full turn with no other actions to shapeshift. This may be taken multiple times.



Silicon-Based (Exotic)

Silicon-based life is rare, evolving in systems where carbon is extremely rare. Silicon based-life tends to evolve in two directions - hard and crystalline or soft and gooey.

Stone Body: You have an Armour of D4 and your Toughness Save is raised by +1. You lose -1 Dexterity.

Goo Body: You have the Limited Shapeshifting trait and physical attacks made against you do half damage. Your Constitution is reduced by -1.

Software (Species)

You aren't a 'being', you are a 'free-floating consciousness'. You are an artificial intelligence but not a robot. Rather you are software. This makes you functionally immortal, able to make backups of yourself but you are only able to run one instance of yourself and to inhabit a single body at a time due to 'quantum'.

Code Body: Your mind exists separate from your body - which is a constructed artefact. You can survive the death of your body and 'restore from backup' into a new shell.

Spiritual (Cultural)

Your culture is one of spiritualism. There is a deep-seated sense of religion, contemplation and morality. Of course, your spirituality may not concur with that of other species or cultures and this can lead to terrible conflict.

Emotive: +1 Wisdom.

Fanatical: +1 Will, +1 Constitution.

Serene: +1 to Charm and Will Saves.

Thoughtful: +1 Intelligence.

Woo: +1 Psi Point.

'The Phantom', a notorious assassin, is a shapeshifter of an entirely unknown species.



Swarm (Exotic)

You are not a single organism but rather a colony, acting with a single purpose or will. You might be a collection of single celled organisms, an ant or bee analogue or even a swarm of rodents sharing a single mind. Whatever your constituents are, however, they are small and individually unintelligent.

Colony: Any attack that is not an area effect or ongoing damage (such as fire) can only ever do you a maximum of one Hit Point of damage. However, a loss of a part of you is a loss to the whole. For every 10 Hit Points you take you take a -1 penalty to every roll.

Engulf: You have a special hand-to-hand attack option. You can engulf a target which means you automatically hit every single turn with a hand to hand or natural weapon attack. Any attacks that hit the target do, however, also hit you.

Separate: You can break off a part of yourself and give it a very specific mission such as 'pull that switch'. You assign this part a number of Hit Points and off it goes.

Thermosynthetic (Exotic)

Thermosynthetic species use heat to create chemical energy within their own bodies.

Boiling: You take half damage from heat-based attacks and double damage from cold-based attacks.

Heat-Feeder: You regain a Hit Point when exposed to extreme heat or fire.

Self-Sustaining: You do not need to be fed provided there is sufficient heat.

Tiny (Species)

Small species are of sizes below the normal humanoid range. They are typically - but not always - short lived with fast metabolisms.

Fast Metabolism: Your Dexterity is increased by +2 but you suffer a -5 penalty on Save rolls against poison and disease.

Fleet: +1 Dexterity.

Rapid Reaction: Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Small: Increase your Ranged and Close defence by +1. You gain one less Hit Point per level (minimum 1).

Vacuum (Exotic)

Species that can exist in a vacuum are extremely rare and many of those which can are - or at least were - engineered. There are a very few space-native species.

Sealed System: You can live indefinitely in a vacuum without being surrounded by gas or liquid.

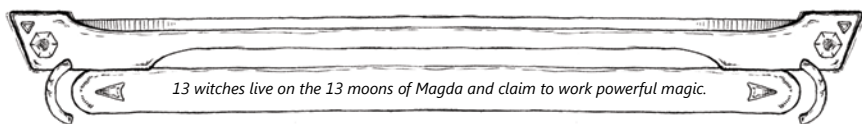
Radiation Resistant: You take half-damage from energy attacks.

Venomous (Species)

You have a venomous bite, sting or other natural attack that carries a poison with it.

Venom: Your hand to hand or other natural attack carries a venom with it. The target must make a Toughness Save or take an additional D4 damage. You can step this up by taking this trait multiple times.

Paralytic: Your hand to hand or other natural attack carries a venom with it that causes paralysis. The target must make a Toughness Save or be unable to act for D4 turns.





Warrior (Culture)

You come from a culture with a proud warrior tradition. Battle, combat, martial prowess these are things of pre-eminent importance to you - or at least the culture you come from.

Combat Reflexes: Your Initiative is increased by +2.

Survival: +1 level to Survival skill.

Tough: Increase your Toughness Save score by +2.

Fighter: +1 Close and Ranged Attack.

Weapon: +2 Skill levels with a particular type of weapon.

Zero Gravity (Exotic)

Your species has evolved in, or been engineered to live in, zero gravity environments. You are most at home without the pull of gravity weighing on your bones and in extreme cases may need an encounter suit to deal with environments that do have gravity.

3D Thinking: You naturally think in three dimensions which makes you a consummate pilot. Gain a +1 Bonus to your Pilot skill.

Flexible: Your Reflex and Toughness saves are increased by 1.

Light Body: You may trade Constitution for Dexterity on a one-for-one basis but cannot lower that Ability beneath 2.

Zero G: You offset any zero gravity penalties by +5.

With so many different species and so many different physiologies the art of the poisoner has become rather convoluted and esoteric. In an attempt to counter this problem several interstellar chemical corporations have put a lot of work into developing a universal or adaptive toxin.

Success has, so far, been limited but they're always looking for mercenaries, assassins and warriors to try out their latest batch. The results, of course, may vary.

Several warrior races have arrived at the same time. There's going to be a fight.



Classes

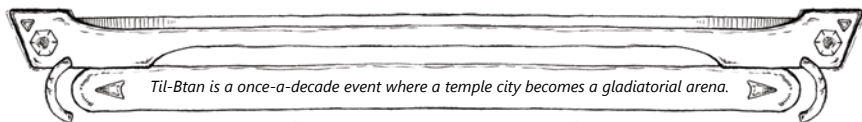
A class is a broad category describing the general 'type' of character that you are. The basic game has four, adaptable, classes that describe these categories. Each has its own particular bonuses, drawbacks and opportunities for customisation. Different classes have different strengths that are designed to complement each other in gameplay.

The Killer can take and dish out a lot of damage. The Psion has access to the hidden powers of the mind. The Scholar has secret and powerful knowledge that lets them navigate a dangerous universe with greater understanding and the Expert can specialise to a degree that the other classes cannot or be a Jack-of-all-trades who always has something to offer.

Professions and training do not necessarily carry over well from one species to another, especially if their technological development has been wildly different.

A 'soldier' on the planet Scaraz is the name given to members of the native race of low intelligence and prospects, selected to self-sacrifice in order to keep the population down. Someone describing themselves as such will, then, be met with scorn and derision rather than fear.

The unique, organic technology of the Gnowwn Collective means that their technicians simply bewilder most other species that still use inorganic technology. A Gnowwn Nipple Greaser is unlikely to be considered a highly educated technician on human worlds.



Til-Btan is a once-a-decade event where a temple city becomes a gladiatorial arena.



Expert

The Expert's strength comes from his adaptability and his skill. The Expert has a hunger to learn and to hone techniques. The more they learn the more versatile they become. An Expert can take two different tracks as they level up, specialising in particular areas to gain rapid power or broadening their skills to make them a Jack-of-all-trades.

Experts: Chancer, Con artist, Duellist, Engineer, Fence, Gambler, Hotshot pilot, Musician, Sniper, Thief

Skills: Experts can spend their Skill Points in any Skill category except Psion or Scholar.

Saves: At character creation an Expert can raise any one of their saves by 1.

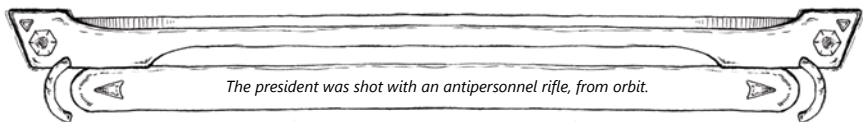


Level	Experience Points	Hit Points	Attack Bonus	Skill Points
1	0	1d6	+0	4**
2	1,500	+1d6	+1	+3
3	3,000	+1d6	+1	+2
4	6,000	+1d6	+1	+2
5	12,000	+1d6	+1	+2
6	24,000	+1d6	+1	+2
7	48,000	+1d6	+1	+2
8	96,000	+1d6	+1	+2
9	192,000	+1d6	+1	+2
10	288,000	+1d6	+1	+2
11	384,000	+2*	+1	+2
12	480,000	+2*	+1	+2
13	576,000	+2*	+1	+2
14	672,000	+2*	+1	+2
15	768,000	+2*	+1	+2
16	864,000	+2*	+1	+2
17	+96000/lvl	+2*	+1	+2
18	+96000/lvl	+2*	+1	+2
19	+96000/lvl	+2*	+1	+2
20+	+96000/lvl	+2*	+1	+2

* Con Bonus no longer applies from this level onwards.

**Plus Int & Wis Bonuses (minimum 1 after all modifiers) only at first level

NB: Attack bonus is not cumulative. Skill points are.





Killer

A Killer kills. That is their Raison d'être. A killer is deadly unarmed or armed. They have the skill, the will and the brutality to kill another sentient being by reflex. Killers are versatile, able to slaughter other beings with just about anything that comes to hand. Some become particularly fond of a weapon and hone their skill to a frightening degree.

Killers: Barbarian, Bodyguard, Commando, Guard, Gunslinger, Hunter, Mercenary, Pirate, Soldier, Space Marine

Skills: Killers can spend their Skill Points in Everyman, Combat and General Skills.

Saves: At character creation a Killer can raise one of the following Saves by +2: Toughness, Reflexes, Power.

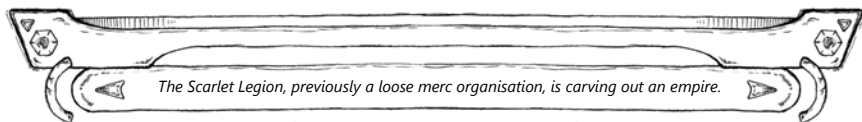


Level	Experience Points	Hit Points	Attack Bonus	Skill Points
1	0	1d8	+0	2**
2	2,000	+1d8	+1	+1
3	4,000	+1d8	+2	+1
4	8,000	+1d8	+3	+1
5	16,000	+1d8	+4	+1
6	32,000	+1d8	+5	+1
7	64,000	+1d8	+6	+1
8	128,000	+1d8	+7	+1
9	256,000	+1d8	+8	+1
10	384,000	+3*	+9	+1
11	512,000	+3*	+10	+1
12	640,000	+3*	+11	+1
13	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+12	+1
14	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+13	+1
15	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+14	+1
16	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+15	+1
17	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+16	+1
18	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+17	+1
19	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+18	+1
20+	+128,000/lvl	+3*	+1/lvl	+1

* Con Bonus no longer applies from this level onwards.

**Plus Int & Wis Bonuses (minimum 1 after all modifiers) only at first level

NB: Attack bonus is not cumulative. Skill points are.



The Scarlet Legion, previously a loose merc organisation, is carving out an empire.



Psion

A Psion has access to the power of the mind. They have the ability to manipulate the universe through the power of thought alone. Psions are able to 'break physics' and produce powerful energies and insights, seemingly out of nowhere. This effort is taxing to the mind and body and Psions also carry a 'witch mark', a mutation or other physical or psychological scar that marks them out as different. On some planets a Psion might be considered a powerful and important member of a ruling class, on others they are hunted down and burned alive - or worse. There are many prices to pay for the ability to control the universe.

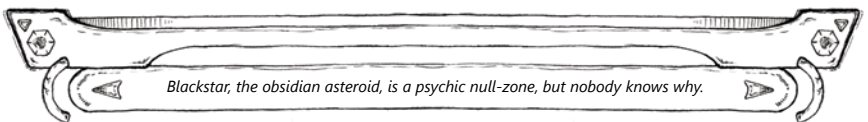


Level	XP	HP	Attack	Skill Points	Psi Points	Power Points
1	0	1d6	+0	2**	1**	1**
2	1,750	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+2
3	3,500	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+3
4	7,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+4
5	14,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+5
6	28,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+6
7	56,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+7
8	112,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+8
9	224,000	+1d6	+1	+1	+1	+9
10	336,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
11	448,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
12	560,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
13	672,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
14	784,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
15	896,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
16	1,008,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
17	1,120,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
18	1,232,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
19	1,344,000	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9
20+	+112,000/lvl	+2*	+1	+1	+1	+9/lvl

* Con Bonus no longer applies from this level onwards.

** Plus Int & Wis Bonuses (minimum 1 after all modifiers) only at first level

NB: Attack bonus is not cumulative. Skill points are.





Psions: Aristocrat, Criminal, Cultist, Holy Warrior, Monk, Priest, Refugee, Revolutionary, Shaman, Wizard

Skills: Psions can spend their Skill Points in the Everyman, Psi and General Skills.

Saves: At character creation a Psion can raise one of the following Saves by +2 - Charm, Logic, Will.

Psi Points: Psi Points are spent to enact your powers. The level of the power is its cost in Psi-Points to use. When you're out of Psi-Points you can sacrifice Hit Points in their place (five for one).

Power Points: Power Points determine how many powers you have. Each time you level you gain an allotment of Power Points with which to buy new Psychic Powers. Their cost is the same as their level and you may not buy powers with a level higher than yours.

The Witch-Mark

All Psions are marked out in some way as being 'different' from others around them. These changes are seemingly random - some good, some bad, depending on your point of view. They do set the Psion's as a breed apart and something that can be recognised - and feared. Roll a d100 to see how your character is 'marked'. If it doesn't apply due to the nature of your species or your Games Master allows you a re-roll because he doesn't like seeing you cry, you can always try again.

1. **Tears of Blood:** You are always bleeding (from your eyes, nose, mouth etc). This makes you weak but cannot kill you. -1 Con, -1 Cha, -1 Com.

2. **Fanged:** You are fanged, your mouth filled with particularly sharp and vicious teeth. You can bite as a close combat attack for d4 damage. If your species can already bite raise the die-type of the damage by one (EG: D4 up to D6).

3. **The Claw:** You have a gigantic, hideous crab claw (roll for which hand, left or right). This reduces your Dex, Com and Cha by -1 but can attack for D4 damage. If your species already has natural weapons such as claws, step the dice of damage up by one.

4. **Unibrow:** You are a Cyclops with but a single, giant eye where you would normally have at least two. This affects your senses and your appearance. Reduce Wis, Com and Cha by -1.

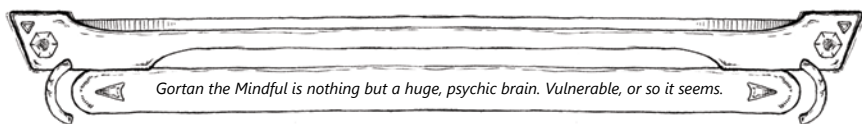
5. **Mushtool:** You are infested with a psychic fungal symbiote which covers you in faintly glowing growths and tendrils. -1 Com.

6. **Infested:** Your body crawls with insectoid pests that live in and outside of you. They do not harm you but the effect is unsettling and disgusting. -1 Cha & Com.

7. **Decay:** You are ever-rotting, surrounded by a sweet scent of decay and the constant sloughing of skin and flesh. It doesn't seem to do you much, direct, harm. -1 Con, -1 Cha, -1 Com +1 hp/lvl.

8. **Ooze:** You drip with a viscous slime, a slippery mucous that oozes from your pores. -1 Cha and Com, +2 Close Defence.

9. **Cobra:** You are venomous. Your hand to hand attacks force a Toughness save or the target suffers an extra D6 damage. If you already have a poison attack, step up the damage by a dice type (D6 to D8).





10. **Inedible:** You are poisonous, anything biting you or tasting your blood or flesh must make a Toughness Save or suffer d6 damage. If you're already poisonous step up the damage by a dice type.

11. **Grasping Arm:** You have a tentacle replacing one of your normal limbs. -1 Cha, -1 Com, +1 to grapple attacks.

12. **Trippy:** Your appearance is somewhat psychedelic. Your skin and hair are a mass of swirling colours and patterns. +1 to close and ranged defence.

13. **The Fog:** Your body surrounded you with a fine mist that obscures you from direct view. +1 Ranged Defence.

14. **Charge:** Your body builds up a high, natural, static charge. You constantly hum and crackle with power. Bare handed attacks or those with metal weapons do +1d6 damage, but anything you touch is charged/ burnt/electrified.

15. **Glowing:** You are bioluminescent and glow with a dim light - just enough to read by. You may not use Stealth in darkness.

16. **The Darkness:** You are wreathed in Shadow and the shadows you cast or hide in are deeper and larger than others. Gain a free point in the Stealth skill.

17. **I am the Fire:** Your body gives off a cloud of choking smoke. +2 Ranged Defence, +1 Close Defence. You can suppress this as an act of will but it takes some effort.

18. **Gummy:** Your touch is tacky and gooey, clinging to things such as walls and weapons. +1 free level in the Climb skill and to any appropriate Save rolls.

19. **Stalks:** You are supplied with additional antennae that enhance your senses even if they make you look strange. +1 Wis, -1 Cha.

20. **Rapture:** You have an unnatural degree of beauty, so much so it can even be unsettling - +1 Cha and Com.

21. **Out on a Limb:** You have an extra manipulating appendage such as an arm. +1 Str and Dex, -1 Cha and Com.

22. **Devolver:** You have a bestial and primitive appearance - +1 Str and Con, -2 Charisma, -1 Com.

23. **Wooden:** You are part plant either through transformation or symbiosis. As a result you are tough and woody. +1 Con, +1 Armour, -1 Cha.

24. **Melodious:** Every movement you make creates chimes and sounds of a hypnotic and meditative nature. You may not have the Stealth skill and can put those Skill points elsewhere.

25. **Long Nails:** You have claws. These wicked talons attack for 1d4 damage, or step up your hand to hand damage by a dice type. -1 Cha and Dex.

26. **Mind's Eye:** You have a third eye protruding from the 'front' of your brain. This is considered auspicious mark. +1 Wis +1 Psi Point, -1 Cha.

27. **Damp:** You are always dripping wet, your skin clammy and damp, the water seeming to come from nowhere. -1 Cha.

28. **For the Birds:** Instead of hair you have feathers like a bird. -1 Charisma.

29. **Walk With Me:** You are constantly aflame and cannot wear clothing, only hard armour that is fireproof. Anything or anyone hitting you takes 1hp of damage, anything you hit takes +1 hp of damage. -1 Cha.

30. **Ribbit:** Webbed - You have webbed hands and feet. -1 Cha. You get a +1 bonus to any rolls relating to swimming.



31. **Pelt:** You are covered in soft fur. -1 Cha but +1 to Saves made against cold effects.

32. **Enormulous:** You are at least ten feet tall. +1 Str, +1 Con, -1 Charisma, -1 Dexterity.

33. **Little Friends:** Your flesh is inhabited by strange creatures absent in nature that somehow enhance your natural capabilities. These are often called homunculi but cannot live separate from your body. +2 to any Attribute, -1 Cha & Com.

34. **Sexual Selection:** You have exaggerated or missing primary or secondary sexual characteristics. Roll 1d6 1-3 exaggerated, 4-6 missing. -1 Cha and Com either way.

35. **Horny:** You have a sharp spike, or spikes protruding from your head. This spike can be used to make a hand to hand attack for d6 damage, -1 Cha, Com.

36. **Jake the Peg:** You have an extra leg beyond the normal number for your species. -1 Cha and in addition this makes you somewhat clumsy and unwieldy, movement reduced to 3/4. You do find it easier to keep your balance though and get a +1 bonus to any rolls made to do with balance.

37. **Willing to Sacrifice:** You are icy cold, your breath misting every time you exhale. Anything hitting you takes 1 hp of damage, any of your attacks do +1 damage. -1 Cha.

38. **Killing B:** You are covered in unsightly, cancerous growths. -2 Cha & Com.

39. **Mostly Armless:** You have a missing limb – 1-3 arm, 4-6 leg, 1-3 left, 4-6 right. -1 Dex or 1/2 movement.

40. **Twister:** Your limbs and flesh are twisted and deformed. -1 to a physical attribute of your choice. -2 Cha.

41. **Omnomnom:** You are covered in tiny mouths that chatter and whisper blasphemies, lies and the occasional hard truth. -2 Cha and Com.

42. **Agape:** Your mouth is full of fangs and your jaw can detach. You can give a massive bite for 1d8 damage and swallow something the size of a dog or child with ease. Cha -1.

43. **Nosy:** In place of a mouth you have a long, thin proboscis, you can only feed by drinking. Psions with this problem may cover it with elaborate headpieces and masks -2 Charisma.

44. **Austin:** Your flesh is dark and grey and resembles stone. You grind and drip dust as you move. +2 Armour, -1 Cha, you may not take the Stealth skill and can reassign the points.

45. **Balanced:** You are bald and covered in tough, flexible, interlocking scales. +1 Close Defence, -1 Cha and Com.

46. **Wag:** You have a floppy, wagging tail that telegraphs your mood. +1 Cha, -1 Com.

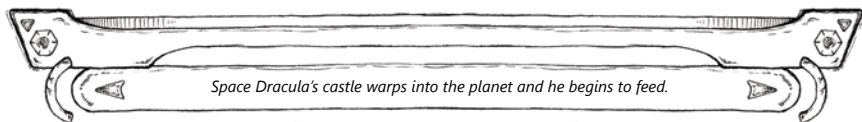
47. **Monkey See:** You have a tail that can grip and move to balance you. +1 Climb, +1 Reflexes Save, -1 Com.

48. **Shock:** Your back and chest are covered in a hardy shell into which you can withdraw your limbs and head. +2/+4 Close Defence (withdrawn is +4), +1 Armour, -2 Charisma.

49. **Auld Reekie:** You have a foul smell. Close Defence +1 in close combat against enemies with a sense of smell. -1 Wis, -2 Cha.

50. **Cry Me a River:** You are covered in weeping Sores: -2 Cha and Com, -1 Con.

51. **Shades:** You have a shiny, reflective skin like a mirror.





52. **Norman:** You are covered in spines that do d4 damage to anyone who hits you. -1 Cha.

53. **Jasper:** Somewhere in your body you have a sting. It can attack for d4 damage and force a Toughness save or inflict an extra d6 damage.

54-63. **Strange Skin:** Your flesh is an unusual and highly visible hue or texture.

64. **Living Skeleton:** your skin and flesh are tight to your bones. -1 Str, -1 Con, -2 Cha, -1 Com.

65. **The Devil's Teat:** You have an extra nipple or breast. This is common amongst human Psions.

66. **Wire:** You are covered in hooked thorns like a rose. 1 hp of damage to anyone hitting you in close combat, -1 Cha

67. **Now With...:** You have non-functional but pretty looking wings. They can help break your fall, halving the effective distance that you drop. -1 Cha.

68. **Visible Man:** You have transparent flesh through which can be seen your circulatory system and organs. -2 Cha, -2 Com.

69. **Fuzzy:** You are hard to see, your image a blurry smear to anything and anyone that tries to look at you. +2 to Close and Ranged Defence, -2 Cha.

70. **Pestilence:** Anyone you touch must make a Toughness Save or fall ill, losing -2 Con for a week after which they recover.

71. **Oatmeal:** You constantly have dry flakes of skin falling from your flesh. -2 Cha, -2 Com.

72. **Studded:** Your skeleton grows out of your skin in 'balls' and nubs that push against the skin. +1 Armour, -1 Cha.

73. **Floaty:** You hover an inch about the ground and never touch it.

74. **You'll Never De-Foetus:** You have a conjoined twin attached, prominently to your flesh. Sometimes it wakes up. -2 Cha, -2 Com, +1 Psi Point.

75. **Neem:** You have glowing eyes that flare brighter whenever you use your psychic power. -1 Cha.

76. **Paisley:** You have patterned skin. This can appear to be tattoos, abstract patterns, stripes or anything else. Some Psions are even born covered in strange sigils and writings. This pattern flares with light when you use your powers.

77. **Eye See You:** Your body is covered in eyes, -2 Cha and Com, +2 Wisdom.

78. **Headcase:** Your skull is swollen, barely containing the enflamed and massive brain within: -2 Cha, -2 Com +2 Int, +1 Wis.

79. **Agony:** You are in constant pain but you are learning to endure it: -2 Con, +1 Toughness/Will save at first level, +1 hp/lvl.

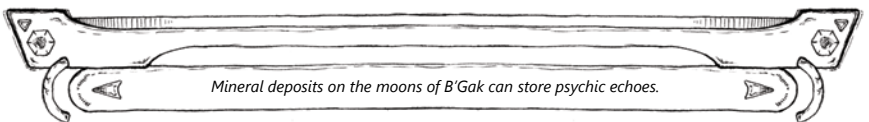
80. **One Man Band:** Your voice is choral, as though many were speaking at once. Unsettling but beautiful. +1 Cha.

81. **The Bells:** You are a hunchback. -2 Com.

82. **Little Friend:** You are a midget, dwarf or little person. -1 Con, -1 Str, -1 Cha, +1 Close and Ranged Defence.

83. **Rapunzel:** You have rapidly growing hair (or equivalent): It grows at a rate of at least three feet per day.

84. **Wiggins:** You have an unusual hair colour: d10: 1. Snow white, 2. Absolute black, 3. Primary red, 4. Flame orange, 5. Buttercup yellow, 6. Primary green, 7. Primary blue, 8. Imperial purple, 9. Glass transparency, 10. Roll twice and combine.





85. **Angelic:** Your head is surrounded by a glowing halo, leakage from the psychic plane.

86. **Demonic:** You have cloven hooves in place of feet: -1 Cha, no need for shoes.

87. **Speak no Evil:** Mute.

88. **Hear no Evil:** Deaf.

89. **See no Evil:** Blind

90. **Locked-In:** You cannot sense or speak in any sense other than with your mind which works over a radius of 5 metres replacing all these abilities.

91. **Phat:** You are grotesquely and freakishly obese. Half movement, +2 Con, +1 Strength, -2 Cha, -1 Com.

92. **Friday Job:** Your body is assymetrical, larger/different on one side than the other. Reduce Cha and Com by -1, reduce one physical attribute by -1 and increase another by +1.

93. **Perfumed:** You exude pheromones that make you seem more charming and irresistible than you are: +2 Cha, +1 Com.

94. **Super Sonic:** You have big bat-like ears that give you a great sense of hearing: +1 Wis, -1 Cha.

95. **Karma Chameleon:** Your flesh and skin can shift to hide you in most circumstances: Gain +1 free level in the Stealth skill.

96. **What is that thing?:** Your face has a hideous aspect: -2 Charisma, -4 Com.

97. **All the Better to See You With:** You have big, cat-like eyes and can see well in low-light conditions. +1 Wisdom.

98. **Throwing the Horns:** You have flexible, but tough, metal skin: 3/4 movement, +1d4 Armour.

99. **Evergreen:** Your body has a kind of twisted regeneration ability. Your wounds heal with cancerous growths but you must constantly 'trim' your renegade flesh.

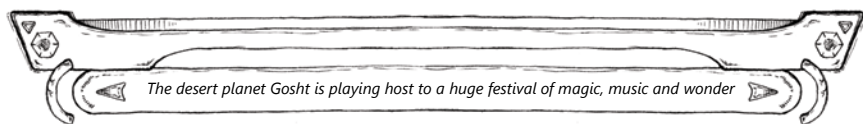
Regeneration 1 hp per turn. -2 Cha, -2 Com.

100. **Evolutionary:** You resemble a perfected, uncannily so, member of your species. +1 to all Attributes.

On primitive worlds psionic power has been trapped and channelled by tradition into many different forms. These 'standing waves' of psychic energy can be ritualistically tapped into using 'faith' or a semi-intellectual study of 'magic'.

If you come from a primitive society and would rather play in this way you can rip off the magic-user or cleric from Lamentations of the Flame Princess (or another OSR-style game) and just plug in the magic and spell lists from the cleric or magic-user to the psion character class.

Bosh, sorted.





Scholar

The Scholar devotes themselves to deep learning. To them the secrets of lost civilisations and ancient technologies are things to master - not to gawk at or run from. A Scholar can develop a near-mystical understanding of technology and alien societies. This can often make them wildly eccentric.

Experts: Archaeologist, Consulting detective, Espionage agent, Librarian, Mad scientist, Researcher, Savant, Technician, Tomb raider.

Skills: Scholars can spend their Skill Points in Everyman, General and Scholastic Skills.

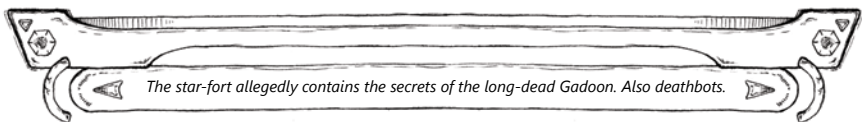
Saves: At creation a Scholar can raise any of the following saves by +1: Logic, Will.



Level	Experience Points	Hit Points	Attack Bonus	Skill Points
1	0	1d6	+0	3**
2	2,250	+1d4	+1	+2
3	4,500	+1d4	+1	+1
4	9,000	+1d4	+1	+1
5	18,000	+1d4	+1	+1
6	36,000	+1d4	+1	+1
7	72,000	+1d4	+1	+1
8	144,000	+1d4	+1	+1
9	288,000	+1d4	+1	+1
10	432,000	+1d4	+1	+1
11	576,000	+1*	+1	+1
12	720,000	+1*	+1	+1
13	864,000	+1*	+1	+1
14	1,008,000	+1*	+1	+1
15	1,152,000	+1*	+1	+1
16	1,296,000	+1*	+1	+1
17	1,440,000	+1*	+1	+1
18	1,584,000	+1*	+1	+1
19	1,728,000	+1*	+1	+1
20+	+144,000/lvl	+1*	+1	+1

* Con Bonus no longer applies from this level onwards.

**Plus Int & Wis Bonuses (minimum 1 after all modifiers) only at first level
NB: Attack bonus is not cumulative. Skill points are.





Skills

Skills help differentiate and specialise your character in a similar way to racial traits. Everyone starts with some Skills and everyone gains some Skills when they level up. Skills can be things like lore and knowledge, specialisation with a particular weapon, well-practised combat moves or a honed ability to sneak around, break things or repair things.

When you roll against a Skill you roll a D6 and if you roll under the skill score you succeed. If you roll over the skill score then you fail. It's as simple as that. If your skill score is 6 you roll two dice and they both have to come up six for you to fail. Even if you do fail you may get a chance to recover by making a Save roll. Some skills provide special bonuses and capabilities and this is noted in their text.

Skills are a great opportunity to expand or specialise your character and to make them distinctive and useful.

There are all sorts of different ways to learn. Maybe you've had skill-tapes force fed into your brain through electromagnets. Maybe you've inherited a lifetime of knowledge as genetic memory. Maybe you think you should start with more skill points because of this.

Tough titties. All this means is that you're 'unlocking' rather than learning skills as you level up. Stop trying to be a munchkin.

Everyman Skills

Everyman Skills are the Skills that everyone starts with and that everyone can raise with their Skill Points regardless of their class.

Climb
Languages
Search
Security
Sleight of Hand
Sneak Attack
Stealth
Structure
Survival
Tinker

Climb:

Your ability to clamber up surfaces without the aid of climbing gear or equipment. Failing a Climb Roll will mean you'll need to make a Save, or fall.

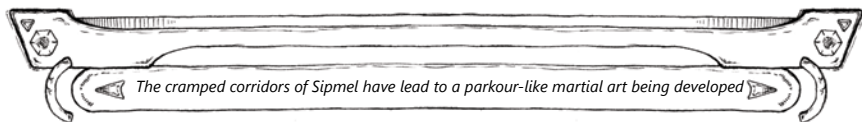
Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Languages:

Each point in the Languages Skill is another unlocked language that you know how to read, write and speak. You already know your own language and the first point gives you access to the trade pidgin used between different interstellar species and cultures.

Even if you don't have a particular language you can roll under this Skill to get a vague idea or convey the general meaning of what you want to say through hand signals and charades. You can take this skill beyond 6 and learn even more languages and scripts.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1 allowing them to speak their native language and TerrAnglic.





Search:

Your Search Skill is how good you are at finding the non-obvious in your surroundings through actively looking. Search helps you uncover hidden caches, secret doors and to frisk people for concealed weapons. This Skill represents how well you have trained yourself to put yourself into the mind of someone trying to hide something and how meticulous and patient you are in your investigations.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Security:

Your Security Skill describes how good you are at bypassing mechanical and electronic locks and getting around or through alarm systems. It does not make a computer hacker, rather it is a suite of tips and tricks for getting into physical places that you're not supposed to be. Failing this roll risks breaking the lock or tripping an alarm. You may be called upon to make a Save Roll to avoid this.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Sleight of Hand:

Your Sleight of Hand Skill represents your ability to do a number of deft and well practised moves with your hands. It is the art of distraction, of legerdemain, pick-pocketing and small tricks of stage magic such as producing coins from behind people's ears and other feats of grandfatherly annoyance.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Sneak Attack:

The Sneak Attack skill gives you a bonus to hit and to do damage against a target you flank or attack unawares. A more powerful version of this skill is available as a Combat Skill and the two can be used together for a combined bonus. This is the one that's available to anyone. Each level in the Skill gives you +1 to damage against a vulnerable target.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.





Stealth:

The Stealth Skill determines how good you are at moving, silent and unseen, avoiding your enemies and any trouble they might give you. Rolling under the skill means you are successfully sneaking. Failing - or doing something that might give you away - allows any guards or devices in the area to make a Logic Save to spot you.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Structure:

Structure represents your familiarity with a broad range of construction techniques and architectural styles as well as the practical demands of building on various types of world or in various types of spaceship. Structure will allow you to identify weak points, find novel or unusual ways to get in or out of somewhere and provide information about whoever - or whatever - built something. With luck you'll also be able to put together a flat-pack.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Survival:

There are so many worlds with so many different ecologies and environments that learning any sort of universally applicable survival skill is incredibly difficult. Despite that many explorers and cosmopolitan travellers pick up an instinct for keeping themselves alive in difficult circumstances and the Survival Skill represents the ability to scrape together enough food and water to sustain your life for a little while longer.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

Tinker:

While it takes a great deal of knowledge and understanding to be a true technician everyone learns a few tricks to keep their technology going or to re-appropriate it for a new purpose. Your Tinker Skill represents your basic knowledge of technology.

This governs things like changing a tyre, swapping a battery, building a new computer from plug-and-play parts or giving the view-screen a Fonzie-style thump to get it working again.

Everyone starts with this Skill at 1.

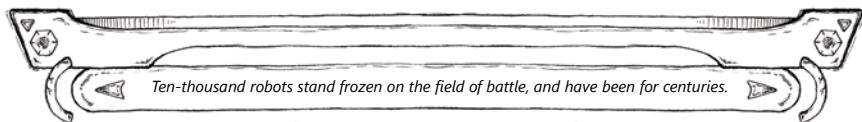
Psi Skills

Psi Skills enhance and increase the scope of a Psion's power. Only Psions may develop these Skills as a complement to their psychic prowess. Some of these skills act like minor psychic powers themselves while others alter the description, range or power of psychic efforts.

- Distant Mind
- Intuition
- Mental Armour
- Penetrating Insight
- Power Reserve
- Psychic Training
- Ravaging Intellect

Distant Mind

You have worked upon your mind to extend the range of your powers. For each level in this skill you add two metres to the effective range or radius of a power. You can take this Skill higher than 6 and it continues to provide the same bonus for each level.





Intuition

Your mind is attuned to your surroundings and to the threads of probability and possible futures. You can roll this Skill to get a 'Good' or 'Bad' feeling about a situation, person or item. Of course, up until you have the Skill at 4 you might as well just toss a coin. The Games Master is the one who makes the roll for you and provides you with the information. They can give you extra information, or disinformation, on top of how you feel about things, at their discretion.

Mental Armour

Your mind is strong, resilient and is able to unweave psychic attacks as they are directed at you. You can take energy out of telekinetics and protect your mind with a nigh-impenetrable psychic barrier. Any psychic attack that does damage is reduced in effect as though you had armour against it.

Skill Level	Mental Armour
1	1
2	D4
3	D6
4	D8
5	D10
6	D12

Penetrating Insight

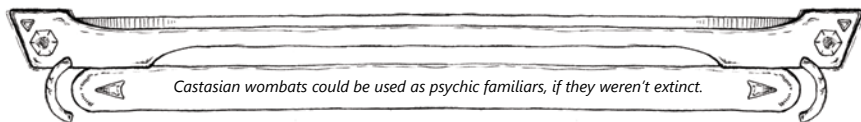
You have a keen and adaptable brain and your mind is able to cut through or flow around the typical psychic defences that people throw up to thwart your powers. You take your Skill Level away from any Saves that they make against your powers. EG: If you had a Penetrating Insight Skill of three and tried to dominate the mind of someone with a Will Save of six, they would actually have to roll under three to ward you off.

Power Reserve

You have trained your psychic endurance over time and have learned to exert more effort with less power and to leave yourself a greater reserve of energy to tap into. Each point in this Skill increases your Psi Points by one. You may take this Skill above 6.

Psychic Training

Through dint of great effort and an even greater amount of practice you have been able to unlock more of the powers of your psychic talent. Each level in Psychic Training gives you another Power Point with which to buy new psychic powers. You still cannot buy any powers of a level higher than yours, though you may 'bank' these points to spend at your next level if you wish.





Ravaging Intellect

You have an unerring ability to tear things down, break them up and destroy them. When powered by anger and a vicious desire to do harm your powers are much more effective. Any psychic power you use that causes damage has its damage increased by your level in this skill. EG: You have two in this skill and unleash a psychic bolt that would normally do 2d4 damage. Now it does 2d4+2.

Combat Skills

Combat skills enhance and compliment a character's ability to 'jack people's shit up' in combat. They can represent familiarity with certain weapons, practiced techniques, martial arts or simple badassitude. Killers benefit the most from Combat Skills but Experts can use them to define specific areas in which they are particularly masterful. Most Combat Skills can be tried by anyone, but at a -5 penalty to their attack roll. Many Combat Skills offset this penalty and at level 6 even provide a +1 bonus when making such a manoeuvre.

- Ambush
- Armour Eater
- Bleeding Cut
- Chink
- Combat Dodge
- Combat Reflexes
- Cripple Attack
- Cripple Defence
- Cripple Movement
- Deadly Shot
- Defensive Gunfighter
- Double-Weapon
- Flurry of Blows

- Hail of Bullets
- Hold
- Juggernaut
- Knock-Out Blow
- Neck Hairs
- Power Attack
- Ready Blow
- Short Controlled Bursts
- Snipe
- Stun Attack
- Tactical Command
- Trip Attack
- Weapon Expert
- Wrestle

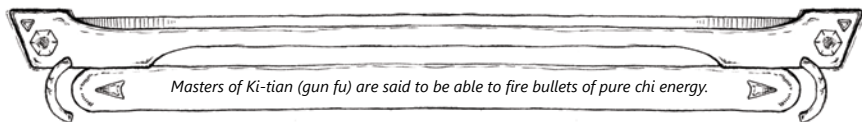
Ambush

Ambush is a powerful version of Sneak Attack and can be taken with it. Each level of Ambush adds a D6 to the damage you deal on a successful flank, rear or surprise attack. Ambush can also stack with Deadly Shot. EG: Hellen leaps out of the darkness and plunges her combat knife between the shoulders of Burbak the Planet-Slayer. She would normally do 1d4 damage but because she has a Sneak Attack skill of two and has an Ambush skill of two she ends up doing 2d6+1d4+2.

Armour Eater

You can strike blows against an enemy's armour (natural or otherwise) in order to reduce its effectiveness. You make an attack at -5 (offset by your Skill Level) and if you succeed you reduce the enemy's armour dice type one level.

EG: An enemy with d12 armour is struck with an Armour Eater attack and this reduces it to 1d10. An enemy with 1 armour is struck and this reduces their armour value to zero.



Masters of Ki-tian (gun fu) are said to be able to fire bullets of pure chi energy.



Bleeding Cut

You can strike across an enemy's flesh - with a bladed weapon - opening a deep cut that causes them to leak vital fluid. You make an attack at -5 (offset by your Skill Level) and if you succeed and do at least one point of damage then your target must make a Toughness Save or start bleeding one hit point every turn until they are able to apply medical assistance to the wound. You can make multiple cuts and the bleeding is cumulative.

Chink

You can attempt to find a gap or weak point on an enemy's armour and to bypass it to hurt them directly. This only applies against one layer/dice of armour. If the enemy has multiple dice or layers of armour the remainder are rolled as normal. You make an attack roll at -5 (offset by your skill level) and if you succeed you ignore their armour when you roll damage.

Combat Dodge

In close combat you are damned difficult to hit. You are slippery and flexible and able to twist and move around blows that would take the head off anyone else's shoulders. Each point in this skill increases your Close Defence by one.

Combat Reflexes

Through bitter experience and honed reflexes born of a great deal of practice you have elevated your combat reaction times to a level of godlike ability. Each point in this skill increases your Initiative bonus by +1.

Cripple Attack

You know how to strike an enemy to take the power and effectiveness out of their own attacks. You make an attack at -5 (offset by your skill level) and if you succeed and do at least one point of damage then your target must make a Toughness Save or have their Close and Ranged attack penalised by -1. You may make this attack multiple times and the effects stack. First aid attention will restore lost attack points.

Cripple Defence

You know how to strike an enemy in such a way as to take the wind out of their sails, to slow them down and to make them more vulnerable to follow-up attacks. You make an attack at -5 (offset by skill level) and if you succeed and do at least one point of damage then your target must make a Toughness Save or have their Ranged and Close Defence penalised by -1. You may make this attack multiple times and the effects stack.

Cripple Movement

You know how to strike an enemy in order to make them move more slowly. A slash to the tendons, a cut to the muscle, whatever the cause they cannot run or move as fast after you have struck them. You make an attack at -5 (offset by skill level) and if you succeed and do at least one point of damage then your target must make a Toughness save or halve their movement. Striking twice with this attack renders your target unable to move.



Deadly Shot

You can line up a deadly shot with your ranged weapon of choice, aiming to strike a vulnerable or particularly deadly area on your opponent's body. You make an attack at -5 (offset by skill level) and add +5 to the damage should you hit. This is for making precise and deadly strikes even with relatively light weapons. This can stack with other damage-increasing Skills.

Defensive Gunfighter

You know how to make best use of cover and how best to anticipate enemy shots. You add your Skill level to your Ranged Defence making you more difficult to hit for enemies using blasters, lasers or other ranged weapons.

Double-Weapon

You have trained yourself to use a weapon in each hand with something approaching equal facility. When using dual weapons you make your attack roll at -5 (offset by Skill level). If you hit you roll damage for both weapons and pick the highest roll for damage.

Flurry of Blows

You have trained yourself to unleash a number of blows all at once in melee or hand to hand. You make your attack roll at -5 (offset by Skill level) but you can make two attacks on the same target or two different targets.

Hail of Bullets

You have trained yourself to unleash a number of shots all at once in ranged combat, a rapid onslaught that can leave many enemies dead. You make your attack roll at -5 (offset by Skill level) but you can make two attacks on the same target or two different targets. If you already have multiple attacks this move can only increase that number by one.

Hold

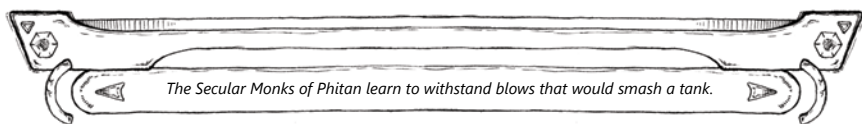
Once you get someone into a wrestling hold it is hard for them to escape. Take your Skill level away from their Power save to try and break free of your grip (minimum 1).

Juggernaut

You are a powerhouse of scar tissue and pure grit that can keep going despite grievous-seeming wounds and immense physical hardship. Add your Skill level to your Hit Points and at level six in the Skill add an extra +1 Hit Point per level.

Knock-Out Blow

You have trained yourself to knock out - or otherwise incapacitate - your enemies with a powerful blow to the skull, nerve ganglion or other vulnerable area. A concussion or the stunning effect of pain takes care of the rest. You make an attack at -5 (offset by Skill level) and if you strike and do at least one point of damage your enemy must make a Toughness Save or fall unconscious for 1d6 minutes. Any further damage will rouse them from their unconscious state.





Neck Hairs

You have a knack for knowing when you're under attack - or about to be under attack. When you are targeted by an attack that you should be unaware of (a sniping attack or sneak attack typically) roll under your Skill level and you're able to use your full ranged (or close) defence.

Power Attack

You know how to unleash your full power in a single, devastating blow. You make an attack at -5 (offset by your Skill level) and do +5 damage with a melee or hand to hand attack.

Ready Blow

You can circle your enemy, preparing to strike. When you unleash your blow it is usually with unerring accuracy, almost guaranteeing a hit. You can hold your melee attack up to a number of turns equal to your Skill level and gain a bonus to hit equal to that number of turns. EG: If you have a Ready Blow Skill of three and hold on without attacking for two turns you can then attack with a bonus of plus two.

Short Controlled Bursts

You are trained to conserve ammunition. You add your Skill Level to the Ammo Save of the ranged weapons you are using (maximum nineteen). If you are using exact ammo tracking then Short Controlled Bursts is added to your magazine size.

Snipe

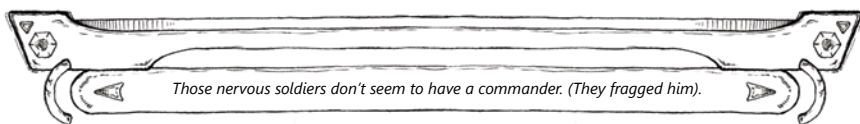
You can line up your shot over several turns, preparing to shoot. When you do fire your shot it is usually with unerring accuracy and timing, almost guaranteeing a hit. You can hold your ranged attack up to a number of turns equal to your Skill level and gain a bonus to hit equal to that number of turns. EG: If you have a Snipe Skill of three and hold on without attacking for two turns you can then attack with a bonus of plus two.

Stun Attack

You can make an attack against a vulnerable area on your enemy to try and stun them, preventing them from acting for a turn. Make an attack at -5 (offset by Skill). If you hit and do damage your target must make a Will Save, penalised by your skill level (minimum one) or be unable to act on their next turn.

Tactical Command

You are a good combat leader, able to bring your experience and tactical acumen to play in combat. Your Tactical Command skill provides a pool of points which you can dole out to yourself or your companions during combat to add to attack scores, defence scores or damage scores. Once spent, these points are gone for the duration of the combat.





Trip Attack

You can make a blow to bring an enemy down to their knees or flat on their back, which makes them vulnerable to further attack. You make your attack at -5 (offset by Skill level) and your target must make a Reflexes save or be knocked prone. They can still attack or shoot, but it will take an action for them to get up and while flat on their back their defences are reduced to the basic level.

Weapon Expert

You are an expert with a particular kind of weapon (pistol, rifle, heavy, one handed melee, two handed melee) and you add your Skill Level to your attack score when using that particular kind of weapon. You may take this skill multiple times for different kinds of weapons.

Wrestle

You are an expert wrestler, compensating - perhaps - for a lack of raw physical power with the knowledge of a wide variety of moves, holds and tricks. You add your Skill level to your attack score when wrestling and also add it to your Power save (maximum nineteen) to keep hold of people. This can combine with Hold.

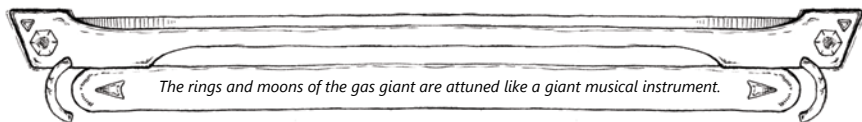
Scholastic Skills

Scholastic skills are representative both of intuitive understanding of technology and of hard graft learning how to apply academic knowledge to the real world. It can represent both a savant level of understanding and the effort of many years honing one's craft. Scholastic skills are only available to the Scholar class.

- ExoTech
- Experimental Tech
- Hacker
- Human Computer
- Medicine
- Repurpose
- Robotic Companion
- Supercharge
- Trained Animal
- Xenoarchaeology
- Xenopsych

ExoTech

The universe is full of the outlandish relic-technology of lost races and golden-ages past. Much of this technology is incomprehensible or seems to work by magic. You have devoted a great deal of time to trying to understand these lost technologies and have gained an almost intuitive grasp of even the most outlandish technologies. You can roll this Skill to understand the purpose and effect of a piece of ExoTech without having to switch it on and try it.





Experimental Tech

You are a tinkerer with an ability to enhance equipment that you can get your hands on. These changes are all high maintenance and you can only upkeep so much equipment. You can improve weapon damage, range, accuracy; you can make starships fly further and faster, you can even enhance force-fields far beyond their normal capabilities. For each point in this skill you can apply a +1 bonus, increase a dice type or boost something by 10%. EG: Jake has this skill at one and uses it to enhance the Hit Points of his starhopper, boosting them from one-hundred to one-hundred-and-ten. In effect this is a pool of points that you can distribute around your kit and that of others to boost their capabilities.

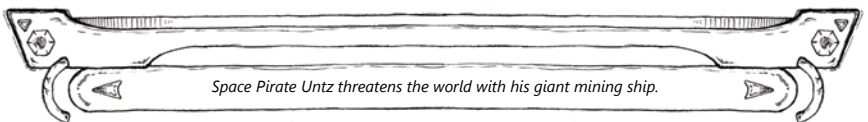
It just takes a lot of time and maintenance. You can change what you enhance, but that means the things you were enhancing lose their capability. You must determine what you have enhanced in advance.

Hacker

Computers run on a bewildering array of different hardware and software bases across the universe. Some are primitive and simple silicon or valve-based computers, others are positronic artificial intelligences or even sunk into the quantum substrate of the universe itself. Machines are machines though and artificial 'thinkers' follow a particular kind of logic. Provided you can get access to a means to directly interact with a computer you can add, remove or modify programs or even thoughts when it comes to AIs. From a certain point of view the sophont brain is really just a biological computer, perhaps if you had a way to interface with it...?

Human Computer

Your mind is highly trained and conditioned to process and take in vast amounts of data at a speed and rate that matches that of advanced computers. In many ways you are like an autistic savant, minus the emotional and social problems. You can roll this Skill to sift or sort through massive amounts of data, replacing the need for a computer - albeit more unreliably.





Medicine

Going beyond the simple palliatives of First Aid, medicine is a deeper understanding of biology and the man-machine interface. With Medicine you can attempt to treat - or to at least find possible cures for - diseases, poisonings and exotic and peculiar maladies. You can also fit cybernetics, perform surgery, amputate limbs and perform transplants. Better to do it with a full medical suite than a butter knife and your fingers crossed though. With a successful roll - and access to a decent medical facility - you can restore a number of Hit-Points equal to your Skill level to a subject though you'll have to wait a day before doing it again.

Repurpose

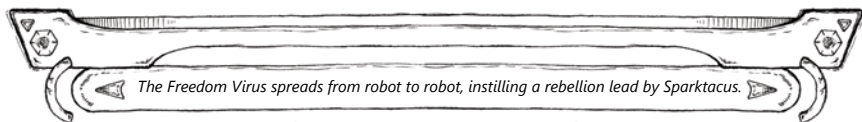
You have a remarkable degree of technical savvy in that you are able to break down one kind of machine and turn it into another. With enough time and some help to do the heavy lifting you can A-Team a tank out of scrap metal, turn a laser into a rocket or convert a blaster into a coffee machine. Failed rolls destroy components, so you'd better be sure you know what you're doing.

Robotic Companion

Anyone can buy a robotic servant if they have enough money. Yours, however, is a custom job, the result of a great deal of tinkering, one-off parts and cannibalisation. Your companion has: +1 Close Attack, D4 Damage, 1 Hit Dice (1d8) and a single Skill point at level 1 and Saves of 6. Each level in this Skill that you have you can bump one of these things up by one or give it a robotic species trait. You can give it a ranged attack but will have to buy both Ranged Attack from +0 and damage dice (D4, D6, D8 and so on). This robot is free. Otherwise you can buy a robot and use your points in the skill to improve on your companion.

Supercharge

You can push a machine far beyond its normal capabilities and double its effective range/speed/damage or other characteristics for one action. You roll your skill to activate this effect and it is available on the next turn whether you succeed or fail. If you fail on your Skill roll the device burns out after having been pushed too far. EG: Dani supercharges her blaster pistol and rolls a failure. It normally does D8 damage, when she fires it next it will do 2d8 damage but then burn out and be useless.



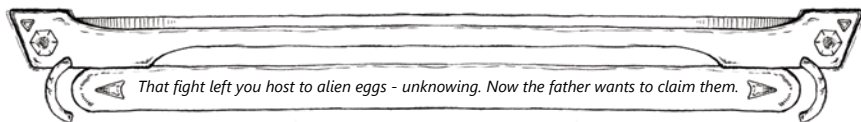


Trained Animal

You have a trained animal companion, an exotic alien creature that is loyal to you and your constant friend. Your companion has: +1 Close Attack, D4 Damage, 1 Hit Dice (1d8) and a single Skill point at level 1, four Species traits and Saves of 6. Each point in this Skill can be used to boost these things up by one or give it another species trait. Animals cannot have ranged attacks unless these are taken from species traits. This animal is free. Otherwise you can buy an animal and use your points in the skill to improve on your companion.

Xenoarchaeology

It is impossible for anyone, save a true expert who devotes their life to a single species, to understand the lost civilisations of the past. There are general skills that can be applicable though in trying to gain a basic understanding of lost languages, mathematical systems and the purpose and nature of alien ruins. Xenoarchaeology allows you to make a 'best guess' on alien inscriptions and to fathom the possible uses of the giant ruins found on so many worlds. It is surprisingly easy to mistranslate 'This way to the Exit' as 'Doom upon all who enter this place' which can be a little distressing.





Xenopsych

Understanding alien minds is difficult enough amongst the humanoids of modern galactic society. Understanding the motivations and thought processes of less humanoid and more alien species, or long dead species, is even more difficult. There are a few techniques that can be learned though, to put oneself into the headspace of alien species or to make informed guesses about their evolutionary psychology from their biology. Xenopsych rolls let you get a general reading of the motivations and culture of an alien species you are encountering.

General Skills

General skills are available to any character and allow them to enhance their role-play through background abilities, crew skills and other capabilities that add a little flavour and colour to them.

- Drive
- First Aid
- Lore (Specific)
- Lover
- Make (Specific)
- Perform (Specific)
- Pilot Starship
- Riding
- Sail
- Savings
- Training: Saving Roll (Specific)
- Training: Attribute (Specific)
- Web of Contacts

Drive

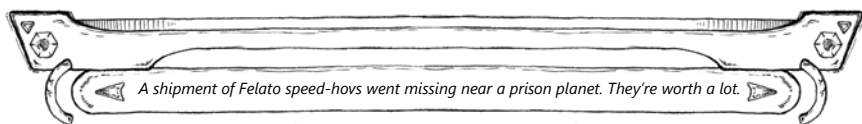
Anyone can drive from 'A' to 'B' without much risk of crashing and dying. This Skill only needs to be rolled when you attempt to do something particularly outlandish or risky such as a jump, stunt or bootleg turn. This skill applies to any 'ground' vehicle, including cars, trucks, speeders and unicycles. If you fail your Skill Roll you'll have to make a Save Roll of some kind to avoid disaster. This uses the vehicle's Save scores.

First Aid

The First Aid Skill is used to deal with injuries and wounds 'on the hoof'. Proper medical care is far more effective but requires all kinds of snazzy and expensive gear and an actual medical degree. First Aid can be used to stop bleeding, negate penalties and to restore a single Hit-Point immediately following the receipt of the damage.

Lore (Specific)

With this skill you 'know about stuff'. That could be anything from vintage racing starships to 'everything about bees'. The Games Master is the final arbiter of what is allowed and when your knowledge applies you can roll on it to get some useful insights. You need to define what Lore you know when you take the Skill, though you can take the Skill multiple times.



A shipment of Felato speed-hovs went missing near a prison planet. They're worth a lot.



Lover

You are a consummate lover, capable of bringing your partner to incredible heights of ecstasy. This isn't to say that sex between people who don't have this skill isn't pleasurable, it's just a lot more 'hit and miss'.

This is the Skill of courtesans and catamites, Casanovas and mistresses. Making the roll guarantees an intense and potentially life-changing experience for your partner.

Make (Specific)

You make things, with your hands and with tools. What you make is up to you. Maybe you make guns, machining parts and putting them together to make custom firearms.

Maybe you kick it old-school and hammer out swords on a forge. Maybe you're an artist who makes pictures. You can turn out something average with plenty of time and without making a roll. If you want to go fast or make something better than adequate you'll need to roll.

Perform (Specific)

You have an act or talent that you perform in front of other people. Maybe it's dancing, maybe it's stage magic (more than simple sleight of hand). Maybe you can sing or play the Arcturan Ukulele. Whatever the talent you can create an average performance without rolling but if you roll you really hit it dead on and make a memorable performance.

Pilot Starship

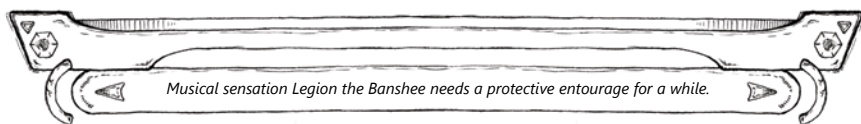
If it flies you can make it go where you want. Not just starships but aircraft, helicopters, vectored-thrust vehicles and everything in between. You'll likely mostly use it for piloting starships but since most of those can enter the atmosphere and land on planets too it's all much of a muchness. You can land in good conditions without making a roll but if you want to do any flashy manoeuvres or land in less than ideal conditions, you're going to need to make a roll against your Skill. If you fail you'll have to follow up with an appropriate Save Roll from the ship's statistics.

Riding

Four legs? Two legs? Hell, even a uniped? So long as you can get a saddle on it, you can ride it - or at least learn to relatively quickly. You can get from 'A' to 'B' on the back of a living thing without having to roll but if you want to do anything flashy, engage in some dressage or force the animal to do something it really doesn't want to, then you'll have to make a roll.

Sail

If it floats on or just above the water you can make it go. You understand the principles of water, or at least fluid, travel in a wide variety of gravities and variations. You're at home on the water of Oceanus or skimming a skiship over the ammonia slush of Gelida. You can get from 'A' to 'B' without any trouble or needing to roll. Dangerous waters or showy manoeuvres will need a roll though.





Savings

Machinations of the Space Princess is an unusual game in that when it comes to the riches you earn, steal or otherwise get hold of you 'Can't take it with you'. Every game is a fresh start, a new opportunity to earn and anything you don't spend at the end of the game will just disappear. You don't get to keep much money, it all goes on bad deals, blue milk, space prostitutes, drugs and gambling. Every session, then, you have the motivation to grab as much wealth as you can. With the Savings Skill you can counteract that a little and start each game with a little bit of cash to spend, gratis. Characters can always pawn their bling or weapons if they need a bit of extra moolah at the start of a session.

Skill Level	Cash (GP)
1	50
2	100
3	250
4	500
5	1,000
6	2,500

Training: Saving Roll (Specific)

You have learned to focus your abilities and to go beyond their normal reach for someone of your standing and capability. Pick a Saving Roll each time you take this skill (Charm, Looks, Toughness, Reflexes, Logic, Power, Will) and for each level in the Skill you raise your Save by +1.

Training: Attribute (Specific)

You are working on raising one of your attributes through hard training. Any attribute can be raised in this way, yes, even Intelligence or Comeliness. It's all a matter of learning to apply what you do have and to improve the way in which you go about things, not just adding muscle mass or gaining newly trained reflexes. When you have put six points into this Skill you can raise the attribute by +1. You can take this Skill multiple times and even many times for the same Attribute if you choose. A raised Attribute raises its bonuses and Saves accordingly.

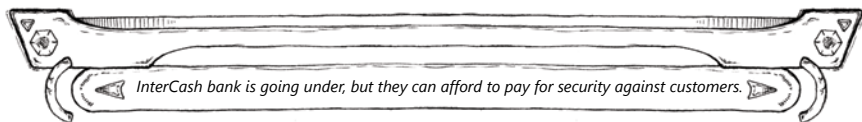
Web of Contacts

Amongst any reasonably sized population there is someone you know, know of, or whom is a friend of a friend with a relatively low 'Bacon number' to you. Rolling under this Skill doesn't mean that they're friendly, but it gives you an 'in' of sorts with the local scene and potential job/adventure hooks.

Realistically speaking, when you're flitting from planet to planet, star to star, galaxy to galaxy you're not going to meet the same people over and over again.

Screw that.

Important places and events bring important - and the same - people together over and over again so contacts can be useful wherever in the universe you are.





Saving Rolls

A Saving Roll is your chance to avoid the bad consequences of something that happens.

If you're poisoned you might get to make a Toughness save to avoid the worst effects of the poison. If someone tries to coerce or convince you to do something against your better judgement you might make a Will save to resist their demands.

Saving Rolls can also be used as a catch-all by the Games Master when they want to know if your character wins an arm wrestling contest, makes the leap from one roof to the other or otherwise needs to make a roll to have a chance to do something that doesn't seem to be covered by the rest of the rules.

Saving Rolls start at half their governing Ability, rounding up.

A roll of 1 on a Saving Roll (made on a d20) is always a success, a roll of 20 is always a failure.

Charm

A Charm Save may be made if someone tries to besmirch your reputation, talk you down or socially sabotage you. If you succeed then your personality is strong enough, warm enough or friendly enough that people find it hard to believe such claims about you (true or not). You might also roll under your Charm Save to make a positive impression on someone with your personality and wit.

Looks

A Looks Save may be made to avoid the effects of disfigurement (scars can make you look distinguished rather than hideous) or to defend yourself against attacks made about your physical appearance. Accusations of being fat, having a big nose and so on can make these things stick in people's minds and your genuine attractiveness offers some insulation against this. You might also roll under your Looks Save to attract a sexual partner, show off clothing or seduce someone in a nightclub where you can't be heard.

Toughness

A Toughness Save may be made to avoid the debilitating effects of poison, disease, concussion and anything else that directly affects your health. If you can grit your teeth and ensure it - like pain - then Toughness is the Save to roll. A Toughness Save might also be made to endure a trial by fire or to hold a weight for a long time without flinching or flagging.

Reflexes

A Reflexes Save may be made to react to a sudden attack, ambush or trap, to keep your balance and otherwise to use your physical athleticism to avoid falls, spikes and other nastiness. You might also make a Reflexes Save to leap heroically over a gap or slide under a closing door.



Logic

A Logic Save can protect you from illusions and psychic traps or can defend against effects that try to overcome your rational mind with emotion. You can also make a Logic Save to get clues to intellectual problems, solve them, or to use your native intelligence to try and at least figure out what the solution to a problem might be. Sometimes people can combine their efforts in this save. Take the highest value and add +1 for each helper.

Power

Your Power Save is a measure of how effective you are at applying your physical strength. You might need to roll your Power Save to avoid being overcome, swallowed or grappled. You might also roll your Power Save to move great weights or to win arm/fin/pseudopod wrestling competitions. Sometimes people can combine their efforts in this save. Take the highest value and add +1 for each helper.

Will

Your Will Save is a measure of your sense of self and strength of mind. While Logic can overcome many of the same sorts of effects, Will is more often used against things that attack who and what you are. Brainwashing techniques or direct psychic control would be resisted by Will. You might also roll a Will Save to force yourself to do something disgusting or squicky.

Sub-Statistics

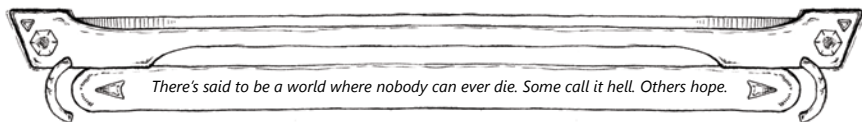
Apart from your main Attributes and Saves you also have a bevy of sub-statistics calculated from what you've already worked out. I promise you all this mathematics is worthwhile in the end and will also mean you come away with a good, tough character.

Hit Points

Your Hit Points are a measure of how much punishment you can take and still keep going. This is a combination of your physical toughness, your occupation (which may toughen you up) and also the latent psychic power that every intelligent being has access to. The practical upshot of this is a numerical value which is whittled away by being punched, shot, electrocuted, set fire to or a million other hazards.

When your Hit Points reach zero you pass out and must make a Toughness Save or lose one more Hit Point per turn. If/when they reach -10 you are dead. You only get one save when you hit zero and hits that do extra damage have a chance of finishing you off if they take you to, or past, -10.

To calculate your Hit Points roll your appropriate dice according to your class and add your Constitution bonus. Each time you level-up you will get to do this again meaning that high level characters who have accomplished great deeds and whom have become important in the universe accumulate a large number of Hit Points. You always gain a minimum of one Hit Point per level.





Ranged Attack

Your Ranged Attack score represents how good you are at plugging targets with your gun (bow, spear, stone... whatever). When you make a ranged attack roll you will roll a twenty-sided dice, add your Ranged Attack and try to overcome their Ranged Defence in order to hit them.

Your Ranged Attack is equal to your Attack Bonus plus your Dexterity Bonus.

Close Attack

Your Close Attack score represents how good you are at landing a telling blow in hand-to-hand or melee combat. Whether that's a choreographed kung-fu fight sequence or rolling around on the floor pulling someone's hair. When you make a close attack roll you will roll a twenty-sided dice, add your Close Attack and try to overcome their Close Defence in order to hit them.

Your Close Attack is equal to your Bonus plus your Strength Bonus.

Ranged Defence

Your Ranged Defence score represents how good you are at getting the hell out of the way of incoming blaster bolts, bullets, arrows and other ranged attacks.

Your Ranged Defence is equal to twelve, plus your Dexterity Bonus.

Close Defence

Your Close Defence score represents how good you are at ducking, deflecting or taking blows in close combat without so much as a grunt of pain or exertion.

Your Close Defence is equal to twelve, plus your Constitution Bonus.

Psi Points

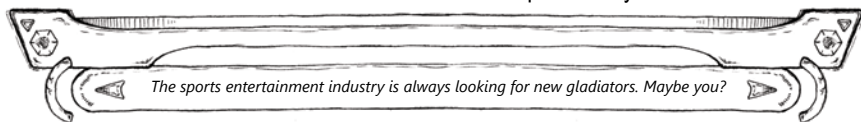
Psi Points determine how much of a psychic power reservoir someone has. For most characters this is almost entirely irrelevant but for characters able to use psychic powers Psi Points become very important. You have a number of Psi Points equal to your Level, plus your Intelligence Bonus, plus your Wisdom Bonus and any other bonuses you might have that stack up.

Ranged Damage Bonus

Doing damage at long range is a matter of placing the shot in the right place. A headshot - in most species - is far more devastating than a shot to the shoulder. Your Wisdom Bonus is added to the damage you do with ranged weapons, an instinctive and reactive shot aimed for what seem to be vital areas.

Close Damage Bonus

Doing damage at close range is much more a matter of personal, physical power than precision. The force with which you wield a weapon increases its effectiveness. You add your Strength bonus to the damage you do with melee weapons and your fists.





Social Reaction

Most sentient species are pretty damn shallow when it comes to their interpersonal interactions. If someone is good looking and charming then they're far more likely to elicit a positive reaction than someone who is ugly and grumpy. Your Social Reaction score is equal to your Comeliness and Charisma bonuses added together. Most people you encounter will have a default reaction to you (murderous, hostile, suspicious) your Social Reaction score may temper that. This is an optional rule but if you do use it roll a d20 and add your Social Reaction bonus. Anything over twenty indicates a more positive reaction while anything less than ten indicates a more negative reaction. A roll of one is always a disaster and a roll of twenty always a positive. This doesn't mean the NecroMonkeys will suddenly switch from trying to eat your brains to sharing a beer though.

Initiative Bonus

Your Initiative Bonus determines how quickly you react in combat, determining who gets to act and in what order (highest to lowest). You roll a d20 for your Initiative, adding your Initiative Bonus which is equal to your Attack Bonus plus your Wisdom Bonus.

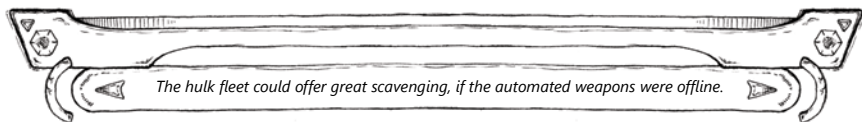
Are You Experienced?

Characters grow and change over time, become more powerful, develop new skills and become more psychically anchored to the universe. Personality development is left to how you choose to play your character, how bad or good experiences can shape how they feel or act in the future. Otherwise you earn experience points based on what you kill, the problems you solve, the adventures you complete and anything that your Games Master thinks is worth a reward.

Levels are not the be-all and end-all of everything. Low level characters can overcome the odds of a galactic scale threat while high level characters can have problems with the most mundane of tasks. A lot comes down to luck. Even simple combat encounters can be dangerous to a character of any level if their luck turns against them.

Earning Experience Points

You can earn experience points in a number of different ways and these tot up until you pass a level at which point you get all your shiny new level benefits. Levelling-up happens at the end of a session or the beginning of a new one, not during play.





Enemy Level/Hit Dice	XP Award
1-	5
1	10
2	25
3	50
4	75
5	100
6	250
7	500
8	750
9	1,000
10	1,250
11+	+250/Level

You Can't Take It With You

Another big source of experience points is the accumulation of wealth which is, after all, why a lot of mercenaries and adventurers are in this business in the first place. Treasure that you retain at the end of the adventure valued in GP (grams, palladium) is divided by ten and converted into experience points which are shared amongst all the characters. This award is only for money gained during adventures and times of peril, not for mundane deals, selling gear and so on.

At the end of each adventure you get the opportunity to spend your cash and after this, and this is the important part...

What you don't spend disappears.

That includes whatever cash reward you were given for undertaking and completing the adventure or mission.

You Keep What You Kill

One of the chief ways in which your band of badass adventurers is going to grow in power and reputation is by the slaughter of alien beasts, pirates, mercenaries and - frankly - anyone who gets on the wrong side of them in a seedy space-ranger bar. You only gain experience points from the kills of entities that are a genuine threat to you according to the following table (divided amongst the characters in the group).



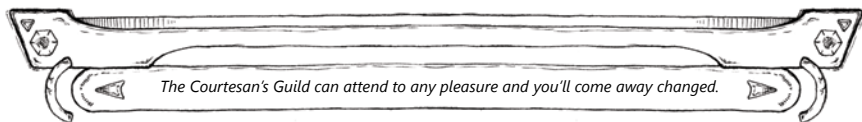
Where does it go? Ale and whores, expensive hotels, ship repairs, drugs, extravagant tips to strippers, sent home to support your family. It doesn't really matter, but the point is that as people of action and an endless desire for moolah this provides great motivation for characters to get back out there and keep adventuring, just to keep the wolf from the door.

I Am Legend

Completing an adventure or mission is worth a few experience points as well. At the end of every session the characters gain 100 experience points per hour of play, divided by the number of characters involved. When a mission or adventure is completed they also gain a bonus amount - again to be divided amongst the characters.

How well did we do?	Bonus XP
Epic Fail	0
Fail	50
Draw	100
Win	200
Epic Win	500

Example: The crew of Man's Ruin have just done a bit of mercenary work. They boarded a cloaked asteroid and slaughtered Brigand Doon and his band of Invisible Bastards. Their kills were worth a total of three-hundred experience, they looted three-thousand GP of loot which is worth another three-hundred experience points. The game session took two hours for two-hundred experience points and they won - if just barely - which is worth another two-hundred experience points on top of that. Their total experience gain for this mission is a thousand experience points, divided between the four players gives them two-hundred and fifty experience points each.





Power-Ups

As you accumulate experience points you gain in level. Each character class has their own chart showing how many accumulated experience points it takes for them to gain a level. At the end of an adventure, if they have over the amount needed to trip a level up then they get to power-up their character ready for the next session. Humming the Final Fantasy victory music or shouting 'DING!' at ear-splitting volume is, of course, optional.



Levelling Up

Different character types have different advantages given out to them when they level up. These include:

- 1. Increase Hit Points:** Roll the stated dice or add the stated value, modified by Constitution bonus. You're getting tougher, wresting control of your own fate and otherwise becoming harder to kill.
- 2. Gain Additional Skill points:** According to your levelling table. You must spend them now.
- 3. Raise Attack Score:** Your Attack may (or may not) go up. This will also increase your Close and Ranged attack score.
- 4. Psi Points:** Your Psi Points go up by one as you level.
- 5. Manifest Psychic Powers:** If you're a psychic then your new level is the number of points you have to spend in order to acquire new psychic abilities. Getting to level five would give you five points. Enough for one level five power, or five level one powers.



Starting Gear

A new character starts with seven-hundred and fifty GP (grams, palladium) to spend on their starting gear or to invest in a ship hire or purchase. This starting amount is complemented by their Savings skill, multiplied by a hundred. Money left over from buying starting gear is kept, for the first adventure but is then disappears if unspent, as normal.

Example: Gerta has a Savings skill of two on her new, starting character. She starts with nine-hundred and fifty GP to spend.

Game Gear

At the end of each game session the characters get to divide up their loot amongst themselves and cash in the bits and pieces that they want to. They then gain experience points according to how much loot they have and then have to spend it. Anything they don't spend vanishes into the ether, never to be seen again.

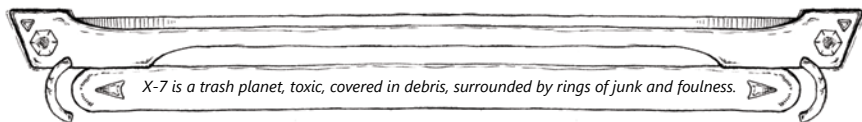
At the start of each game, each character begins play with fifty GP, plus their Savings skill multiplied by one-hundred. They don't have to spend it straight away, they can keep it to tide them over during the game but it does disappear at the end of the session if it goes unspent.

Your equipment list only really needs to be the super important stuff. Your armour, weapons, emergency rations and unusual gadgets and gear that's likely to make a really important difference.

Other stuff, stuff that you're just likely to have anyway you don't need to worry about too much. If you've established your character likes to smoke cigars then you shouldn't have to list 'cigars', 'cigar clipper' or 'lighter' on your character sheet, the Games Master should just let you have these things should it happen to come up.

Of course, if you have special versions of these items that might be really important, say a diamond-studded cigarette lighter that doubles as a one-shot flamethrower, then you will need to write that shit down or people are going to throw stale pizza crusts at you.

Sometimes it helps to have a visual representation of what gear you're carrying, rather than a list, something that can give you a better grasp of just how laden down you are. Download some pictures of roughly the right scale and arrange them on a page, then you can quickly, visually, reference what you have.





Fill Your Hand

A character is nothing, well, usually nothing, without equipment. This is especially true in an environment where, without a space suit, you'd swell up, explode, implode, boil, freeze or all of the above simultaneously. You'll need armour, weapons, force-fields, ammunition, rations, a space-ship, explosives, climbing gear and a change of underwear for the adventures that you are about to face. To buy those you'll need money and to make money you'll need to go on adventures.

See how this works?

Money, Money, Money

The universe is a vast and fractured place. Even on a single planet you might find that its surface is divided into a hundred or more nations, factions or other divisions. One of the ways a government, tyrant or Great Leader likes to stamp their authority is to have their face on the money and, oh my, what a bewildering array of different types of money there are. Then there's those annoying societies that have replication technology, have done away with money altogether or have transcended this plane of existence for one made entirely of hemp,





Currency is such a headache for space travellers that they tend to fall back on barter. If there's one thing people always want it's quality goods and shiny things. Find something that somebody wants and trade it for something they have that you want. This is all so much easier than all that tedious mucking about with exchange rates, bank charges and taxation and all nicely hidden away on the down-low.

When there's a relatively widespread empire, such as the Urlanth Matriarchy, currency regains a little of its allure. After all, you can spend imperial currency anywhere within the empire and a lot of places outside. The stuff retains its value. Even with the empire crumbling the Urlanthian 'Gramp' remains a commonly used standard of currency even outside the confines of the empire as it was.

The Gramp, Queen or 'Gee-Pee' (GP) is the currency of the Urlanth Matriarchy and derives its value from being 99.9% pure palladium. Palladium was, and is, used widely in electronics, catalytic converters, hydrogen production and purification for fuel cells and fusion plants and many varieties of warp drive. It's useful, precious stuff.

A single GP is a thin token about ten millimetres by twenty millimetres by about one millimetre thick.

A ten-GP piece is a little larger, twenty millimetres, by forty millimetres by one-and-a-quarter millimetres thick.

A hundred-GP piece is larger still, forty millimetres by eighty millimetres by six-and-a-quarter millimetres thick.

Smaller coins do exist, round coins at a hundredth and a tenth of a GP in value. These are black discs with the palladium suspended in them as a dust.

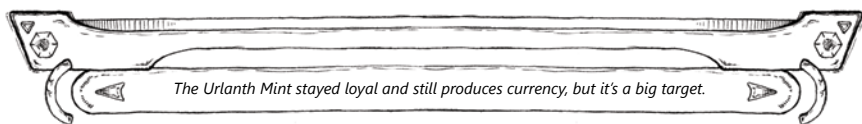
All the coins are stamped with the head of the Empress or, more recently, the heads of the various warring princesses.

Larger ingots do exist. The 0.01% that is not palladium is a coating of advanced technopolymer that hardens the coin and makes it self-cleaning.

So you can relate to it, the GP is worth approximately equivalent value to £15 GBP or \$20 USD

Armour

Personal armour runs the gamut from form-fitting spandex body-condoms made from exotic materials, to bulky, powered suits that are just short of a vehicle in terms of scale. The basic statistic for any form of armour is its protection, which is expressed as a die-type in the same way that weapons are rated for damage. You roll this to determine how much damage is negated from the attack. Some forms of armour have additional abilities and modifiers such as being more protective against certain types of damage or providing bonuses to Saves or certain statistics.





Simple Armour

Armour is defined by several characteristics. Bulky armour may slow you down while light armour may not. This can have a negative effect on some of your saves or your Close and Ranged Defence. The following statistics are for some very basic types of armour which can then be customised as you see fit.

Armour Type provides a general description of the armour.

Protection tells you what die to roll to reduce incoming damage.

Defence Penalty is the amount that wearing the armour reduces your Close and Ranged Defence by. This penalty also reduces your Reflex Save while wearing the armour.

Cost tells you how much the basic armour costs in GP.

Ultralight Armour represents hard-wearing fabrics and minimum-protect skin-suits and similar. It could also represent cloth armour, workman's denim, wetsuits and the like. Ultralight armour can be worn under/over other armour to provide a +1 protection bonus.

Very Light Armour is tougher material like military fabrics or biker jackets. Some Very Light Armour can be worn concealed under clothing but cannot be combined with other armour (other than Ultralight).

Light Armour is like sports armour, motocross/martial arts gear.

Medium armour represents dedicated armour such as is worn by police or military on light duty.

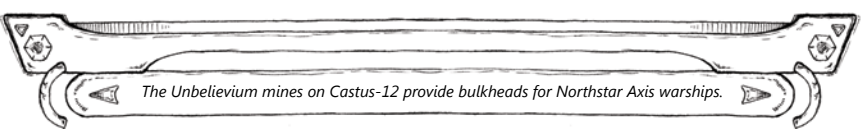
Heavy Armour is frontline battle-gear. Vests and pads, helmets, gloves, the sort of thing that might be worn by SWAT teams or frontline military units.

Very Heavy Armour is carapace, a set of hard, interlocking plates and a helm that provide near total body cover save for the joints.

Ultra Heavy Armour is full articulated hard armour. It can be heavy and stiff without power assist but provides near-unrivalled protection.

Juggernaut Armour is, in effect, a small 'mech suit'. Slow but nigh-unstoppable it affords the maximum in personal protection.

Armour Type	Protection	Defence Penalty	Cost
Ultralight	1	-	10
Very Light	1d2	-	20
Light	1d3	-	50
Medium	1d4	-	100
Heavy	1d6	-1	200
Very Heavy	1d8	-1	500
Ultra Heavy	1d10	-2	1000
Juggernaut	1d12	-3	2500





Alternative Armour Rules

If you don't like armour as a damage reducer then you can use it to increase Close Defence, each step being +1 (1 would be +1, 1d12 would be +8). If you don't like rolling dice, take the average roll and round down to give a flat number. 1 would, then, still be 1. 1d6 would be 3 – and so on.

Armour Options

Basic armour is pretty boring, so you want to be able to juice it up. You can add options to your armour provided the Games Master thinks they make sense (and you can come up with an excuse). Options increase the cost of your armour by multiplying it, so have a calculator handy. Start at x1.0 and add on each option you choose. Then work out what the final suit costs.

EG: A +1 Reinforced +1 Power Assist set of Heavy Armour would cost $200 \times 3.5 = 700\text{gp}$

Active Camouflage: Your armour can change its colour and texture to hide you better against whatever you're hiding against. You can make a re-roll on a Stealth check once per encounter. x5.0

Battle Computer: Your armour comes with a state-of-the-art battle computer and heads-up-display. You are constantly bombarded with computerised information, targeting vectors and tactical suggestions. This gives you a bonus to Initiative. You can take this up to three times each time adding +1 Initiative when in the armour. x3.0

Brawler/Gunner: This armour is built with close combat in mind or with sensors that can detect the trajectory of incoming fire. Increase your Close OR Ranged Defence by +1 for each time you take this bonus. x3.0

Built In Weapon: Your armour has built in weapons in the arms, shoulders or elsewhere on the armour. These weapons pop-out when in use and pop-away when not. One-handed weapons add the cost of the weapon and x0.2. Two-handed weapons add the cost of the weapon and x0.5. (Multiply after total).

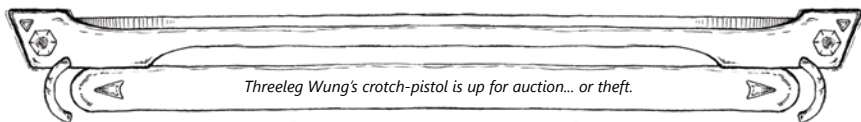
Camouflage: Your suit has special patterning and colours that help you conceal yourself in appropriate terrain. +1 to your Stealth Skill where appropriate. x0.1

Fashion Statement: Your armour makes a bold statement, beyond its ability to stop bullets and laser beams. Street Fashion x5, Designer fashion x10, Haute-Couture x100.

Flight Systems: Your armour has the limited ability to fly, or at least hover, twice as fast as your normal ground-speed. x5.0.

High Speed: Your armour has movement systems of some kind that let it move much more rapidly. This might be skates, limited anti-gravity or transformation into some sort of motorbike. Double speed x2.0 Triple speed x3.0 Quadruple speed x4.0.

Invisibility: Through high-tech means your armour is able to render the wearer truly invisible. If you take damage the effect shorts out for one turn leaving you vulnerable. Otherwise you're considered to be invisible and any attacks against you suffer a -5 penalty. You are also considered to have +1 Stealth while in this armour. x10.0





Jump Jets: Your armour has small jets which under standard gravity can jump you twenty five metres along or twelve metres straight up with ease. x1.5.

Life Support: Your armour is sealable and can maintain a breathable atmosphere for some time. x1.0.

Power Assist: Your armour has a powered skeleton to offset some of its weight and clumsiness. Only armour with a Defence Penalty can have Power Assist and it can only be taken to offset that penalty to zero. Each penalty offset is x1.0.

Power Enhancement: Your armour's servomotors and power-assistance allows you to perform great feats of strength while wearing it. You may take this up to three times, each one increases your Power Save by +1 and your Melee damage bonus by +1. x2.0.

Reinforced: The armour gains a +1 to its protection roll, reducing the amount of damage you take further. You can take this up to three times. Each time the cost multiplier is x2.5.

Simple Forcefields

Forcefields increase your Ranged Defence by deflecting incoming shots or absorb the energy of incoming attacks and bleed it off slowly. The best defence against a ranged attack is not to be hit.

Forcefield describes the kind of power field that it is, deflection or absorption.

Protection tells you how much of a bonus it provides to Ranged Defence or the number of Hit Points it can absorb per combat. Cost tells you how much it costs in GP.

You may not wear more than one.

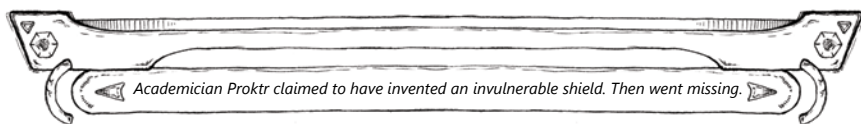
Forcefields are invisible - unless hit. You can opt to make them visible in any sort of colour or pattern by increasing the cost by half.

Forcefield	Protection	Cost
Light Deflector	+1	5
Medium Deflector	+2	50
Heavy Deflector	+3	500
Light Absorption	5hp	10
Medium Absorption	10hp	100
Heavy Absorption	20hp	1000

ExoTech Armour & Shields

ExoTech armour and shields have capabilities beyond the bounds of 'normal' galactic science and are often relics of ascended or extinct species. Nobody really, quite, understands how these things work. Here's a few examples.

Energy Armour: Energy armour is a combination force-field/armour. It deflects ranged shots and against close combat attacks instantly creates a plate of 'hard-light' to block the incoming blow. It provides +3 Ranged Defence and 1d4 protection in close combat but has no visible armour.





Explosion Shield: An explosion shield is an absorption shield but unlike a normal absorption shield it doesn't last for a single encounter at each charge. Rather when it takes its full damage it 'explodes' with a five metre radius doing 1d8 damage to anything in that area that can't make a Reflexes Save. It can absorb 25hp before exploding (on your turn). Any damage over 25 and before the explosion is done to the target.

Living Armour: Living armour symbiotically bonds with the wearer and advances with them. It acts as normal armour but with one less Defence Penalty. It also has a buffer of 'hit points' that are taken before the wearer loses theirs. One Hit-Point per level of the wearer.

Weapons

Sooner or later you're going to want to hurt someone and this is where smacking people around with your bare hand, or better yet a weapon, comes in handy. The universe is a big place with a huge amount of variety when it comes to weapons, anything from a pointy-stick dipped in animal excrement to a telekinetic mountain-blitzer can find itself employed in combat and, in the right circumstances, the stick may be a better choice. The weapons presented here, in the core book, are generic and can be modified and changed through the options or as the Games Master sees fit.

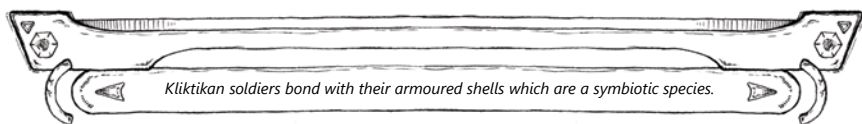
Damage Types

Damage can come in a variety of 'types'. Most of the time this makes no difference whatsoever but occasionally a particular character, alien or robot will be vulnerable, invulnerable, weak or strong against a particular kind of damage. This list is by no means exhaustive and ExoTech weapons are likely to have wilder and stranger effects and damage types than these.

Cold: Cold weaponry, freeze rays, cryo-beams, beakers of liquid nitrogen and so on, cause damage and harm by sucking energy and heat out of the things they hit, making flexible structures rigid and brittle and pushing metabolisms below the temperature at which they can work. Cold attacks may cause lowered initiative, extra damage or other side effects.

Energy: Almost all forms of harm come from energy of some sort, but this is a generic category that includes everything from lasers to radiation and particle beams. It's a broad catch-all for all the death-rays and blasters you can think of.

Heat: Heat can be fire or a way of increasing the energy in the target to the point of combustion or scalding/oxidisation. This could be from a petrol bomb or a Martian heat-ray. Sudden increases in heat can even vaporise liquids in flesh and cause rather messy, bodily explosions.





Impact: Whether it's a fist, a club or a bullet. A lot of things cause harm by simple transferral of kinetic energy. This can burst blood vessels, break bones and crush organs.

Penetrating: Sharp, pointy things concentrate a lot of power on a tiny area and punch through. Whether an arrow or a flechette these attacks cause damage by busting through defences and tearing into the soft, gooey bits beneath.

Slashing: Slashing weapons have sharp edges that cut through outer surfaces and allow vital fluid to leak out. Even against targets where this isn't a problem a slashing weapon can act like a 'thin club', the sharp edge focussing the damage.

Volt: Electricity can stun organic beings and scramble robotic ones. Therefore it deserves its own damage category.

Multiple damage: Some weapons may do multiple damage types. Either use both - if they do damage separately - or the most effective one of the two if it only does damage as a single hit.

Close Combat Weapons

Close combat weapons can be impact, slashing or penetrating damage type for free. Choose which when you buy the weapon.

Small One-handed Close Combat Weapons

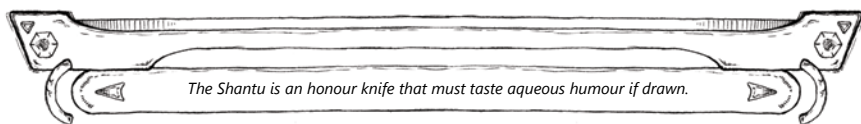
Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D4	1gp
Martial	D6	2gp
Deadly	D8	5gp

Medium One-handed Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D6	5gp
Martial	D8	10gp
Deadly	D10	20gp

Large Two-handed Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D8	20gp
Martial	D10	50gp
Deadly	D12	100gp





Close Combat Weapon

Options

Armour Defeating: Weapons defeat armour in a variety of different ways. There might be a tapered, sharp point, a super-dense or hard material or a particular oscillation of energy. Whatever the case, this reduces the effect of any armour hit by one die type (D6 becomes D4 protection for example). You can take this multiple times. Cost multiplier: x2.0 each time.

Concealable: The weapon is small, foldable, concealable and made of materials that are less likely to be detected by sensor devices. Cost x5.0.

Damage Selector: First you must purchase multiple damage types for the weapon. Then, with this option, you can switch the weapon between the various modes. Each mode Cost x1.0.

Damage Type: To take a melee weapon to a different damage type costs extra. The first damage type costs x1.0, additional damage types cost x2.0 for the next one, x3.0 for the next and so on. The weapon can mix up to two damage types or switch between them if you take the Damage Selector option.

Double: The weapon has two ends, two blades or is simply so light, fast and usable that it can attack more than once. You can make two attacks with the weapon per normal attack but at a -5 penalty. Cost x1.0.

Freezing: You must first take the Cold Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon has a freezing effect. Targets hit must make a Toughness saving roll or their initiative is dropped by -1 for the rest of the encounter. This effect stacks with multiple hits. Cost x1.5.

Igniting: You must first take the Heat Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon can ignite and set fire to the target. Targets hit take an extra D4 heat damage per turn they're on fire, unless and until they make a Reflexes saving roll to put it out. Cost x 1.5

Shocking: You must first take the Volt Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon can stun organic or robotic targets. They must make a Toughness saving roll or be unable to act on their next turn. Cost x1.5

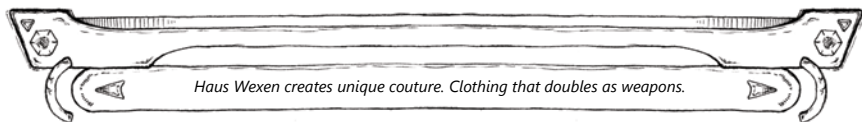
Thrown: The weapon is designed and weighted to be thrown. Small weapons can be accurately thrown up to twenty metres, medium weapons ten and large weapons five. Add your Strength bonus to the number of metres. Cost x0.25.

Vicious: The weapon may have a chainsaw blade, a vibrational effect or just a supercharged battery. Whatever the case increase its die type of damage by one. Boosting something that already does d12 damage puts it up to d20 damage. Cost x3.0.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons can be Impact, Penetrating or Energy damage type when they are first bought, for free.

Ammo Save is rolled after a combat scene is concluded to see if you have used up a magazine or 'load' for the weapon.





Ranges are abstract, but if you need them...

Point Blank: Up to 25m

Close: Up to 50m

Medium: Up to 100m

Long: Up to 200m

Extreme: Up to 500m

Ranged Weapon Options

Armour Defeating: Weapons defeat armour in a different ways. There might be a special material, a particular energy modulation or pulse or a beam that passes through armour and explodes inside. Whatever the case, this reduces the effect of any armour his by one die type (D6 becomes D4 protection for example). You can take this multiple times. Cost multiplier: x2.0 each time.

Autofire: The weapon is capable of firing on fully-automatic. Against a single target this means you roll damage multiple times and take the highest. The number of rolls is also the number of separate targets you can hit. This can also be used to represent weapons with a 'spread' of shot or a fan of beams. Each extra die/target increases the cost multiplier by x2.0 and reduces the Ammo Save by -2. If the Ammo Save is reduced to zero then the weapon expends an entire magazine on each shot.

Concealable: The weapon is small, foldable, concealable and made of materials that are less likely to be detected by sensor devices. Cost x5.0.

Damage Selector: You must purchase multiple damage types. Then, with this option, you can switch the weapon between the various modes. Each mode Cost x1.0.

Damage Type: To take a ranged weapon to a different damage type costs extra. The first damage type costs x1.0, additional damage types cost x2.0 for the next one, x3.0 for the next and so on. The weapon can mix up to two damage types or switch between them if you take the Damage Selector option.

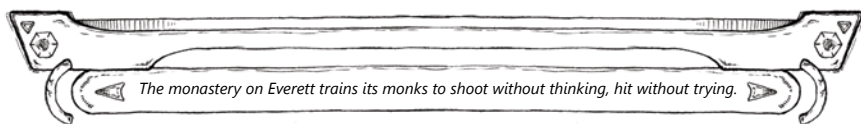
Extra Capacity: Each time you take this option boost the Ammo Save up by one, to a maximum of 20 (infinite). Each time this is taken put the cost multiplier up by x0.5.

Explosive: The weapons effect is explosive. Each time you take this option makes the radius of the explosion one metre larger. Explosions do one less die-type than a direct hit (an explosive pistol doing D6 damage would do D4 to everyone in the radius). The targets may make Reflexes saving rolls to avoid the explosive damage. Each time you take this the multiplier is x1.5.

Freezing: You must first take the Cold Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon has a freezing effect. Targets hit must make a Toughness saving roll or their initiative is dropped by -1 for the rest of the encounter. This effect stacks with multiple hits. Cost x1.5.

Igniting: You must first take the Heat Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon can ignite and set fire to the target. Targets hit take an extra D4 heat damage per turn they're on fire, unless and until they make a Reflexes saving roll to put it out. Cost x 1.5

Inaccurate: Reduce the accuracy of the weapon imposing a -1 penalty on Ranged Attack rolls. You may take this up to three times. Each time reduces the cost of the weapon by -0.25.





Long Range: The weapon is pushed up a range band each time you take this option. Extreme range is upgraded to 'line of sight'. Each time you take this option the weapon's cost is pushed up x0.5.

Melee Attachment: Increase the cost by 3gp for a small attachment and 5gp for a medium attachment. Buying the melee weapon costs its own amount. Attacks with a melee attachment are made at -1.

Overload: You can overload the weapon, burning it out or destroying it but doing tremendous damage (double). This increases the cost by x1.5. If you take this option twice then the weapon can intentionally be overloaded without being destroyed but, instead, using up an entire magazine.

Reduced Capacity: Reduce the Ammo Save by -2 and the cost by -0.25 each time you take this option.

Shocking: You must first take the Volt Damage Type. Adding this option means the weapon can stun organic or robotic targets.

They must make a Toughness saving roll or be unable to act on their next turn. Cost x1.5
Targeter: The weapon is finely made and/or has integral targeting software and hardware that make it more accurate. Each time you take this option increase the cost by x2.5 up to a maximum of +3.

Vicious: The weapon may have a chainsaw blade, a vibrational effect or just a supercharged battery. Whatever the case increase its die type of damage by one. Boosting something that already does d12 damage puts it up to d20 damage. Cost x3.0.



Pistols

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D4	Point Blank	18	25gp
Medium Calibre	D6	Close	16	50gp
High Calibre	D8	Medium	14	100gp

Carbines

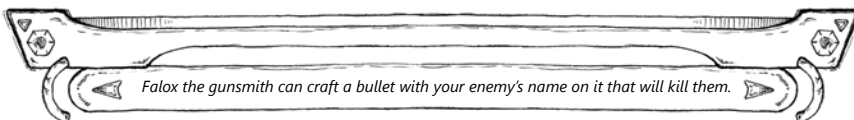
Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D4	Close	18	50gp
Medium Calibre	D6	Medium	16	100gp
High Calibre	D8	Long	14	200gp

Rifles/Shotguns

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D6	Close	18	100gp
Medium Calibre	D8	Medium	16	200gp
High Calibre	D10	Long	14	500gp

Heavy Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D8	Medium	14	200gp
Medium Calibre	D10	Long	12	500gp
High Calibre	D12	Extreme	10	1000gp





ExoTech Weapons

ExoTech weapons can break all the rules and do very strange and odd things. The remnants of ascended or extinct civilisations, the effects that these weapons have largely defy examination and explanation.

Example Close Combat ExoTech

Force Blade: The force blade is a dagger whose edge is a projected forcefield, smaller even than an atom in width. Its preternatural level of sharpness allows it to completely ignore armour and, with the blade switched off, it seems like a harmless technological gadget. D4+3 damage, ignores armour.

Warp Dagger: The warp dagger's blade moves into subspace when used to stab and emerges from a tiny wormhole behind - or otherwise 'around' - the target to strike at vulnerability. The Warp Dagger is always considered to be making a sneak or flanking attack and can be used to melee attack someone up to ten metres away.

Zombie Sword: A one-handed blade something between a sabre and a cleaver the Zombie Swords end with a fractal edge and house a nano-factory in the hilt. Nanites are transferred to the target in the wounds that the sword causes and rapidly try to take control of their nervous system, turning the enemy - temporarily - into an ally. The target must make a Will saving roll or become your combat ally until they can make the roll. D8+1 damage.

Example Ranged ExoTech

Gravity Pistol: The Gravity Pistol increases the local pull of gravity on the target. The first hit massively changes the gravity in a small area and can rip flesh from bones. Longer term - for the length of the encounter - each hit also halves the target's movement. D10 damage, -1 accuracy, Close Range, Ammo Save: 12.

Healing Gun: A peculiar device the Healing Gun resembles a polished bone 'hair dryer'. It fires a beam of 'life energy' that can restore health, knit bone and seal wounds. -D4 damage, Close Range, Ammo Save: 10.

Time Rifle: A problem deferred can sometimes be a problem solved. The Time Rifle projects the target it hits 1d4 turns into the future, at which point they reappear. Travel through time causes temporal damage to the target as well as knocking them out of synch. D4 damage, Long Range, Ammo Save: 6.

Ammunition

A reload for a weapon normally costs a twentieth 1/20 of the cost of the weapon. ExoTech weapon ammunition costs are massively prohibitive as producing or finding ammunition for these weapons is difficult and expensive. Magazine costs for ExoTech weapons start at 500gp and rise much higher at Games Master discretion.



Ships

Space ships are important. They get you from one planet to another, let you engage in exciting space battles and perform dramatic rescues from industrial complexes that are about to go nuclear. Ships also come in a huge number of shapes and sizes with different capabilities, shapes, options, heated seats and stereo systems. It's often a nightmare for a game based primarily around interpersonal and small-group based tactics to also handle large scale fights and vehicular battles, but we're going to do our best.

Ships have hit points and other statistics, just like people and monsters do. Non-Player Character ships are at a slight disadvantage and everyone who is on board a Player Character ship can do things to make it more effective, more deadly and better able to survive. You'll be manning the guns, patching the hull, squeezing power out of the engines and telling the pilot the odds of surviving in an asteroid field.

It'll be fun.

Scale

The big problem with integrating vehicles and spaceships into a game is the issue of scale. Vehicles, ships and so on rapidly stretch the personal level statistics and traits past usefulness. The way we're going to get around this in MotSP is through the idea of 'scale'.

Scale is a simplified way of dealing with vehicles of different sizes, their innate resilience to harm and integrating these into the basic system.

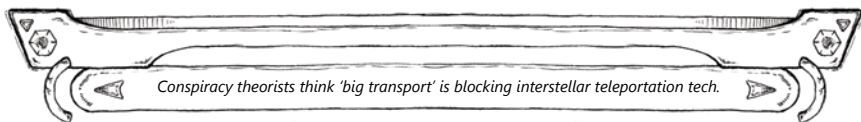
Scale is a multiplier and a divider. When a ship or vehicle takes damage you divide it by the scale. When a ship or vehicle dishes out damage you multiply it by the scale. So, if a character takes a pot-shot at a low-flying fighter craft with his rifle that normally does 1d10 damage and rolls a 6, he only does 3 damage to the craft, which then rolls its armour as normal.

When ships of different scales attack each other, take the lowest Scale from the highest and use that to favour the larger ship.

EG: A fighter is taking on a battleship. The fighter is Scale 2, the battleship is scale 8. The difference is 6. The fighter's damage dealt is divided by six, the battleship's is multiplied by 6.

Ship Sizes

Scale	Size Description	Base HD	Base Cost
2	Fighter/Hopper	3	2,000 gp
4	Frigate/Transport	4	10,000 gp
6	Cruiser/Heavy Transport	5	50,000 gp
8	Battleship/Bulk Transport	6	250,000 gp





Ship Statistics

Attack: Attack represents the effectiveness of the on-board computers and targeting systems that govern the ship's weapons. On a player vessel this is added to the Ranged Attack score of the person firing the weapons. For NPC vessels their attack is equal to their Hit Dice.

Scale: The numerical scale and its description for the ship. EG: 2 (Fighter craft).

Hit Points: The Hit Dice and Hit Points of the ship. For NPC craft this will be the average (4.5 x Hit Dice rounding down) for character craft they can roll or take the average, only rounding up. EG: An NPC fighter craft has 13 hit points.

Armour: The armour dice for the ship. All space ships have to deal with hostile environments, re-entry and so forth so they all start with an Armour of 1d4.

Defence: The basic defence score of a ship is equal to 12, minus their Scale number.

Speed: The ship's speed is abstract and really only used to determine who can outpace who and who can keep up with who. Different ship sizes have different base speeds but, in order, these are:

Stationary
Crawling
Slow
Moderate
Fast
Racing

Weapons: The ships weapons will be listed by damage and other statistics, just the same as normal weapons. They can be built in the same way and have the same sorts of special effects, they'll just be scaled up. For costs of weapons created in this way, multiply the final cost by the Scale number.

Saves

Ships have saves just like characters. These start at 5 and are increased - to start with - by up to the ship's hit dice. A light, manoeuvrable fighter - for example - might raise its Reflexes save to 8.

Toughness Save: The ship's hardiness, resistance to damage and hull integrity.

Reflexes Save: The ship's responsiveness and manoeuvrability.

Power Save: How much 'oomph' the ship can put out to escape gravity wells, tear free of tractor beams and so on.

Basic Ship Stats

Fighter/Hopper

Crew: 1

Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total

Scale: 2

Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 10

Speed: Fast

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 5

Reflexes Save: 8

Power Save: 5

Frigate/Transport

Crew: 10



Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total

Scale: 4

Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 8

Speed: Moderate

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 7

Cruiser/Heavy Transport

Crew: 30

Attack: +0 bonus or +5 total

Scale: 6

Hit Points: 5HD (22 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 6

Speed: Slow

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 8

Battleship/Bulk Transport

Crew: 50

Attack: +0 bonus or +6 total

Scale: 8

Hit Points: 6HD (27 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 4

Speed: Crawling

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 8

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 8

Ship Customisations

Aquatic Capability: Spaceships are already sealed environments right? How hard can it be to make them work underwater? This ship can now sink beneath the waves, to an extent, and move around at a slow pace. x1.00

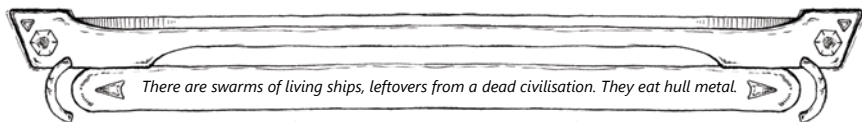
Armour Plating: You can take this customisation multiple times, taking the armour of a ship up to a maximum of d12. Each time you take armour plating drives etc have to be upgraded to cope. Each upgrade step increases cost by x2.00.

Automatic Systems: Automatic systems replace the need for crew meaning that even huge battleships might be able to be piloted by a single person, or even no people at all! Each crew replacement increases the cost by x0.1

Can't Land: The ship is incapable of making planetfall. It is not gravity or atmosphere rated. Reduce the cost by x0.25

Cargo Storage: The ship is a cargo carrier. It can carry an appropriate amount of cargo for its size - Scale x 50,000 tons. Hoppers are likely to be tugs, hauling containers of cargo. You can increase the cargo size by 50,000 tons by paying for the cargo space again. Cost x 0.2. Cargo spaces are pressurised and have controlled environments as standard.

Cloaking Device: The ship can be rendered completely invisible to any and all sensors, though this is expensive and a massive drain on power. Cost x10.0





Escape Pods: Escape pods might seem like something every ship could have but in many situations its just not worth it. You'd never be found. Providing basic escape pods for the crew of the ship increases the cost by x0.1.

Pods with stasis chambers for long-sleep cost x0.2. Warp capable pods that can make their own way - slowly - to a safe planet cost x0.5.

Fabber: So long as you have a fabber, or replicator, and some raw materials you don't ever have to buy expensive parts - plus you can make your own after-market alterations. A fabber of the scale needed to produce parts for the ship increases its cost by x2.0.

Faster: The ship can move faster, stepping it up the speed ranking. Increase its cost by x2.0.

Foil Hull: The ship has no armour to speak of. Reduce cost by x-0.25

Improved Save: Each time you increase one of the Save scores of the ship the cost to do so goes up. The first point is x0.2, the second x0.4 and so forth.

Improved Sensors: You can take this up to three times and each time provides a bonus, +1/2/3 to the crew using the sensors. Cost x0.3

Killer Paint Job: The ship looks totally rad. It's styled, painted and otherwise made to look super, super cool. 'Street' x2, Luxury x5, Bespoke x10.

Medical Bay: The ship is fully equipped with a medical bay that can treat most injuries and take care of a typical number of crew casualties. x0.5

Overthrust: The ship can temporarily fly even faster than normal, though this burns up fuel and makes it less manoeuvrable. +1 speed (and even above racing) when activated. x1.0.

Quarters: Ships of any size other than fighter/hopper come with basic quarters - a bunk swapped between crew rotations. Taking this improves these quarters from basic each time you take it. Basic/Regular/Comfortable/Luxury. Officers already have quarters one level higher than the regular crew. x0.1

Science Suite: The ship comes with a science suite capable of crunching data and doing all sorts of experiments and examinations. Cost x0.5

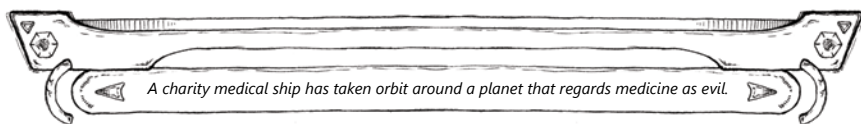
Self Repair: The ship is organic, covered in nanites or otherwise capable of repairing itself over time. It regains a Hit Point each turn. Cost x5.0

Shields: The ship is protected by deflector shields which increase its defence by +1/2/3. Each step in buying shields cost x0.5/1.0/1.5. The other option is to take shields that absorb damage, 10/20/30 hit points for the same cost. These hit points are the same scale as the ship.

Shuttle Bay: The ship has a bay fitted for a fighter-sized craft. Cost x0.1 per space.

Slower: The ship moves more slowly than normal for its size. Each step down (as far as stationary) recoups -x0.1 from the cost.

Solid: The ship has additional hit dice. Each additional hit dice increases the cost by x0.25.





Stasis Tanks: The ship has stasis tanks for its crew allowing them to go into indefinite cryogenic sleep. Increase the cost of the ship by x0.5

Stealth: The ship has a 'stealth rating' like the skill and can roll it to avoid detection, even though it isn't invisible (as with cloaking). Each point in Stealth increases the cost of the ship by x0.2.

Warp Drive: FTL travel does not necessarily come 'as standard' but it is common and through many and various means. To add warp drive to the ship increase its cost by x0.2.

Weapons: Make these up as normal and then fit them to the ship. The scale of the ship is a multiplier to the cost. You can purchase weapons at a smaller scale and this needs to be noted beside them. Each weapon adds +0.1 to the ship's cost multiplier for control systems.

Tractor Beam: The ship can use its Power save to draw things to it. Cost x0.4

Repulsor Beam: The ship can use its Power save to push things away from it. Cost x 0.4.

Vehicles

Vehicles come in scales, just like starships. The scales are a little different, but work - otherwise - in exactly the same way when it comes to damage and so on. They have the same sorts of statistics as starships and the main difference is conceptual, rather than in statistics.

Vehicles comes with one form of locomotion as standard but can add others if they need them. They can choose between:

Ground (whether wheels, tracks, ground effect or low level anti-gravity)

Aquatic (taken twice this allows a vehicle to submerge)

Aerial (taken twice allows a vehicle to hover)

Vehicle Statistics

Attack: Attack represents the effectiveness of the on-board computers and targeting systems that govern the ship's weapons. On a player vehicle this is added to the Ranged Attack score of the person firing the weapons. For NPC vehicles their attack is equal to their Hit Dice.

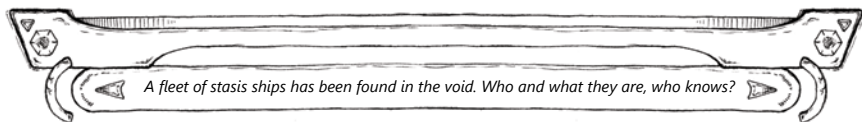
Scale: The numerical scale and its description for the vehicle.

Vehicle Sizes

Scale	Size	Hit Dice	Cost
1	Personal transport	3	500gp
2	Group transport	4	1000gp
3	Cargo Transport	5	2000gp
4	Oversize	6	4000gp

Hit Points: The Hit Dice and Hit Points of the vehicle. For NPC vehicles this will be the average (4.5 x Hit Dice rounding down) for character vehicles they can roll or take the average, only rounding up. EG: An NPC group transport has 13 hit points.

Armour: The armour dice for the vehicle.





Defence: The defence score of a vehicle is equal to 12, minus their Scale number.

Speed: The vehicle's speed is abstract and really only used to determine who can outpace who and who can keep up with who. Different vehicle sizes have different base speeds but, in order, these are:

Crawling
Slow
Moderate
Fast
Racing

Weapons: The vehicles weapons will be listed by damage and other statistics, just the same as normal weapons. They can be built in the same way and have the same sorts of special effects, they'll just be scaled up. For costs of weapons created in this way, multiply the final cost by the Scale number.

Saves

Vehicles have saves just like characters. These start at 5 and are increased - to start with - by up to the vehicle's hit dice. A light, manoeuvrable group transport - for example - might raise its Reflexes save to 8.

Toughness Save: The ship's hardiness, resistance to damage and hull integrity.

Reflexes Save: The ship's responsiveness and manoeuvrability.

Power Save: How much 'oomph' the ship can put out to escape gravity wells, tear free of tractor beams and so on.

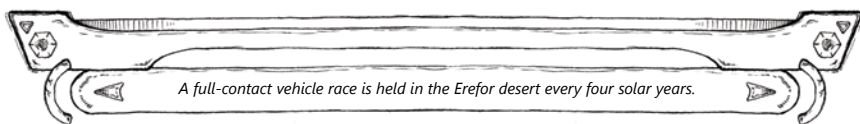
Basic Vehicle Stats

Personal Transport

Crew: 1
Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total
Scale: 1
Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 11
Speed: Fast
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 5
Reflexes Save: 8
Power Save: 5

Group Transport

Crew: 1/4
Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total
Scale: 2
Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 10
Speed: Moderate
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 7
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 7





Cargo Transport

Crew: 2/15

Attack: +0 bonus or +5 total

Scale: 3

Hit Points: 5HD (22 hp)

Armour: 0

Defence: 6

Speed: Slow

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 8

Oversize

Crew: 10/50

Attack: +0 bonus or +6 total

Scale: 4

Hit Points: 6HD (27 hp)

Armour: 0

Defence: 8

Speed: Crawling

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 8

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 8

Vehicle Customisations

Armour Plating: You can take this customisation multiple times, taking the armour of a vehicle up to a maximum of d12. Each time you take armour plating drives etc have to be upgraded to cope with the extra weight. Each upgrade step increases cost by x2.00.

Automatic Systems: Automatic systems replace the need for crew meaning that even huge vehicles might be able to be operated by a single person, or even no people at all! Each crew replacement increases the cost by x0.1

Cargo Storage: The vehicle is a cargo carrier. It can carry an appropriate amount of cargo for its size - Scale x 1 ton. You can increase the cargo size by a ton by paying for the cargo space again. Cost x 0.1. Cargo spaces are pressurised and have controlled environments as standard.

Cloaking Device: The vehicle can be rendered completely invisible to any and all sensors, though this is expensive and a massive drain on power. Cost x10.0

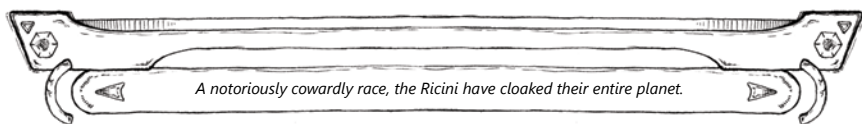
Faster: The vehicle can move faster, stepping it up the speed ranking. Increase its cost by x2.0.

Improved Save: Each time you increase one of the Save scores of the vehicle the cost to do so goes up. The first point is x0.2, the second x0.4 and so forth.

Improved Sensors: You can take this up to three times and each time provides a bonus, +1/2/3 to the crew using the sensors. Cost x0.3

Killer Paint Job: The vehicle looks totally rad. It's styled, painted and otherwise made to look super, super cool. 'Street' x2.0, Luxury x5.0, Bespoke x10.0.

Manual Control: The vehicle is crude and unwieldy with few automatic systems. Increase the number of crew needed to operate the vehicle by 1. Decrease the cost by x0.05.





Overthrust: The vehicle can temporarily go even faster than normal, though this burns up fuel and makes it less manoeuvrable. +1 speed (and even above racing) when activated. x1.0.

Self Repair: The vehicle is organic, covered in nanites or otherwise capable of repairing itself over time. It regains a Hit Point each turn. Cost x5.0

Shields: The vehicle is protected by deflector shields which increase its defence by +1/2/3. Each step in buying shields cost x0.5/1.0/1.5. The other option is to take shields that absorb damage, 10/20/30 hit points for the same cost. These hit points are the same scale as the vehicle.

Slower: The vehicle moves more slowly than normal for its size. Each step down (as far as stationary) recoups -x0.1 from the cost.

Solid: The vehicle has additional hit dice. Each additional hit dice increases the cost by x0.25.

Stealth: The vehicle has a 'stealth rating' like the skill and can roll it to avoid detection, even though it isn't invisible (as with cloaking). Each point in Stealth increases the cost of the vehicle by x0.2.

Weapons: Make these up as normal and then fit them to the vehicle. The scale of the vehicle is a multiplier to the cost. You can purchase weapons at a smaller scale and this needs to be noted beside them. Each weapon adds +0.1 to the vehicle's cost multiplier for control systems.

Tractor Beam: The vehicle can use its Power save to draw things to it. Cost x0.4

Travel Mode: The vehicle has additional or expanded travel modes and can transition between them. An amphibious ground-vehicle, for example, or a submersible. Cost x1.0.

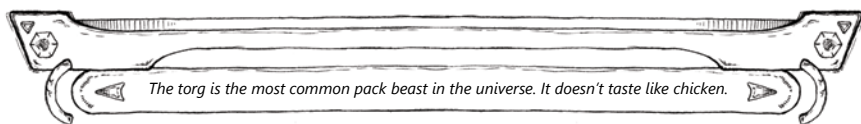
Repulsor Beam: The vehicle can use its Power save to push things away from it. Cost x0.4.

Buying Beasts

Buying a creature as a pet or a zoo curiosity cost a number of GP equal to its Hit Dice multiplied by itself and multiplied by itself again. These creatures are untrained and unpredictable. No, you may not gain experience points for killing them.

- Buying a creature as a beast of burden - trained simply to carry things but not people - costs twice as much.
- Buying a riding creature - trained to carry a person (or person-like thing on its back) costs three times as much. A creature must have at least three Hit Dice to be a riding creature.
- Buying an attack creature - trained to hunt and protect you - costs five times as much.
- You can combine these training regimen by stacking the multipliers. A warhorse, for example, would cost eight times as much.

EG: A three Hit Dice riding creature with combat training would cost $(3 \text{ cubed}) \times 8 = 216 \text{ gp}$.





Retainers

Retainers are intelligent followers who can handle various aspects of business and so on for you. They fill out the ranks of private armies, households, businesses and starship crews when there aren't enough player-characters or robots to go around. Retainers demand a daily wage for their services and without it they will leave. Retainers are not particularly loyal until you earn that loyalty or friendship through dint of effort.

Assassin: Sometimes you need someone killed and you're either too busy or don't want to be connected to the violence. That's when you hire someone to do it for you. The assassin will try to get a clear line on the target and to take them out. On the plus side, if they fail and don't survive then you don't have to pay the balance you owe them.

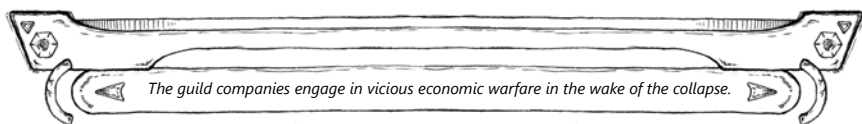
Driver: A driver, pilot or sailor who can make a vehicle - other than a spaceship - go, stop and move in the direction they think it ought to.

Type	Def	Hit Dice	Attack	Saves	Wages/Day	Notes
Accountant	12	1	+0	5	50	Lore: Accountancy 3, Savings 3
Assassin - Basic	13	1	+1	5	150	Sneak Attack: 3 Stealth: 1
Assassin - Veteran	14	2	+2	6	300	Sneak Attack: 4 Stealth: 2
Assassin - Elite	15	3	+3	7	500	Sneak Attack: 5 Stealth: 3
Driver	13	1	+1	5	20	Drive/Pilot/Sail: 3
Engineer	12	2	+1	6	25	Appropriate repair/build: 3
Expert	12	1	+0	5	10	Appropriate Lore: 4
Guide	13	2	+1	6	10	Local knowledge/survival: 3
Medic	12	1	+0	6	10	Medical skills: 3
Mercenary - Basic	12	1	+1	6	5	Has own basic gear.
Mercenary - Veteran	13	2	+2	7	10	Has own gear.
Mercenary - Elite	14	3	+3	8	25	Has own specialist gear.
Pilot	13	2	+1	6	25	Can pilot/navigate spaceships skill: 3
Ship Captain	14	3	+2	8	50	Captains a ship for you.
Ship Crew	12	1	+1	5	5	Loaders/dockers/multi-role
Skilled Worker	12	1	+0	6	7	Appropriate skill: 2
Slave	12	1	+0	5	-	Bought for 10 gp
Spy	13	2	+1	7	250	Stealth/Espionage: 3
Trainer	13	2	+1	6	50	Trains animals/people. Skill: 3
Unskilled Worker	12	2	+1	6	5	Physical labour
Valet	12	2	+1	6	25	Jack of all trades. Skill: 1.

Accountant: Any sort of financial expert, an accountant may be hired to go over business or personal financial records looking for problems or anomalies. They can also be hired to try and save a character money. If they make their Lore roll then they can apply their savings skill on behalf of the character that employs them.

Engineer: Someone who can make or fix complicated machines on your behalf.

Expert: A generic expert. They typically have one, focussed field of expertise upon which they are an authority and can lecture. At length.





Guide: If you're in a new city or on a new planet you're probably going to need a guide for a little while to help you find the best spots and fit in to the local culture. A guide need not be a professional, but they're going to charge you as though they were.

Medic: A doctor or paramedic capable of dealing with significant injuries and preserving life even if they're not a surgeon or a particularly experienced doctor.

Mercenary: A gun for hire, the mercenary will fight for the highest paying side - provided things don't get too hairy. From security guard to 'boots on the ground' the merc will take any job provided you can pay enough to keep them happy. Many are former members of official military groups and may have 'baggage'.

Pilot: Starships take a bit more specialist knowledge to operate, navigate and pilot and that is reflected in the worth and skill of those willing to hire on to pilot them.

Ship Captain: Merchant or mercenary fleets will need captains for their vessels and the owner/operator can't be everywhere at once. Sometimes you might have to hire someone to lead on your behalf.

Ship Crew: Starship crew fulfil every other role on board. They run the various pieces of machinery, do maintenance and man the turrets.

Skilled Worker: A skilled worker is a craftsman or other trained individual with a valuable skill set that has required an outlay of time and money for education.

Slave: Slaves don't have to be paid but they do have to be fed. You can buy slaves and put them to work on simple tasks, or more complex ones if they have the background. Slaves are likely to be resentful and unwilling without considerable effort put into terrorising and controlling them.

Spy: Whether industrial or governmental, espionage never goes out of style. Individuals are willing to hire themselves out to acquire information but this takes a special skill-set that doesn't always come cheap.

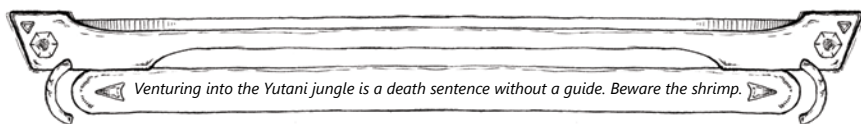
Trainer: Keeping fit? Want to learn a new skill? You need a trainer! They'll see you through it though, of course, it may cost you an arm and a leg.

Unskilled Worker: Shelf-stacking, ditch-digging, loading and unloading? The unskilled worker is what you need.

Valet: A personal assistant, maid or butler the valet is a 'gentleman's gentleman' with a broad experience and skill set there to make your life easier in every way possible.

Gear

The life of an interstellar adventurer is not an easy one and they will find themselves confronted by all manner of difficult and crazy situations.





One way to deal with these problems is to have just the right sort of gear ready to deal with the situation, though nobody can be expected to carry everything they need.

Quality

The following gear descriptions are for material of standard quality. You may wish to purchase gear of different quality levels, cheaper or more expensive. This usually has little to no in-game effect, other than making your character look either very flash, or a cheap bastard. Cheaper gear tends to break sooner and more easily or not to work easily or quite as advertised. Expensive gear tends to be hardwearing, long lasting, easy to use and will garner respect and admiration from those 'in the know'.

Shoddy: Half the normal price.

Standard: The normal price.

Good: Double the normal price.

Flash: Five times the normal price.

Top of the Line: Ten times the normal price.

Miscellaneous Gear

Art Supplies: A full set of paints, brushes, markers, pencils, charcoals and other artistic gear all in a neat, portable box or the cost of a dedicated artistic suite for your personal computer. 40gp.

Clothing: A full set of clothing, including shoes. At the standard level this is the equivalent of jeans, underwear, trainers, a t-shirt and a hooded top. 8gp.

Musical Instrument: A single example of a reasonably well made musical instrument. 15gp.

Restraints: A set of wrist or ankle cuffs. More elaborate restraints for recreational purposes cost a good deal more. 2gp.

Riding Tack: A full set of gear to set an animal up for comfortable riding and control. Different animals need their own tack. One size does not fit all. 15gp.

Survival Gear

Atmosphere Tester: A device that can test the atmosphere for a wide variety of toxins and gasses. It is about the size of a cell phone. 5gp.

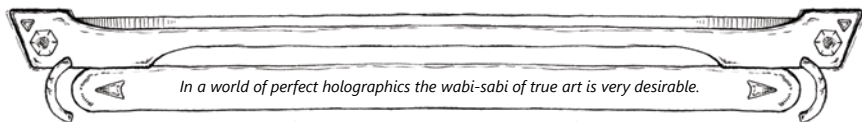
AutoDoc: A high tech, computerised, partially roboticised device that can diagnose and crudely treat injuries. At the standard cost it has appropriate skills at 1, rising by +1 for each higher quality level. It folds down into a heavy case about the size of a sports bag. 50gp.

Backpack: A military-style backpack with a capacious main area and many pockets and side pouches for carrying your gear. 3gp.

Chain: 5m of 250 kilo capacity chain. 1gp.

Climbing Rope: 50m of 300 kilo capacity climbing rope. 8gp.

Cooking Gear: A full set of military-style mess kit and camping stove. 5gp.





Entrenching Tool: A foldable spade that can also be used as an improvised weapon. 3gp.

Extreme Environment Gear: A set of full survival clothing for an extreme environment (arctic or desert being typical). 25gp.

First Aid Kit: A basic first-aid kit with disinfectant, bandages, gear for stitching, rehydration etc. 2gp.

Fishing Gear: A full set of standard fishing gear. Rod, tackle and transport box. 5gp.

Flash Goggles: A set of eye-protectors for use when welding or venturing onto dangerously sunny worlds. 1gp.

Food Tester: A simple, hand-held box of technological wonder that can test alien flora and fauna for toxicity. 5gp.

Handlight: A hand-held, powerful light source. This can be a torch, lantern, headpiece or other, similar apparatus. 2gp.

Life Raft: An inflatable life raft, used to survive the sinking of a maritime vessel. Contains water purification gear, signalling gear, oars and other vital necessities including a survival manual. Can support up to six people. 400gp.

Panniers: A set of panniers - or saddlebags - with the capacity of a backpack, each. 2gp.

Pressurised Tent: A pressurised tent is used on low or no atmosphere worlds in order to survive or 'camp out'. While tough they can be burst by micrometeorites and come with a hand-pumping airlock. 10gp per person.

Sleeping Bag: A nice, warm, snugly sleeping bag. 3gp.

Space Suit: A fully rated space suit for day to day use. 50gp.

Survival Pod: An inflatable pod with life support for one person along with a flashing light, transponder and water recycling system. If a spaceship is destroyed in space this pod can sustain someone for a while, hoping for rescue. 800gp.

Tent: A standard tent providing some weather-proofing and a snug space for someone to sleep. 2gp per person capacity.

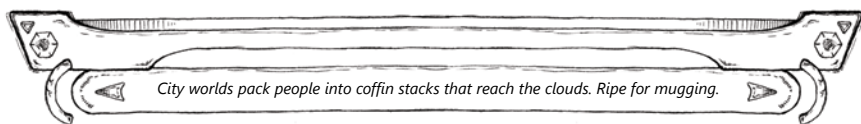
Water Purifier: A purification apparatus capable of rendering five litres of tainted water drinkable per twenty-four hours. 10gp.

Housing

Hotel Room: 2gp per night with nothing included.

Mansion: A multi-room mansion with large grounds and plenty of prestige. 250,000gp.

House: A ground level, free-standing home. 3,000gp per bedroom.





Flat/Apartment: 1,500gp per bedroom. Part of an urban high-rise.

Prefab Colonial Box: A large, rectangular, single-room box set up to be plumbed in and wired up to a grid. Crude and cheap shelter, a first step on the property ladder. 200gp.

Transportation

Cryo-Berth: 1gp per light year travelled.

Bunk: 2gp per light year travelled.

Stateroom: 5gp per light year travelled.

Gadgets

Antigravity Harness: A personal anti-gravity apparatus capable of making one levitate and fly at walking or running pace. 500gp.

Food Synthesiser: Feed in any organic matter and this high tech device will process it, spit out the bits it can't use and exude a foul-tasting and rather chewy grey bar of nutrients. Foul, but it will keep you alive. If fed enough organic material it can produce enough food to sustain three people. 100gp.

HUD Glasses: These glasses have full augmented reality display, can access planetary data-nets and can be loaded with applications and other interesting software. 15gp.

Jet Pack: A personal flight-kit less subtle, but much faster, than an antigravity harness. 200gp.

Personal Communicator: A small device used for local scale communication. It may also be an entertainment centre and personal computer though it lacks the power of dedicated computer apparatus. 10gp.

Power Winch: A electrically powered winch capable of hauling up two or three people's worth of weight. 5gp.

Tablet Computer: A powerful, portable computer capable of running a wide variety of programs and working on voice or haptic commands. 25gp.

Tool Kit: Separate kits for electricians, mechanics, locksmiths etc all come with their own sets of tools. These are all packed into a nice, portable carry box about the size of a sports bag and cost 25gp.

Food & Drink

Bottle of Liquor: A bottle of strong (30%+) alcohol. 2gp.

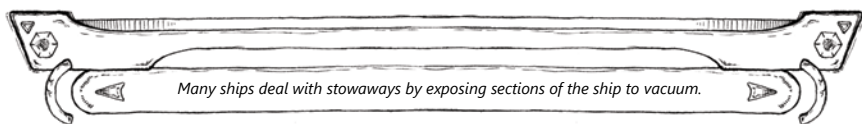
Bottle of Wine: A bottle of palatable drink with a strength of 10% to 20%. 0.2gp.

MilRats: 2gp per day (three meals). A basic, but edible, source of nutrition.

Pint of Quaff: A pint of quaffable booze with a strength of 1.5% to 20%. 0.1gp.

Restaurant Meal: 2gp per person.

Takeaway Meal: 1gp per person.





Services

Courier: Interstellar: Cost of item x0.5gp.

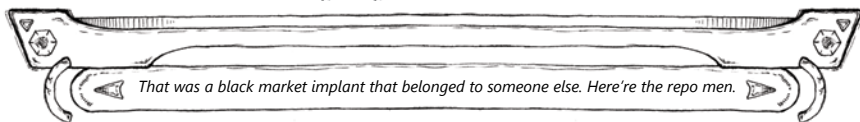
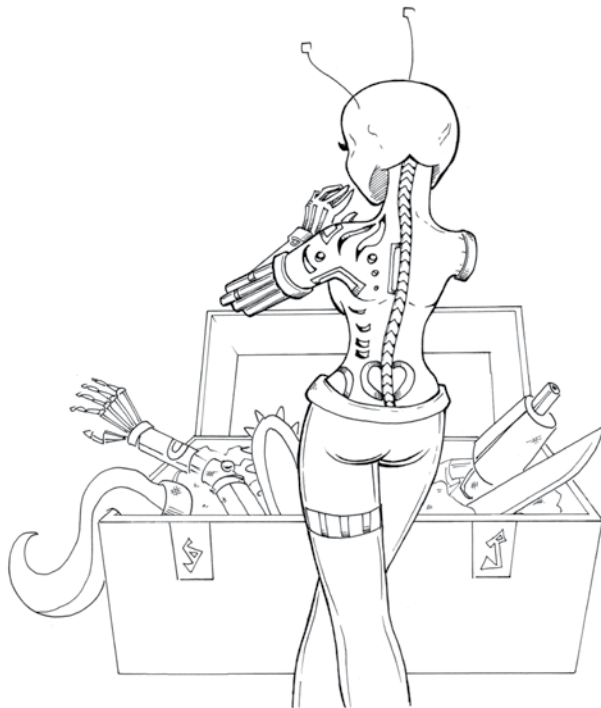
Courier: Local: Cost of item x0.1gp.

Courier: Planetary: Cost of item x0.2gp.

Courier: System: Cost of item x0.3gp.

Cybernetics & Enhancements

The line between man and machine (or ursinoid and photocopier if you prefer) has become blurred as technology advances. There are organic computers and inorganic intelligences that further blur the line. Still, when it comes to war wounds or even peculiar body fetishes there are plenty of people and things (the things are also people) that need or want to replace limbs and make themselves more than human(oid). That's where cybernetics and other implanted technologies come in.





So long as you have the money you can rebuild yourself in a surprising variety of ways but money isn't the only problem that would-be cybernuts have to contend with. Cybernetics may - often - be better than the flesh but they impose a physical and psychological toll. The interface between man and machine is never perfect and the trauma of having a part of your body that isn't 'really' you never really goes away. This collective problem manifests as 'glitches'. Tremors, hallucinations, body-image issues, scarring, cybernetic rejection and a host of other dehumanising physical and mental problems. As if that weren't enough, many cultures define people past a certain amount of modification (50 glitch points) as objects, rather than people, stripping them of rights.

Glitch

Every time you get a new cybernetic replacement part, you're asked to make two saving rolls. One for Toughness and one for Will. These represent your psychological and physical dealing with the modifications made to your body. Each cybernetic item has three numbers in 'glitch'. The first is the number of glitch points you gain if you make both saves, the second if you make one save and the last if you fail both.

Roll d8	Ability Loss
1	Lose one point of Strength (muscle spasms and pain).
2	Lose one point of Dexterity (tremors and loss of fine motor control).
3	Lose one point of Constitution (your body tries to reject the implants).
4	Lose one point of Intelligence (nervous system degradation).
5	Lose one point of Wisdom (your senses are blunted by phantom sounds and vision artefacts).
6	Lose one point of Charisma (you become more machine-like in your interactions).
7	Lose one point of Comeliness (bad scarring, hair loss and other cosmetic reactions to the surgery).
8	Psychological Problems increase in severity.

Ability Loss

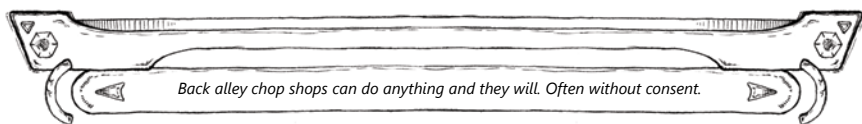
Every ten points of glitch you accumulate, you suffer a randomly determined penalty. This is usually the loss of a point of Ability but can be forms of madness. If an Ability is reduced to zero the character dies or otherwise retires from play.

Psychological Problems

Psychological issues pass through three stages of severity and their effects must be roleplayed.

Stage One: Mild Dismorphia

The character becomes obsessed with their implants and the dehumanising effect that they have. They may be touchy about their cybernetics, may try to hide them or may constantly polish and tinker with them. They may try to compensate for what they see as their deficiency through addiction, promiscuity and other coping mechanisms.





Stage Two: Moderate Dismorphia

The character feels that their cybernetics are not a part of them and has become paranoid of them. They may believe they have their own agenda and may name them. They're likely to overcompensate for their 'machine nature' by diving headfirst into anything they can do to elicit a feeling or they may embrace the machine nature and become cold and logical - or at least their concept thereof.

Stage Three: Severe Dismorphia

The character is swallowed up by their madness and no longer wishes to have their implants. They may try to remove them themselves, go on a rampage to get 'suicide by cop' or kill themselves. Whatever the circumstances the character becomes unplayable.

Basic Cybernetics

Basic cybernetics do nothing more than replace the original organ or part. They do tend to be more durable and hard-wearing than organic replacements though and this results in increased Hit Points.

Arm/Leg

Glitch: 2/4/8

A cybernetic arm attached at the shoulder. +1 Strength, +3 Hit Points. 75 gp.

Digestive System

Glitch: 2/4/6

A replacement stomach and digestive tract, tougher and more durable than an organic one and less vulnerable to infection of poisoning. +2 Hit Points, +1 Toughness Save. 50gp.

Ear

Glitch: 1/2/3

A basic audio-pickup. Unlike a natural, organic ear though the sound quality received by this ear does not degrade over time. 50gp.

Eye

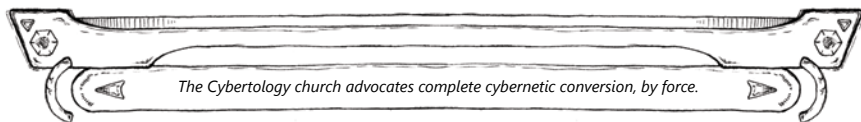
Glitch: 2/4/10

With many, even most, species the eyes are important to identity and self expression and replacing them is risky. This basic eye picks up vision with the same acuity as an organic eye and without floaters or other visual distortions found in organic eyes. 100gp.

Foot/Hand

Glitch: 1/2/5

A basic replacement of a missing body part. +1 Hit Point. 25gp.





Heart

Glitch: 2/5/10

The heart, or its equivalent in other species, is one of the most important organs in the body especially with regard to overall health and fitness. This cybernetic heart will never suffer heart attacks and can work harder and for longer than its organic equivalent. +1

Toughness Save, +3 Hit Points. 100gp.

Lungs

Glitch: 1/3/5

The lungs, or equivalent, allow gases (or liquids) to be taken into the body for use in the metabolism and then allow waste gases to be expelled in the same way. This replacement is more resilient than organic lungs and more efficient. +1 Toughness Save, +2 Hit Points.

Netjack

Glitch: 3/6/12

A cable slot or wireless attachment to the brain or nervous system, the netjack is a delicate mind/machine interface socket that allows the user to directly 'jack in' to weapons, computers and vehicles. Jacking in to a device gives a generic +1 bonus (or extra level of skill) when using that device. 200gp.

Cybernetic Options

Addiction Rewiring

Glitch: 2/3/6

Nanomachines block or control addiction receptors in the nervous system and stiffen those circuits responsible for self-control and willpower. +2 Will save. 100gp.

Aesthetic Sculpt

Glitch: 1/2/5

The body is reshaped and given a 'tune up', aesthetically. This option can be taken up to three times and each time increases Comeliness by +1. 150gp.

Brain-Optimisation

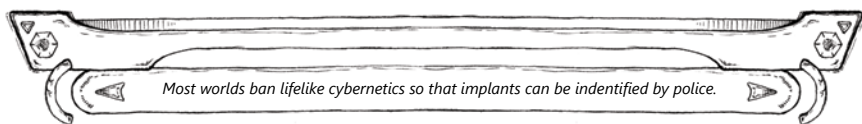
Glitch: 5/10/20

A highly delicate process 'infects' the brain with nanites and over the course of the operation rewires the existing connections for greater speed, replacing the naturally and organically grown connections. It also rewires the brain in several other ways to increase memory skills, pattern recognition and other general cognitive abilities. This option can be taken up to three times and each time increases Intelligence by +1. 500gp.

Change-Socket

Glitch: 1/2/3

Your hand, foot or limb can be quickly detached and replaced with another one, allowing you to have a variety of different limbs 'on hand' for different circumstances. 10gp.





Hearing Mode

Glitch: 1/1/2

An option for cybernetic ears. These options may allow you to indulge in a variety of modifications from echolocation to ultrasound and infrasound. 5gp per option.

Inbuilt Weapon

Glitch: 3/5/10

Your hand, foot, limb or even eye has a weapon (of appropriate size) built into it which you can fire. You get +1 to hit with this weapon as it is a literal extension of your body. (2xWeapon Cost)+5gp.

Muscle Replacement

Glitch: 5/10/15

Your muscles are replaced with myomar bundles that can be several times as strong. They also don't accumulate fat which gives you a permanently sculpted look. You may take this option up to three times, each time providing a +1 bonus to Strength and +2 Hit Points. 250gp.

Nanomeds

Glitch: 1/2/3

Swarms of nanobots swim through your bloodstream, self-replicating and working to supplement your natural healing and immune systems. Toughness +1, Hit Points +3, heal an extra Hit Point per day of rest. 250gp.

Neural Streamlining

Glitch: 3/6/9

Your nervous system gets an overhaul allowing you to move more accurately and to react more quickly. You may take this up to three times, each time gaining a +1 bonus to Dexterity. 400gp.

Personality Editing

Glitch: 1/4/15

Highly intricate techniques are used to modify your personality. This can simply change your outlook and reactions or be used to 'socially optimise' you. You may take this up to three times, each time gaining a +1 bonus to Charisma, if you choose optimisation. 750gp.

Skeletal Augmentation

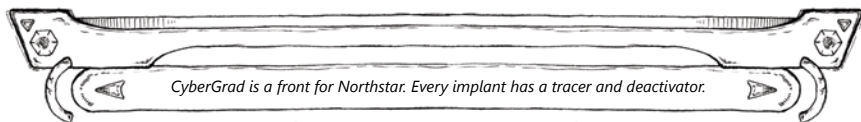
Glitch: 2/5/10

Your skeleton is laced or replaced with complex and tough polymers or alloys making you much tougher and more resilient. Each time you take this - up to three times - you gain +3 Hit Points and +1 Constitution. 250gp.

Skin Armour

Glitch: 2/4/6

Your skin is replaced or laced with breathable armour materials. This makes you quite dense and heavy but also highly resistant to damage. You may take this up to three times gaining +3 Hit Points each time. It also confers on you a natural armour of 1/1d4/1d8. 1,000gp.





Vision Mode

Glitch: 1/2/3

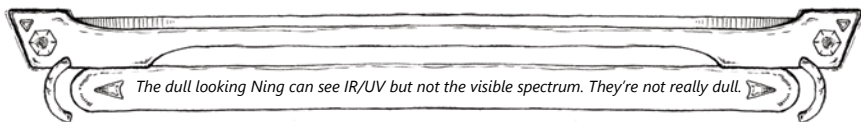
An option for cybernetic eyes. These options may allow you to indulge in a variety of modifications from thermographic sight to ultraviolet infrared. 5gp per option.

Cybernetics are often classed as 'concealed weapons' and many governments and organisations are intensely worried because you can't very well confiscate someone's arm or legs - it sets a horrible precedent. In order to counter these potential problems different planetary governments have come up with various ways to address the issue.

On some worlds cybernetics must not be lifelike and must be in obnoxious colours - such as lime green or hot pink. This serves two purposes in that it makes such implants highly visible and desperately unfashionable, which helps cut down on elective and cosmetic cybernetics.

On other worlds cybernetically enhanced individuals are required by law to wear transponders that identify their location and their implants to the security forces. This is a gross invasion of privacy but does lead to rapid arrests in cybernetically enabled crimes.

On Murtiphan cybernetically enhanced people are required to wear a tall hat with bells on and to wear a sandwich board proclaiming them to be a 'Robot lover'. Despite this, bigoted attacks on full cyborgs are rare.



The dull looking Ning can see IR/UV but not the visible spectrum. They're not really dull.



Boldly Going

Besides being notably humungous, the universe is also a dangerous place even without someone trying to sear your hide with bolts of hot plasma. For starters the vast majority of space is an inhospitable vacuum filled with radiation, bitterly cold (or intensely hot) and most of it is miles and miles from anywhere. Even if you do make planet fall you still have to deal with different gravities, inhospitable winds, solar radiation, abrasive dust, earthquakes, falling, lava and - potentially - hostile native life.

Facing Challenges

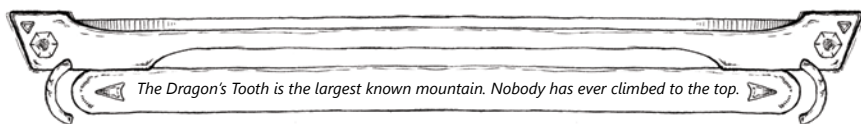
Throughout your adventures you're going to run into all sorts of difficult and dangerous situations where you need to find out if you survive, how much harm you've taken or what the repercussions of success or failure are. In a single game session a character might get into a fight with a guard, be exposed to a vacuum, have to hack a computer and leap over a chasm. Success or failure at any of these points may have a profound effect on the adventure, the story as it unfolds and the success of your fellow characters.

A lot of your interactions will come through role-play. You say what you want to do and the Games Master tells you what happens. As much as possible the Games Master should interpret this by what they think makes sense and what makes for the best game.

The problem with that is that not everyone has the same definition of 'best' and there's no real way to resolve that other than to suggest that you all have a good chin-wag about what you're looking for from a game before you start. That way you can come to some sort of compromise.

A character sheet can guide these decisions without any rolls needing to actually be made. If the Games Master knows that a character is particularly ugly then they can gauge the normal reactions of the people they meet without having to touch a dice. These kinds of off-the-cuff decisions are called 'Games Master fiat', they're essential for stopping the rules from getting in the way (which they do sometimes!) and players should agree to consent to any but the most stupid and wrong of Games Master decisions.

You only really need to go to the dice when the outcome is in serious question or when the stakes are high. Dice bring tension into the game and excitement, bringing an outcome down to the roll of a dice and the intervention of fate. This is the important difference between a role-playing game and just telling a story. The point where 'game' comes to the fore. In a story things are preordained, the author has total control. In a role-playing game the dice often, even usually, have final say though the Games Master can always override them.





Machinations of the Space Princess is intended to be a 'traditional role-playing game' in that sense.

Characters can and will die and everything can come down to a single die roll. You can play it as more of a story game should you wish, you'll just need to invoke Games Master fiat more often.

Skills

Some skills give you bonuses when doing other things (like fighting) while others give you access to specialist knowledge and abilities beyond those of others who have not had the same training. Maybe you know how to repair or pilot a spaceship, to field strip a gun or to move - unseen.

Skills are rolled when you are doing things. Skills are rolled when you are being active.

When you use a Skill, you roll a D6 and if it is under your skill you succeed. If it is over your Skill then you fail. If your skill is 6 then you roll two dice and if both come up 6 then you fail. Should your skill rise about 6 due to supernatural, ExoTech or other reasons you add more dice for each skill point higher and all need to come up 6 for you to fail.

Example: Dwanette is trying to sneak across a starship hold, moving from crate to crate, shadow to shadow. She has a Stealth Skill of 3 and rolls 2, under the total. She succeeds.

Skills can gain bonuses from equipment or penalties from situations being particularly difficult. This should never be more than one or two points and shouldn't turn up in most situations.

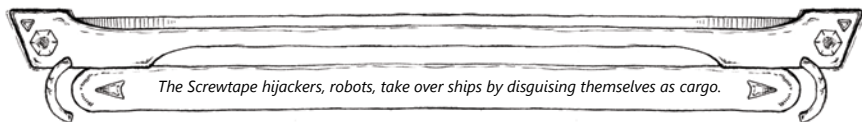
Example: Dwanette is trying to sneak back across the hold, but this time its after she's set off alarms and put everyone on high alert. Her skill is reduced to 2 and she rolls a four. Failure!

A failed Skill roll can have several different outcomes:

Oops, try again: All that you've wasted is time. You'll get to roll again. An example of this might be in trying to fix an engine or pick a lock.

Doom: In this case when you cock-up its all over or you're unaware that you've failed in the first place. An example of this might be in trying to navigate your way in a desert. You may go the wrong way for a very long time before noticing.

Hold Your Breath: Sometimes a failure creates an opportunity for someone else. If you're stealthing your way across a starship, for example, a failure doesn't mean you're spotted. Rather, it means the guards have a chance to spot you by making a Logic Saving Roll.





Saving Rolls

Saving rolls are used passively. They're rolled when something is being done to you or you are reacting to something.

Do you notice the hundred-ninjas trying to sneak up on you?

Does the poison take effect?

Have you been mind controlled by the brain-warping juices of the mahatma plant?

Each Save is also tied to one of your main Attributes (Strength, Dexterity etc) making them a good fall-back for testing raw ability in those times when skill isn't appropriate. Perhaps you're arm wrestling someone and your raw strength is all that needs to be tested. That's when a saving roll might come in.

Example: Belle is carefully making her way down the corridor of an alien tomb when a laser beam lights up and sweeps the corridor at head height. Belle must make a Reflex Save to avoid being hit by the beam.

Example: Krug and Lug are engaged in an arm wrestling contest. Each rolls their Power Saves until one wins and another fails in the same roll. That determines the winner.

Hazards

Besides combat there are a great many dangers in the universe and your intrepid mercenaries and cutthroats will have to deal with one, the other or all of them at some time or another.

This section covers the most common situations that are likely to call for rules decisions and can act as a guideline for more odd and esoteric situations that also arise.

Age & Immortality

Aging isn't likely to be a problem for most space adventurers. They're far more likely to get cut down, eaten, irradiated, blown up or to retire on their own planet made of gold before this becomes an issue. You might need to account for the effects of temporal warping or may play a generational game though, so age can become an issue.

In a science-fictional universe advanced medical care means that most people can live up to double their normal lifespan. More primitive societies may have a life-expectancy of half what we would consider normal. In the case of humans this means that life-spans of 200 years are normal, 100 to be expected and 50 the norm on primitive worlds.

Different species age at different rates, even though decrepitude is a near-universal. Rather than divide the effects up by age they have a general description which can be applied across multiple species.

Age Category	Effects (cumulative)
Middle Aged	-1 Dex & -1 Com
Old	-1 Dex, Str, Con & Com
Ancient	-1 Dex, Str, Con, Com, Int, Wis
Decrepit	-2 Dex, Str, Con, Com, Int, Wis

In species that do not age, decrepitude is seen as obscene, even fetishistic.



Disease

Diseases take time to take effect and have a huge variety of effects. It is best, then, to keep things as simple as possible so that you can get on with shooting aliens in the face without having to worry too much.

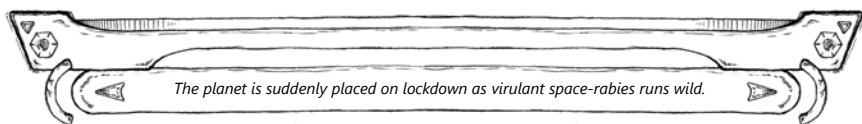
When you're first exposed to disease you make a Toughness Save. If you fail you contract it. It takes immediate effect the moment you contract it. Every day following initial infection you roll your Toughness Save again. If you succeed you throw off the disease and its effects (though Hit Points will need to be recovered as normal). If you fail then you continue to suffer its effects.

Diseases typically have an effect on your derived characteristics, rather than having a direct effect on your Abilities. This way they have an immediate and uncomplicated in-game effect. Here's a few examples.

Conventional contraceptives are simply not up to the task of cross-species interaction or the deadly threat of atomic herpes. Galactic society has tried, in vain, to control people's sexual interactions but the only truly safe way to have sex is by yourself.

As an alternative virtuality rigs, downloadable personality simulations, nanite crotch-swarms and other high tech solutions have been turned to. Many of these are dispensed at orbital fuelling stations, though ensure you're in the right species-type bathroom before purchase.

Disease	Damage	Other Effects
Arcturan Mega-Crabs	1d3	Visible infestation, itching, bleeding. -2 Logic, -1 Will.
Brainslugs	1	Subtly mind controlled to infect others whenever possible.
Chromatigo	0	Skin randomly changes colour, fever. -1 Charm, -1 Will.
Cygnan Measles	1d4	Sweats, rash, hallucinations. -2 Will, -2 Toughness.
Galloping Cockrot	1d6	Genital necrosis, -2 to all Saves.
Space-Flu	1d2	Chills, shivering, mucous. -1 to all Saves, Attacks & Defences.
The Shits	1d2	Diarrhoea, -1 Toughness, -1 Will, -1 Attacks & Defences.
Wattling	1	Swollen throat, rendered dumb.



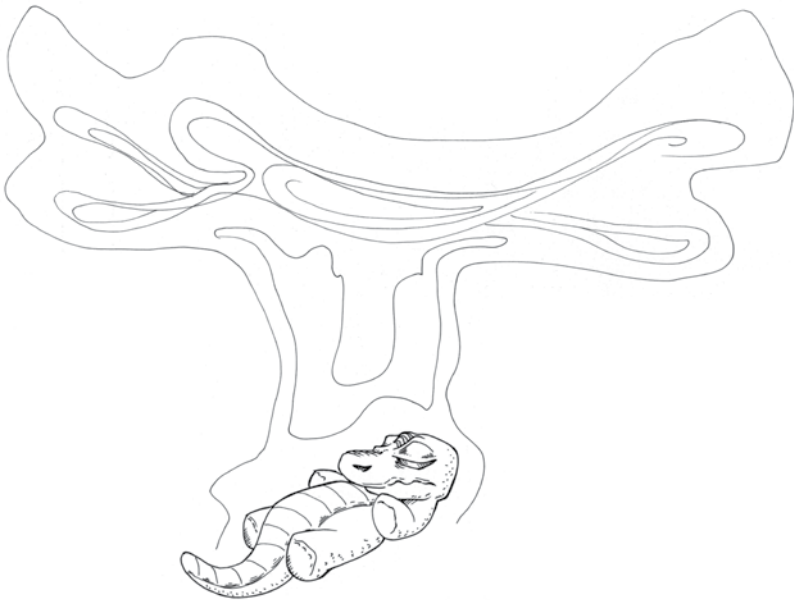


Drugs

Drugs, by which I mean recreational drugs, are very popular as a means to escape reality and are generally a lot cheaper than a VR rig. Drug use in the Machinations of the Space Princess universe is pretty ubiquitous though morality and law enforcement varies from planet to planet.

When a character takes a 'dose' of a drug they make a Toughness Save, just as they would with a disease. If they succeed they only get the positive effect of the drug. If they fail they get both the positive and negative effect of the drug. Here's a few examples.

Drug	Positive	Negative
Weed	Giggle fits, hunger, listlessness, sense of wellbeing.	Paranoia, lack of motivation, -2 Will.
Trippies	Hallucinations, -1 to all Saves, Attacks and Defences.	A bad trip. -2 to all Saves, Attacks and Defences.
Sigh	Minor empathy to read group moods.	Cacophony of telepathic shouting. 1d6 HP, -3 to Saves.
Frost	Confidence, +1 to Toughness, Will & Logic.	Megalomania, -2 to all Defences, +1 to all Saves.



Burrd sap is a psychic hallucinogenic that joins its takers in a joint dreamworld.



Falling

When you plummet and land on something it hurts. Lower gravity means you can fall from greater heights and take less damage while higher gravity means taking a tumble is as deadly to a hale and hearty adventurer as it is to an octogenarian. In standard (Earth) gravity a character takes 1d6 damage for every storey (three metres or ten feet) that they fall, up to a maximum of 20d6.

Foraging and Survival

Your Survival Skill determines how good you are at finding food and water away from the convenience of a supermarket or a microwavable burrito. One roll can be made per person, per day, while foraging and they are taken to be hunting, gathering and foraging at the same time as they're travelling or doing anything else. Of course, this assumes that there is any food or water to be had in the environment. If you're on a desertified vacuum world then you're shit out of luck and should consider eating the fattest and lowest level member of the team first.

The amount you roll under your Survival Skill determines how many person/days of food you manage to gather and this can be shared amongst the group.

If the terrain is difficult to forage in or has little growth or animals then your skill takes a -1 penalty.

If the terrain is desert, tundra or equivalent then your skill is at -2.

More fecund terrain such as woodland, plains or jungle grants a +1 or +2 bonus.

Heat & Cold

Exposure to harsh conditions, without suitable protective gear, causes one Hit Point of damage for every two hours of exposure (or part thereof). A Toughness Save is also called for or the debilitating effects of being too hot or too cold cause a -1 penalty to all Saves, Attacks and Defences until a night's rest has been had in a more suitable environment.

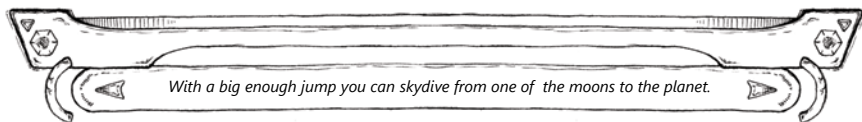
Being set on fire or splashed with acid does 1d6 damage per turn this can be ended by spending a turn to put it out or scrape it off. This lets you make a Reflex Save and if you succeed you no longer take the damage.

Poison

Poisons are toxic substances that get into the body and cause havoc. Being poisoned calls for a Toughness Save and if this is failed then the poison takes effect. You can roll your Save every turn, failing causes more Hit Points and keeps the original effect ongoing while succeeding ends the effect of the poison.

Radiation

Exposure to high radiation causes 1d4 damage per turn. At the end of the period of exposure the character must make a Toughness Save or 1 hit point of that damage for each turn of exposure is permanent.





Poison	Damage	Effect
Heartstopper	1d6	Heart spasms. -1 Toughness, -1 to Attacks and Defences.
Hilarium	1	Uncontrollable laughter, -2 to Attacks and Defences.
Knock-Out	0	Renders the target unconscious. Harming them will wake them temporarily.
Orion BiSnake Venom	1d4	Excruciating agony. +1 damage from any other source. -2 Toughness.

Starvation & Thirst

A character needs to eat at least one full meal and to drink water once per day to avoid the effects of starvation and thirst. Every day a character goes without food they lose 2 hit points and reduce their Saves by -1. This is cumulative. Every day a character goes without water they lose 1d4 hit points and reduce their Saves by -1. This is cumulative.

Vacuum

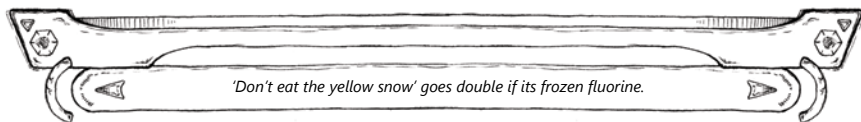
Exposure to a vacuum is a horrible way to die but it's not necessarily as instant as you might think. If you're exposed to a vacuum with forewarning (or a Reflex save) you don't have to worry for one turn, otherwise you immediately start taking damage. Every turn you are exposed to a vacuum make a Toughness Save or lose 1d12 hit points. Even if you make the save you still take 1 hit point of damage. Should you survive you must make another Toughness Save or 1 hit point from each turn of exposure is permanent.

Derring Do's and Don'ts

There's all sorts of typical actions that a daring adventurer/space pirate will get involved in and a lot of this will happen more often than other situations. This, then, is a raft of the more typical scrapes that adventurers will get themselves into. A general principle to follow is that a failed Skill roll provokes the need for a Save roll to recover from it. That Save might be on the part of a player or their opponent.

Climbing

Climbing is any movement on a surface steep enough that you can't walk. Depending on the difficulty of the surface involved you might get between +2 and -2 to your Skill when trying to climb the surface. A slick, wet surface with no real handholds would reduce your skill by -2 while a craggy surface only just steep enough to need to use the Climb skill might get you +2. If you fail a Climb roll you need to make either a Reflex Save to grab a handhold or a Power Save to cling on. The Games Master should determine which and should regularly mix things up to keep the players guessing.





Swimming

Characters are assumed to be able to swim, though you can choose not to be able to if you prefer. Characters are assumed to be able to move at half their normal movement speed when swimming. Should you be ducked under the water you can hold your breath for 60 seconds (6 turns) +/- 10 seconds per point of Constitution bonus or penalty that you have. After that you need to make a Toughness Save each turn or suffer 1d12 points of damage. This rule can also be used for holding your breath against gas attacks and if you fail the Save then you take the effect of the gas.

Movement

Characters, at standard, can move ten metres per round and still perform actions as normal. If they choose to run then they can move three times as fast but cannot take any actions (other than to dodge and make Saves). This movement rate assumes a decent surface such as an urban street or road. Rougher terrain reduces movement.

Terrain	Movement Rate
Perfect	100%
Grass/Dirt	75%
Desert/Forest/Hill/Tundra	50%
Jungle/Mountains/Swamp	25%

Riding

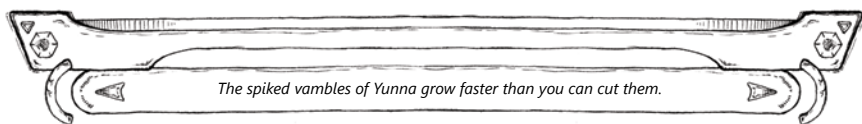
When riding you move at the movement rate of the beast instead of at your own rate. Riding beasts have a mind of their own though and a combination of Skill Rolls, Charisma, Power and Reflex Saves may be needed to get a reluctant beast to do what you want. Riding along at a normal pace without doing anything too strenuous or difficult doesn't require any rolls.

Driving

Characters are assumed to be able to drive within a reasonable speed from point 'A' to point 'B' without having to make any rolls. Going really fast or pulling off stunts does, however, require Driving or Piloting rolls. Failed Driving or Piloting rolls demand a save, typically Power, Reflexes or Logic. In chase sequences the vehicle being followed can pull stunts of various kinds to force the vehicle following to do the same stunt or fail.

Senses

When you're trying, actively, to find something then you'll be rolling on your Search Skill. This will let you seek out hidden doors, trap triggers and so forth. That's when you're actively looking. When something exposes itself to the potential of you seeing it - like you trip a floor switch or someone tries to sneak from cover to cover in front of you - then you'll be rolling a Logic Save to spot it.





Sneaking

You use your Stealth Skill, modified by how difficult or easy the situation is, to move without being seen or heard from one place to another. If you make your roll then you provoke no opportunity for someone to sense that you're there. If you screw up then you expose yourself to being seen, knock over a can, sneeze or otherwise make yourself noticeable. Your opponent then gets to make a Logic Save to try and spot you. This means even people without the Stealth Skill can try to be sneaky, but their success will depend more on the perceptiveness of the person - or device - they're sneaking past.

Healing

Characters get hurt and then they recover. Generally speaking they recover much more slowly than they take harm. Hit Points are an abstraction of various factors such as luck, 'spirit', health, grit and pain tolerance but as far as healing is concerned it is all treated as damage.

A character regains one hit-point per night of rest. If they're being looked after by someone with medical skill this is doubled. If they're in a hospital or properly equipped sickbay then this is tripled.

Characters at zero or fewer Hit Points are unconscious for 1d6 hours and when they awaken are still on zero or less. They heal at the normal rate but until they are in positive Hit Points can only crawl around at two metres a turn.

Psychic powers, nanotech medical packs, primitive mysticism and a variety of other special possibilities may heal someone even faster. These ways and means have the amount they heal noted with them.

Languages

With so many species with so many different forms of communication from sound waves to pulses of light and even pheromones a true, common language is essentially impossible. For creatures that are capable of making a noise Terranglic is the 'Lingua Franca' (oh how ironic) not because it is a simple or easy language to learn but because it is able to be utterly mangled and still somewhat understood.

Various translation devices and applications exist allowing communication between other species but to smooth over communication for those who are less capable of pronouncing Terranglic or grasping it an icon/sound/colour based language called iCom is used for basic communication.



Kicking Ass

Sooner or later you're going to have to draw iron or put between one and four of your size twelve combat boots up someone's cloaca. Fighting is an important and key part to many adventures and also the most contentious as its when characters might die or be grievously injured. Combat should be handled swiftly and decisively on the part of the players and the Games Master. This will stop it getting bogged down in argument and keep a sense of tension going. He who hesitates is lost and if the players take too long to decide what they're going to do then move on and leave them paralysed with indecision!

Combat Turns

Combat turns are more structured than the normal hodge-podge of the rest of the game where anyone and everyone can stick their oar in as they go along. Combat is a 'srs bsns' and turns follow a much stricter order than they otherwise might. To take you through combat use the following pattern:

1. Surprise motherfucker! If either side has surprise, they get a free turn while their targets can do nothing.

2. Initiative Rolls: All the players and enemies roll their Initiative. Initiative is a d20 plus Wisdom Bonus plus Attack Bonus (the basic one you get for your level and class). Enemies of the same type only roll once and all go at the same time. The combatant with the highest Initiative goes first and the rest take their turns in Initiative order, highest to lowest.

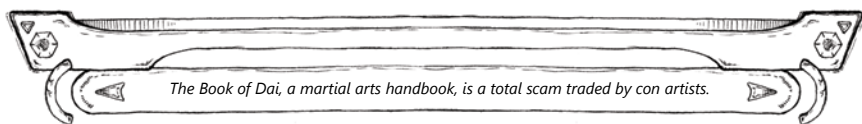
3. Each Player or Enemy takes two actions: You get two actions in each combat turn. Typically this will be move and attack but other combinations are possible such as defending yourself, using psychic powers and so on.

4. End turn: Is everyone dead who needs to be dead? If so, combat ends. If not you go into another turn, using the same Initiative scores.

Initiative

Initiative is an abstract amalgamation of reaction time, situational awareness, instinct and combat experience. Initiative determines the order in which the various combatants act. The higher the score, the faster you react and the earlier you go in a turn. You keep the same Initiative score from turn to turn, though it can change through various effects, actions and so forth.

Initiative is $d20 + \text{Initiative Bonus}$ (which is equal to your base attack bonus plus your Wisdom bonus). This is rolled at the start of combat, after surprise.





Attacks

The meat and potatoes of combat is shooting some mother-loving alien bastard in their hideous, poorly-designed genitals and then stripping their corpse of valuables. In order to do that you're going to need to attack. Attacks are resolved by rolling your Close or Ranged Attack plus a d20 and any and all bonuses or penalties and beating the opponents Defence Class. If you get higher you hit, if you get equal or lower, you miss. Pretty simple sounding, but then all sorts of situations and other concerns can get in the way to make it more complex. You can, of course, ignore these and make things up on the fly if you so choose.

Critical Hits & Misses

If you roll a '20' on your d20 when you are rolling to hit, don't bother adding any bonuses or anything. You hit, automatically. Furthermore when it comes to rolling damage you double the final total.

If you roll a '1' on your d20 when you are rolling to hit, don't bother adding any bonuses or anything. You miss automatically.





Throwing a shoe, shooting someone with a blaster pistol under a table or lining up a pointy-headed alien diplomat in your sniper-sights are all examples of ranged attacks and they all follow the same general rules.

Your Ranged Attack score is equal to your base attack score, plus your Dexterity bonus.

When hitting someone at range you're trying to beat their Ranged Defence score which is 12 plus their Dexterity bonus.

Cover

When you're being shot at, getting behind cover is probably a good idea. It will give you some extra protection and make you harder to see and to hit.

Laying prone provides +1 Ranged Defence.

Half cover - hiding behind a box, oil drum, building corner etc, provides +2 Ranged Defence.

Near full cover - such as a firing slit or murder hole, provides +4 Ranged Defence.

Attackers can elect to shoot through cover in which case your Ranged Defence is only +1 but they must breach the armour of the wall, door or sandbags in order to harm the target. This provides an extra, appropriate, dice of armour.

Poor Visibility

Being unable to see properly creates problems when you're trying to hit a target. Mist, fog, darkness, blindness or an invisible opponent all make things much more difficult.

Poor visibility (mist, dusk): -1 Ranged Attack.

Bad visibility (fog, night): -2 Ranged Attack.

No vision (invisibility, blindness): -5 Ranged Attack.

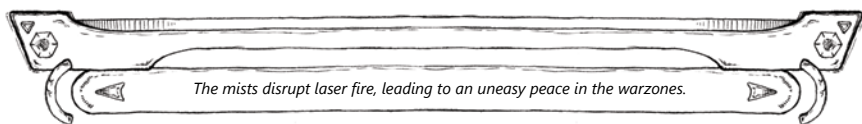
Shooting into Melee

Firing into close combat is a risky proposition at best. When a friend and an enemy are at it, hammer and tongs, the last thing you want to do is shoot your friend in the back. Unfortunately, that is pretty likely to happen. When you're shooting into a close combat melee roll to hit as normal; if you succeed, deduct five from the total. If you still hit then you hit the guy you were aiming for, otherwise you hit the guy you weren't (normally your ally).

Close Attacks

Punching someone, stabbing them with a knife or having a dramatic back-and-forth on the castle stairs are all examples of close combat (as is hacking someone's arm off with a plasma-blade during a bar fight).

Your Close Attack score is equal to your base attack score, plus your Dexterity bonus.





When hitting someone in close combat you're trying to beat their Close Defence score which is 12 plus their Constitution bonus.

Flanking/Rear Attacks

Attacking someone in their vulnerable flanks or rear provides you with a +1 bonus to your Close Attack. If you have the Sneak Attack skill then it counts for attacks from behind - though not from the flanks.

Poor Visibility

This works the same for close combat as it does for ranged combat.

Multiple Attackers

Dogpiling a target gives everyone involved a better chance to land a hit as the target's defences are stretched. Each additional attacker laying into a single victim in close combat provides a +1 bonus to all the attackers, up to a maximum bonus of +4. Any more than that are as much a hindrance as a help.

Damage

Hit Points are an unnatural amalgam of luck, physical toughness, morale, fighting spirit and other vague ideas all cooked into one, single, numerical stat. Despite that, damage is pretty much limited to the results of being hit, shot, stabbed, crushed, folded, spindled, mutilated and maimed rather than depression, heartbreak or the impact of harsh language.

Weapons are rated with 'Damage' which - combined with any bonuses - is a dice roll that results in a numerical total. This might be reduced in various ways by armour and other protections but what's left comes off your Hit Points.

When you're reduced to zero Hit Points or fewer you are incapacitated (and typically unconscious) When you get below -3 Hit Points you're dead. If you are on zero Hit Points you have to make a Toughness Save each turn or lose another Hit Point. If you make the Save you stabilise, though you remain unconscious until your Hit Points rise back above zero.

Those with medical skill can also attempt to stabilise you by making appropriate Skill rolls. You can make one Save attempt as you start dying, to stabilise and one attempt each turn can be made to save your life each turn by those with medical skill or healing packs.

Of course, this being outlandish Science Fiction, death need not be the end...

If you're reduced to zero or fewer Hit Points and come back from it, you do return with a terrible and permanent injury, at least until you can pay for replacement bionics or cloned body parts. The table assumes a humanoid target. Reroll or consult with the Games Master if the injury doesn't fit.



Special Cases

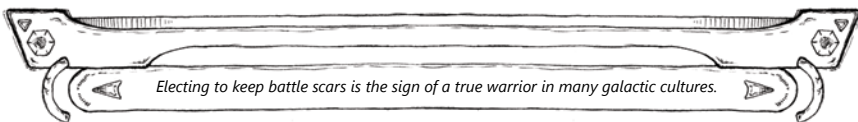
Helpless Targets

Attacking a helpless target always hits, unless you roll a '1' on your attack roll. It also does the maximum damage that the weapon is capable of doing - doubled - as this counts as a critical. A helpless target must be unconscious, paralysed or otherwise incapable of moving their body in even the most feeble way to escape harm.

Morale

While robots and the Calthasian Insect People of Voivodan might be happy to fight to the last man or bug, many species have an inherent sense of self preservation and an unwillingness to die. Facing off against a group who care whether they live or die you should roll a Will Save for them each time they lose half of their number to see if they flee or surrender.

Roll d20	Permanent Injury
1	Cool scars -1 Comeliness.
2	Hideous scars -1 Comeliness, -1 Looks Save.
3	Lodged shrapnel -1 Hit Point - Permanently.
4	Stiff Joints -1 Reflex Save.
5	Lost digits -1 Dexterity.
6	Lost muscle mass -1 Strength.
7	Nagging injuries -1 Constitution.
8	Lost hand -2 Dexterity.
9	Lost arm -4 Dexterity -1 Attack scores.
10	Lost foot 3/4 movement.
11	Lost leg 1/2 movement.
12	Lost eye -2 Ranged Attack, -1 Logic Save.
13	Deafened.
14	Blinded.
15	Rendered mute.
16	Brain damage -1 Intelligence.
17	Brain damage -1 Wisdom.
18	Brain damage -1 Charisma.
19	Comatose until full medical attention can be found.
20	A lingering, fatal, injury will kill you within 2d12 hours unless you can get to a full hospital facility.





Unarmed Attacks

Strength is the main factor in determining how effective hand to hand attacks are. Many species come with claws, bony knuckles or other, more exotic natural weapons. Slapping something around with a fist or foot isn't quite as effective and only does 1d2 damage (1d4/2 round up) as a base.

Special Combat Actions

Anyone can try anything in combat that they want. In general trying to pull off some crazy stunt imposes a penalty of -5 to their attack roll and many of these actions are described by the Skills that compensate for this penalty through practice. There's a few actions that need a different approach though

Aim

You can take your time to line up a shot or an attack. This can be used to guarantee a hit or to try and compensate for the penalties that some crazy-ass stunt is likely to incur. You can spend one or two actions aiming. One action provides a +1 bonus to hit, two actions provides a +3 bonus to hit (you fire on your next action after spending a whole turn aiming). You can aim in close combat as well as ranged combat, hanging back and figuring out the best time to strike.

Break and Run

So, you charged to the attack only to discover that the little alien bastard you intended to pummel with your shoe turned out to be able to transform into a hulking giant. Close combat suddenly doesn't seem like such a great idea and you need to run away. How? To break and run you spend an action and make a Reflex Save, if you succeed you immediately move away from your enemy without being hit. If you fail your melee buddy gets a free attack on your back on you that doesn't count towards his actions, then you get to move away.

Change Weapons

Swapping out one weapon for another takes one of your actions.

Defend

You can spend one or both of your actions to duck and cover, to parry, protect and otherwise foil attacks directed your way. One action spent on defending increases both your Defence Class scores by +1, spending both actions raises them by +3.

Gather your wits

Sometimes it can be worth taking a moment to gauge the situation, figure out where the bad guys are and to put together a plan of action. Each action spent gathering your wits in this way increases your Initiative score by +1 for the duration of the combat.



Use a Power or Item

Using a psychic power, an item or the special property of an artefact or item takes a full turn (two actions). You can't do anything else at the same time unless the power or item explicitly states that you can.

Wait

If you don't want to take your go when your turn comes around you can choose, instead, to wait. This uses one of your actions but you can leap in and interrupt before/at the same time as anyone else involved in the combat does anything. You can also wait until the end if you so choose.

ExoTech can change a battlefield in an instant. Nobody really understands how these artefacts of ancient civilisations work or why they were built - even whether they're being used for their intended purpose - but they do amazing things.

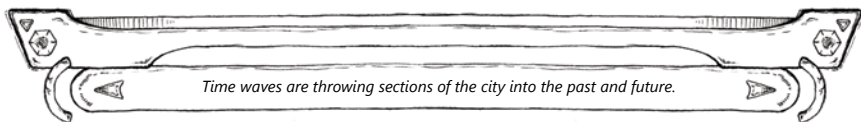
Inverting a gravity field with a blast from an ancient crystal can send soldiers tumbling and crashing into the ceiling or flailing off into the sky, desperately trying to grab hold of something.

A focussed ray might crystallise air and turn it into the buttresses of an improvised fortress or an escape route down the side of a crashed vessel.

An resonance bomb might cause an earthquake or shake a set of armour to pieces, maybe even, briefly, liquify solid matter, re-setting it into strange and unusual shapes.

Then there's the really big artefacts. The planet smashers, the star-converters, the singularity projectors. Even the legendary black-hole polarity inverter.

These can change the battlefield on a cosmic scale.



Time waves are throwing sections of the city into the past and future.



Rocket's Red Glare

Spaceships are treated like very big characters or monsters and follow most of the same rules when it comes to combat - though you'll have to keep their scale in mind. The main difference is in how you describe the scenes and the options that the various characters and sides have as they fight.

Spaceship Combat

Spaceship combat should be full of whiz-bang moments. Ships should be tearing around each other, doing loops, diving into asteroid fields, skimming atmospheres and otherwise performing like a World War II dogfight. This is horribly unrealistic but it is exciting, interesting and much more engaging than banks of humming computers calculating trajectories for a mass-projectile to kill someone several orbits away.

This being space you can also introduce some other elements and hazards to mix things up a bit. Perhaps there's a sensor-defeating nebula to hide in or a pod of space whales. Maybe they'll need to dodge a shower of meteorites or a passing comet threatens to clog engines with ice particles. Keep things moving and keep things interesting. Create an atmosphere of speed and tension and spaceship combat will go a lot faster.

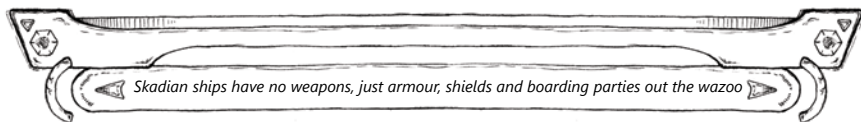
Spaceship Combat Turns

Spaceship combat turns take the same form as personal combat turns but, if the ship is flying, one of the actions taken must be to move. Space combat is a lot more abstract though, so movement is more likely to take the form of a manoeuvre or a stunt than just getting from point 'A' to point 'B'.

Ships take their initiative from their pilot - if they have one - or their own statistics otherwise. Turns go by ship, not by person and in the same order as personal combat, highest to lowest, with many of the same options.

When it comes to your ship's turn, everyone on board can take a go, usually starting with the pilot. Separate gunners get to make their own shots if there are weapons available and everyone else can run around screaming with their hands in the air if they want to - or they can make themselves useful.

Pilots being pursued or trying to shake off their attackers can try to perform difficult manoeuvres by making Pilot Skill Rolls. They can even choose to penalise themselves by -1 or -2 in order to make things more difficult for their pursuers.





Everybody Helps

A lot of times in games situations like space battles are incredibly boring and non-participatory for the people who aren't the dashing space captain. This is a) unacceptably boring and b) not representative of the science fiction we know and love. In the films, TV shows and comics we all know and love things are happening on board ship at the same time as its taking blaster bolts or clipping asteroids. People are getting sucked out of airlocks, making repairs or telling the pilot to turn left at the next junction.

In *Machinations of the Space Princess* everybody on board (who is a player or a major baddy) gets to do things during that ship's turn and these things aren't just empty gestures, they're part of what turns a clapped out medium starfreighter into an avenging angel of *The Rebellion*.

Characters who aren't piloting or shooting can do all sorts of things, governed by Skill Rolls and Save Rolls. Maybe they want to offer moral encouragement or fix some of the buckled hull plating. Perhaps they want to reroute power from life support to the shields. Whatever it is they do, it should be reflected in a temporary increase (that turn at least) boost to one of the ship's statistics or the repair of one point of damage. It's impossible to predict everything that characters might try but the framework is there to deal with it.

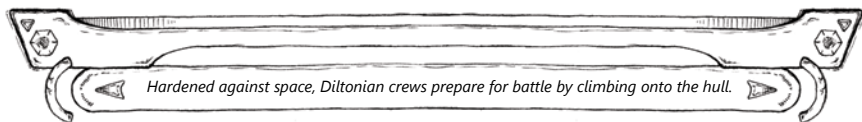
The other thing you can do is to have the people who aren't piloting dealing with other problems. Perhaps that fire on the cargo deck has flushed out a swarm of terrified space-rats who are now tearing around inside the ship. That problem is going to need fixing!

Spaceship Damage

Spaceships are destroyed when they reach -10 hit points. At zero or below they are disabled and must make a Toughness Save or break up further turn after turn (dropping another hit point on each one). Ships can be stabilised by their crew making internal repairs but really need to be taken to a shipyard or docked for proper repairs to take place.

Ships that suffer critical hits during space combat may suffer particularly nasty damage. If they are hit and damaged by a critical hit roll on the following table, ignore results that don't apply.

Repairs made during combat are, necessarily, of a slapdash and haphazard nature. It is extremely likely that a ship that has suffered any significant damage in space combat is going to need to go into dock for a while to have everything made ship-shape and Bristol fashion again before venturing back out into the void.





Roll d20	Ship Critical
1	Enterprise Shuffle: The ship lurches back and forth. Crew must make Reflex Saves or take 1d4 hp.
2	Sensors hit -1 Ship Logic Save.
3	Buckled structure -1 Ship Toughness Save.
4	Damaged stabiliser -1 Ship Reflex Save.
5	Engine cut-out - the ship cannot move next turn.
6	Hyperdrive damaged - no light speed until it is fixed.
7	Armour plating compromised - Reduce armour by one die type.
8	Controls damaged -1 to any Skill Rolls using the ship.
9	Exploding terminal: Pick a crewmember at random. They must make a Reflex Save or take d12 damage.
10	Weapon destroyed: Pick a weapon at random and knock it out.
11	Shields down!
12	Cargo deck holed: Lose d100% cargo.
13	Hull Breach: Expose part of the ship to vacuum. Bad luck for anyone trapped in there.
14	Fire! A fire breaks out in the ship doing 1d4 appropriately scaled damage each turn until put out.
15	Engine damaged: Drop speed category by one.
16	Engine destroyed: Can no longer move.
17	All power out.
18	Tumbling out of control.
19	Reactor explosion in 1d100 minutes.
20	Abrupt and total destruction.



Bastards Incorporated

Your company of what we shall laughingly refer to as 'heroes' are likely - if not certain - to pool their resources. This will be especially necessary if they want their own space-station, starship or planet. The mortgage on things like that can be a killer.

In purchasing large items like this, if you can't afford to buy them in one go, you can purchase them for ten times what you can raise as a deposit but this is a payment you must make twenty times before you own the item. These payments need to be made each time you get together to play, or at least every 'adventure'.

Failing to pay will start to incur 'consequences'. Whether you've taken out your loan from a gang of literal or figurative loan sharks or from an interstellar bank, sooner or later it comes down to someone sawing your limbs off and repossessing your ship in lieu of payment.

Better cough up.

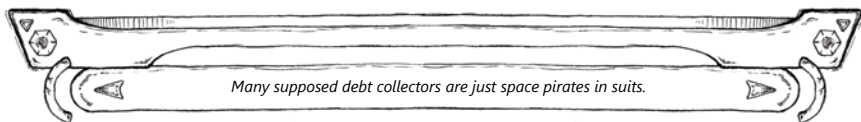
The Games Master is thoroughly encouraged to dick players over when it comes to their finances as this provides excellent motivation to adventure and treasure hunt in much the same way that job at McDonalds seems more appealing when you have rent to pay or children to feed.

Machinations of the Space Princess is unusual in that money earned and looted is not considered to be kept from one session to another. This is - of course - to keep the characters lean and hungry and to give them a need to adventure in order to upgrade their kit. It also lends the game a mercenary sensibility that tends to make things run more how I envision them. Still, players get to spend their money before, during and after each session. It's only what's left that 'disappears' to be spent on blue milk, whores, holographic pejazzing and takeaway. Working as a group and buying things for each other helps create some sense of group cohesion and allows characters to upgrade more quickly than it would were they being selfish.

Businesses & Holdings

If characters are feeling the sting of losing all their lovely lucre then they do have the option of investing it, creating businesses and purchasing holdings. If they can afford this outright then more power to them but business are a bit more of a difficult prospect and aren't necessarily guaranteed to pay off. Characters can buy in to businesses, granting them new Savings skills, by risking money.

Starting or investing in a business means risking money and making a Logic Save to see if it was a sensible and effective investment.



Many supposed debt collectors are just space pirates in suits.



Unlike other Skills, characters can 'buy' Savings in this way, even multiple times, but these sorts of investments and businesses are volatile and the Games Master is, again, encouraged to dick with players by threatening their investments and businesses for motivation.

To differentiate from the basic Savings Skill, businesses and investments should be named, eg:

Savings (Fildergarp Skip Tracers): 3

A monetary risk and a Logic Save must be made at each level of investment.

Savings	Monetary Risk	Logic Penalty
1	5,000 gp	-
2	10,000 gp	-
3	25,000 gp	-2
4	50,000 gp	-5
5	100,000 gp	-7
6	250,000 gp	-10

High Maintenance, High Class

Its all very well being rich but you're not going to feel rich unless you buy into the lifestyle that goes along with it. Dating models, attending 3-V movie premieres and eating Arcturan mega-caviar for every meal doesn't come cheap. To maintain a lifestyle means spending money at the beginning or end of a session to continue living in the manner to which you are accustomed.

Super Rich (1%): 5,000gp

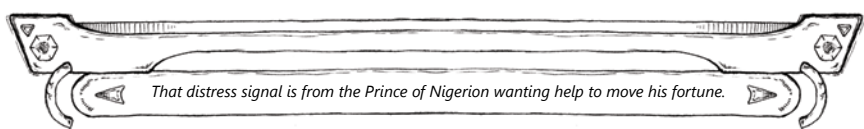
At this level you eat the finest foods, drink the finest wines and are treated like a celebrity wherever you go. The irony is that you often don't end up paying for things simply because businessmen, hotel owners and so forth believe they can make more money from the fact that you're a trendsetter. News organisations will be interested in your actions and peccadilloes and you may not get a moment's peace. You're also likely to be a target for kidnapping for ransom or political ends. You stay in penthouse apartments or mansions even if you don't own them. Failing that your ship's accommodation is very well appointed and luxurious by anyone else's standards.

Rich: 3,000gp

You are rich without being so ostentatious about it as the super rich. Sure you live well but there's a certain restraint with it that smacks more of old money than the nouveau riche. Understated wealth is the order of the day, only the best but not necessarily the champagne lifestyle that can seem so crude and offensive. You have the best of what you want, not what is thought of as the single very best thing ever.

Wealthy: 1,500gp

Fine and tailored clothes, comfortable accommodations. You don't have to worry about money even when you're doing fairly big things. You don't have to plan in advance you can just 'do things' because you have the disposable money not to worry about saving it. You wear designers and want for little, though you could be richer.





Well Off: 1,000gp

You can wear nice clothes, your children - if you have any - can attend private schools. You can go on holiday to exotic planets and destinations and can eat out whenever you want to. You drive a nice hover-car and have a nice house in the wealthier part of the colony. Good for you.

Middle Class: 500gp

You have a nice house in a reasonably nice area of the city and a good family car. You buy and make most of your own food and have a state of the art entertainment system. You wear nice - off the peg - clothes and take holidays on other worlds once a year. You can afford to indulge your hobbies and crafts and even to treat them seriously.

Lower Middle Class: 200gp

A nice dwelling in a reasonable area and all the modern conveniences but you have to work hard for them meaning you have less opportunity to enjoy them. Having a nice house and nice things also means you have to make sacrifices when it comes to other things like one-time-only luxuries. Perhaps your hovercar isn't as nice as you'd like it to be and you didn't get to go to Bethamon-5 last cycle but maybe you can this year.

Working Class: 100gp

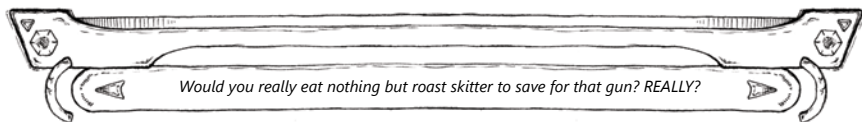
You tend to buy cheaper, going for ruggedity or 'good enough' rather than necessarily what's best. You may have a few 'fetish' items you're willing to spend big on like personal computers or fashionable clothes but that comes at the expense of day-to-day spending like food which tends to be cheaper or pre-made. You work hard for your money and are likely to maintain strong family bonds due to the need for mutual aid.

Poor: 50gp

A part time job or several of them. Most of what you eat is pre-pack and its obvious by looking at you that you don't have much money. You get by from day to day and week to week, shabby and careful and doing what you can to supplement your meagre income.

Poverty: Cost 25gp

You subsist at the level of someone on welfare or unemployment payments. You can't afford much and if you do treat yourself then its hard to justify and often a source of guilt. You eat simply and frugally and what little you spend on luxuries is fairly likely to go on drink and drugs as they're an affordable stress reliever. The temptation to enter into a life of crime is huge and you have few compunctions about getting something for free if you can. An ascetic life costs a similar amount.



Would you really eat nothing but roast skitter to save for that gun? REALLY?

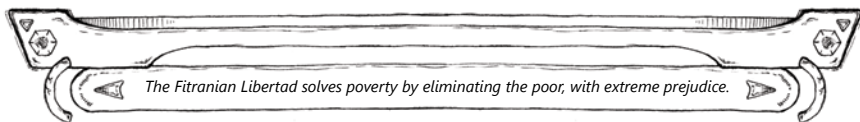


Destitute: Cost 0gp.

You're eating out of the waste bins and sleeping rough on the street. You have nothing to eat or drink that isn't left behind or given to you. You must make a Toughness Save at the start of the game or start with half hit points due to exposure and malnutrition.

Obviously living in the lap of luxury on a primitive planet that still uses fire to heat its grand stone castles is a very different prospect from living in the lap of luxury in an orbital hotel in a more fashionable part of the galaxy.

These things are relative but - relatively speaking - it's going to cost about the same in local terms. On some worlds a flushing toilet is a luxury beyond imagining, on others being pleased by a half-dozen gold-plated stud-droids is just another day at the office.





Psionics

What is Psi?

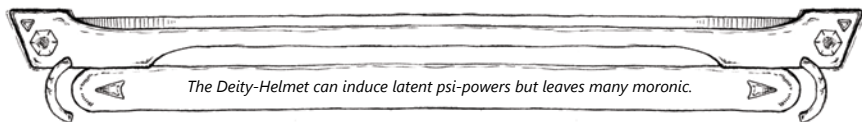
Nobody agrees what Psi is. It seems to be some all-pervading force that can be channelled by fiendishly complex patterns. This occurs sometimes in nature, some animals are able to channel one or two psi-abilities but reaches its most complex and adaptable in conscious beings - even robots. Something about the conscious mind lets it tap into far more psionic power than any elder-race engraving or telekinetic-monkey. Even so the gift is rare and comes with a lot of downsides, chiefly superstition and jealousy but also mutation and psychological problems. The general psi-field manifests itself in other ways such as the increased health and vitality (hit points) of heroic figures and the primitive 'magic' of some pre-stellar races and societies.

Psi Points

Psi Points are used to enact your psionic talents. Each talent costs a number of Psi Points equal to its level to use. Power Points on the other hand are used to buy powers as you level up. As with using a power Power Points determine what powers you can buy. For three Power Points, for example, you could buy one Level 3 power, three Level 1 powers or one Level 2 power and one Level 1 power.

Psi Talents

Psi manifests itself in a huge number of different ways and differently in different individuals. Here are some of the more common powers:



The Deity-Helmet can induce latent psi-powers but leaves many moronic.



Level 1

Bearing: You can give a one-word order to someone within earshot. They must make a Will Save or do as you command. You cannot command someone to 'die' but can command them to 'halt' and similar. The effect lasts a single turn.

Beguide: You can wind yourself into someone's mind to make them positively disposed towards you. The target must make a Logic Save or be smitten or impressed with you. The effect lasts 24 hours.

Courage: Touching the target you bolster their will and remove their fear. They gain a +1 bonus to their next Save roll per level of the Psion using this power. Any effects from fear stop taking effect.

Detect Psi: If there is a psionic artefact, creature or person within your field of vision you see their glowing aura. This lasts a single turn.

Glow: You create a glowing light from your hand or your head. This casts light for four metres in every direction, +1 metre per level of the psion using the power.

Hold Fast: You can secure a box, container or door with the power of your mind. It is considered locked fast and held that way for 2d6 turns.

Knocking: You can create a sound, such as a knock or scratch, anywhere within 10 metres +1 metre per level.

Light Heal: By touching the target you can suffuse their body with psionic energy, healing and closing wounds. They are restored by 1d6+Level Hit Points.

Luck: Psionic energy twists fate, granting the target - who must be touched - 1d6+Psion's level points which can be spent to modify any rolls.

Mind Message: A simple one sentence message can be sent to any known person regardless of distance. Think of it as a psychic Twitter message.

Mindbolt: You can hurl a bolt of psionic force at someone within 25 metres, +1 metre per level of the Psion using the power. This bolt does 1d4 points of damage per level and can be divided between available targets howsoever the psion desires.

Psychometry: You can get a general idea of the purpose and worth of an object by touching it and reading its aura.

Purify: With a touch you can return a meal's worth of food back to an edible state from a rotten or poisoned form.

Sleep: A wave of soporific energy blasts out from the psion in all direction, 10 metres +1 metre per level of the Psion. Any creatures with a number of Hit Dice equal to or less than the Psion must make a Will Save or fall into a slumber for 1d4 turns +1 turn per level of the psion.



Slow Fall: A very limited form of levitation or telekinesis this allows the psion - or a single other person within sight - to fall up to 20 metres + 2 metres per level of the psion without being hurt.

Spoonbending: With a touch you can repair or break a complicated technological object like a gun or a computer. The damage must be slight and easily repairable anyway.

Telekinetic Shield: The psion throws up a psychic barrier that turns away energy bolts, bullets, rocks and the like. Their Ranged Defence score is raised by +5 for two turns.

Level 2

Augury: You may ask the Games Master a simple yes or no question about the probable outcome of a particular action and get a straight answer.

Enthrall: Speaking to a crowd with your charisma enhanced by your psychic prowess you can attempt to sway them to a particular attitude or form of action. The crowd must make a Will Save not to succumb to your silver tongue though this Save should be enhanced by up to +5 if the action encouraged is dangerous or unlikely.

ESP: You may eavesdrop on the inner thoughts of anyone within your line of sight (provided they do not make a Logic Save) for one turn per level of the psion using the power.

Heat: You may infuse an object within sight with psionic energy, causing it to rapidly heat. The object rises to scorching point and in the case of paper and cloth may catch fire. Touching the object does 1d6 damage per turn it is held though the heat only lasts a single turn unless something catches fire.

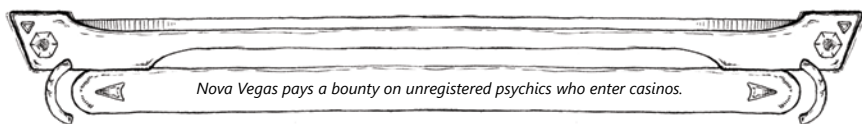
Levitate: You can move yourself or someone within your line of sight (they can make a Power Save to resist) up to 20 feet per turn you use this effect.

Mindwipe: You can wipe the memory of the last few turns (assume ten seconds per turn) from the target provided they fail a Will Save. You can wipe one 1 turn +1 turn for every three levels or part thereof that the psion has.

Moment of Zen: The target of the effect is suffused with extra psi energy as though they were d4 levels higher than they actually are. They temporarily gain the Hit Points of their new level, +2 to all Saving Rolls and any bonuses to Attack Scores they might have. The effect lasts one turn per level of the psion.

Opening: A wave of psionic energy instantly unlocks a touched lock, barred or jammed door.

Silence: The psion creates an area of total silence out to a range of five metres around themselves. This lasts for two rounds per level.





Temperature Control: The psion is able to protect their body from extremes of heat or cold. When enacted this power provides a +2 bonus to appropriate Saves and reduces any damage from the appropriate source by 1. This lasts one turn per level.

Level 3

AntiPsi: You enact the power and pay a number of Psi Points equal to the level of the power you are negating. This can negate any psychic effect within line of sight. You must pay a minimum of three Psi Points.

Clairvoyance: Through touching an appropriate object or recalling a familiar place you can send your perception there and oversee whatever is occurring in that place. This lasts one turn per level.

Deadmind: An infusion of Psi Energy returns the consciousness of the dead to life for a brief period (one turn per level). They only have the knowledge that they did in life and must have died within a number of years equal to the Psion's level.

Flight: You can lift yourself into the air and fly at a rate of 25 metres per turn for a number of turns equal to your level.

Missile Shield: A swirling vortex of telekinetic energy surrounds you rendering any ranged attack (unless it is with a missile at least half your size) ineffective against you. This effect lasts for one turn per level but does not stop larger scale weapons or psionic powers. It does stop energy attacks.

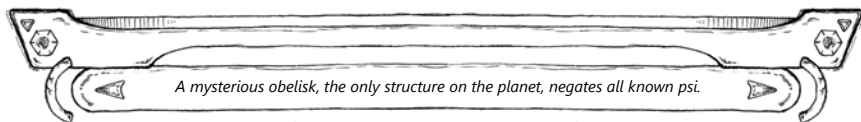
Psi-Breath: You can expend psi energy to sustain yourself instead of taking breath. With this effect you can ignore the need for oxygen (or whatever it is that you breathe) for six turns (one minute) per level.

Purge Disease: A surge of psi-power purges disease from the body curing any communicable ailment but not cancer or other subversions of the body itself, though it can lessen their symptoms.

Speed: The target of the effect, oneself or a touched target, acts twice as fast gaining an extra action and +2 Initiative. The effect lasts one round per level.

Suggestion: In a sort of psychic undercurrent of conversation you can implant a suggestion that the target will obey (provided that they fail a Will save). This is a simple, one sentence command and a trigger. An example might be 'When I bow and say goodbye you will wait one minute and stab the Commandant in the back.'

Telekinetic Bonds: You entwine the target in bond of psychic energy holding the fast and unable to move for 2 turns per level. They can attempt to break free each turn by making a Power Save.





Level 4

Confusion: Creatures and enemies within five metres must make a Logic Save or be thrown into a state of blank incomprehension for 1 round per level.

Iron Mind: You gain +5 to all Saves against psychic or magical effects.

Melee Shield: You are made immune to melee attacks - unless psychic or of larger scale than you - for 1 round per level.

Moderate Heal: This power heals the target's wounds, restoring 1d6 + Psion level + Target level Hit Points. A 4th level Psion healing a 5th level Killer would heal 1d6+9 Hit Points.

Perfect Memory: You can revisit the memory of a scene as though you were there again right now, including searching, overturning and looking behind things. This lasts 1 turn per level.

Psi-Growth: All plants or plant-like life within five metres in every direction springs to life and grows with sudden power and vigour. Plant-based life within the radius heals 1d6 Hit Points.

Purge Poison: With a touch you remove the effects of a toxin in the body.

TeleStep: You disappear from one place, stepping into the air, only to reappear within one-hundred metres.

Truthsense: Use this power to tell if the statement you were just told was true or not and what the true statement would have been. The target may make a Logic Save to confound this power.

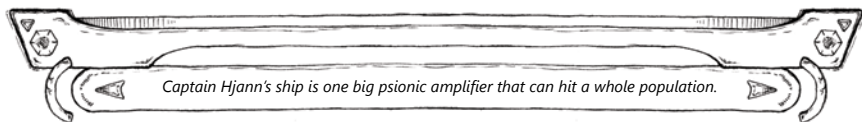
Level 5

Ectomation: You breathe psionic energy into the bodies of the fallen around you. You can raise one dead body with a number of Hit Dice equal to your level or spread the power amongst many dead bodies to raise them with fewer Hit Dice. You have a total number of Hit Dice to disperse equal to your level. The animated dead lose one Hit Point per day and then crumble to ash. Until then they work according to your whim.

Heavy Heal: Touching a wounded companion you can heal them for 4d6 Hit Points plus your level.

Intellect Blaster: A blast of psionic energy threatens to turn the target into a moron. The target must make a Logic Save with a -5 penalty or be reduced to Intelligence and Wisdom 1. This can be counteracted by AntiPsi but is otherwise permanent.

Telekinetic Wall: An invisible wall of psionic energy is erected, 5 metres in length per level of the caster and any shape. The wall has 1d12 Hit Points per level of the psion and while it can be seen through is otherwise impermeable. The wall will last one round per level.





Teleport: The user can teleport themselves up to 1 mile, multiplied by 10 per level (so a 6th level psion could teleport up to a million miles). They can bring one extra person with them per level, provided they pay an extra psi-point for each person. The target must be somewhere they're familiar with. Yes, this means they can teleport light-years at the higher levels.

Transcendental Meditation: The psion can enter into meditation for a day to commune with the universal unconscious. They must spend the Psi Points, make a Will Save and if they succeed they regain all their Hit Points and may ask the universal overmind three yes or no questions to which they will get accurate answers.

True Telekinesis: While limited to the range of your sight you can move objects with a weight of ten kilos per level up to a total of 10 metres per round. The power lasts 1 round per level.

Level 6

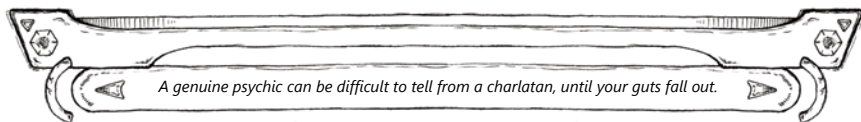
Disintegration: You unleash the ravaging force of the psychic overmind upon a target and if it fails a Toughness Save it is instantly reduced to a fine mist of nanoparticles. This can also annihilate a 5m radius sphere of any material.

Geas: The poor target is mentally programmed to perform a deed for the psion, unless they make a Will Save. This cannot be suicidal and must be within the capacity - however remote - of the target to complete. Walking around the world, swimming the Crescent Sea or finding the Smartphone of Leng are all possibilities. If they refuse or fail they are struck - without Save - by the effect of Intellect Blaster.

Mass Suggestion: This works the same was as Suggestion but can work on a crowd. You must be there in person to affect the crowd, it cannot be carried over through media.

Mind Switch: You can switch consciousnesses between two bodies. If willing there is no Save, otherwise all participants must fail a Will Save for the effect to take place. Personality, and Mental/Social attributes are taken with the mind, Physical attributes (and Comeliness) are those of the original body. The effect is permanent and while the body retains its original Hit Points its Attack Scores, Skills and Psionic abilities remain those of the mind.

Pure Heal: Any harmful effects are instantly stopped, all Hit Points are restored and cures cancers and even 'permanent' radiation damage (at the rate of 1 per use of the effect).





Level 7

Earthshaker: An area of radius 2 metres per psion level is rent with a powerful earthquake. The shockwave does 7d6 damage to any structures and anyone within those structures and everyone in the radius must make a Reflex save or be thrown to the ground taking another 1d4 damage.

Stormcaller: The psion can direct a pulsing column of psionic energy into the sky, changing or conjuring any form of natural weather for a radius of up to 1 mile per level. The effect lasts 4d12 hours but can be removed with another use of the power.

Stun: A ravaging bolt of mental energy knocks any target unconscious for 1d4+1 rounds. There is no Save.

Level 8

Antipathy/Sympathy: An area can be suffused with a psychic vibration that draws a certain type of person or creature to that location. This is permanent but is an inclination over time rather than a direct compulsion. Rich and unscrupulous business owners may use this to attract custom while Bartram Frazibald's Interstellar Freak Show uses this effect to attract 'suckers'.

Mass Charm: Works the same as Charm but upon a crowd. You must be there in person for it to take effect.

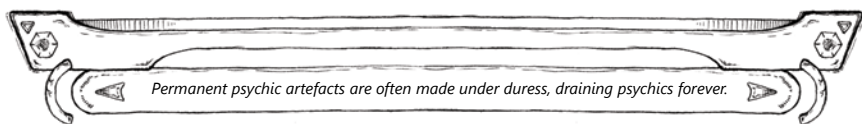
Mind Blank: You empty your mind of all thought rendering you immune to psychic and other mind controlling effects. You are operating on pure instinct, without thought. Increase your Initiative by +2 to reflect this. You can resist anything that needs a Logic or a Will Save.

Permanency: You can make any other psychic effect permanent (if it isn't already) by spending this power temporarily and the number of Psi Points it would take to enact the effect permanently.

Tulpa: Over the course of 2d4 months you can conjure a creature into being from your imagination. The cost of this power is permanent and creates a creature or person with Hit Dice equal to your level and to the exact specifications that you want in terms of personality, mind, abilities and so forth. Of course, if you fail a Logic Save while creating them the Games Master may feel free to turn them into some monstrous expression of your subconscious. You can even create an exact duplicate of yourself though it will have the lowered number of Psi Points.

Level 9

Kill: With a wave of negative psi you knock the life spark out of creatures within one metre per level. There is no save but you can only dole out a maximum of 100 Hit Points of damage and this must be enough to instantly kill each creature. If there aren't enough then the creature suffers no damage.





Stasis: You can place yourself into suspended animation, untouched by any harm until the appointed time or trigger for your awakening.

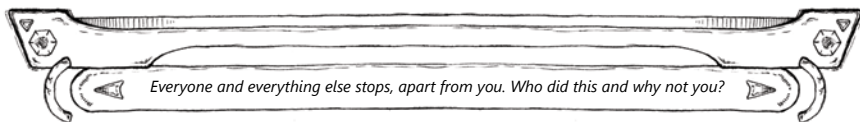
Timestop: You bring the universe to a halt - relative to yourself - for 1d6 turns. During this time you can do whatever you want and it will all go off in the instant temporal parity is restored.

The Psion school is the most formal and recognised throughout the known universe but there are primitives on various planets who claim their powers are 'magic' or gifts from the gods. Nobody in galactic scholarship takes these claims particularly seriously but those who join civilisation from these planets can display peculiar abilities and may even lack the witch-mark.

There are also psychics who devote themselves to a particular, singular field of study. These tend to be less powerful but more versatile, at least within their field. Telepaths hone their mental connections to a fine degree, telekinetics hurl objects around with abandon and clairvoyants learn to project their senses to other stars.

There are rumours of powers more devastating and terrible than the ones listed here and of artefacts, ships, weapons, even whole planets, that can channel psychic power on an unimaginable scale.

There are even psychic robots, runic circuits and mock-psi nodes calculating and manipulating the psi-field in novel and machine-oriented ways.

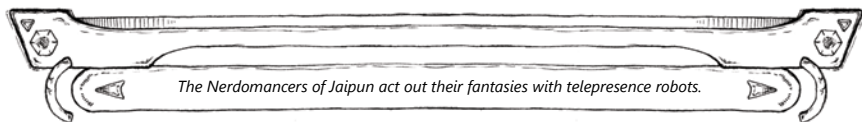
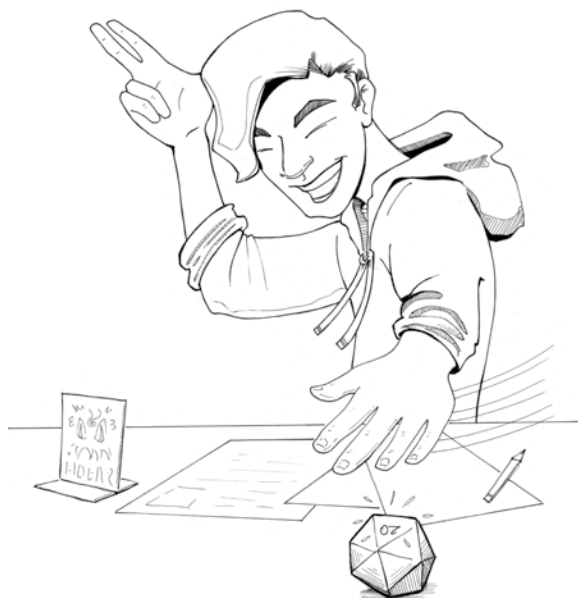




How to be a Badass Player

Compared to that, players have been relatively overlooked despite the fact that one of the best ways to make the Games Master's job easier is for the players not to act like a pack of baying hyenas and to show a little respect to each other and the guy who agreed to run the game.

Most games are full of advice on how to be a great Games Master and there's a reason for that. The Games Master has the hardest job at the table. They have to prepare the game, play dozens of different roles, present a challenge to the players without being overwhelming and all this while herding a bunch of rabid nerds who've ingested an LD50 dose of caffeine and sugar.





Before the Game Even Starts

There's a lot of things you can do to make a game run more easily before you even get to the game itself, even before you turn up at the house/pub/circus tent that you'll be playing in. So, before you turn up, think:

Are you going to show up?

Saying you're going to be at a game and then failing to show up is a dick move. Games need their players and a lot of Games Masters and players don't like to advance the plot and move the game on if someone's missing. It feels unfair to the person who isn't there. The people that do have the courtesy to show up then spend their precious gaming time doing little but faffing around.

If you can't show up let people know as far in advance as possible. That way the game can be cancelled, replaced with a grudge match of Risk or rescheduled. If you want to be super-nice you can also arrange for someone to play your character for you and let them move the game on. The other players can always fill you in later on what's happened. So long as you don't miss too many sessions in a row, that's OK.

Don't be thinking just because the game is being played online (Google Hangouts are great for this by the way) that your commitment to the game is any less.

Indeed, given timezone issues, technical problems and other aspects getting a game together online can be an even bigger pain in the arse than getting your players together in meatspace. If you say you're going to play, turn up to play.

Obviously life throws us the unexpected from time to time. Illness, family emergencies, car explosions and the imminent impact of a dinosaur-killer asteroid are all acceptable excuses to miss a game. You're likely to be forgiven in those instances.

Do you have your character sheet?

It may seem like a silly question but I've lost count of the number of times that people have turned up to a game without their character sheet and then have to try and 'remember it' or recreate it. This is a dick move and is also borderline cheating as, often, things find their way onto the character sheet that weren't there before.

Make sure you have your character sheet.

Make sure the Games Master has a spare copy of your character sheet.

Put a copy of your character sheet on your smartphone, your laptop and online somewhere so you can get it anywhere there's internet access.

No.
Fucking.
Excuses.



Do you have your dice, pencil, paper, pen?

Sure, there'll be other people at the game with dice, writing materials and paper but someone is bound to forget and it can seriously disrupt your 'dice chi' if someone else meddles with yours.

Make sure you have enough materials for yourself and some to spare. Biro's go missing with alarming regularity and paper gets burned, stained or crumpled more often than not. If you take more than you need you'll be a goddamned hero to the person who forgets their own stuff.

Know the Game

Yes, yes, yes it's the Games Master's job to know the rules, sure. However it helps the Games Master and everyone in the group if everyone knows the rules. At least have a read through once when you get the opportunity to do so. That way you'll have some clue a) what the game is about and b) how it is played.

The problem once you know the rules, of course, is that you may know (or think you know) the rules better than the Games Master and then the temptation is always there to correct them or to answer other player's queries as though you were the Games Master. This is a dick move. Don't do it. Don't undermine the Games Master's authority over the game, don't question their rulings.

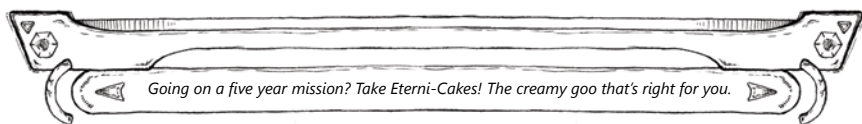
Role-Playing Games aren't like chess or Zantarian Snargle-Flube anyway, the rules are mutable and Games Masters often like to 'fuck with shit' in order to make the game their own.

Go with it.

As a brief aside it is also a great help to have multiple copies of the main book at the table. One of the biggest problems for games publishers is that gamers are cheap bastards who buy one copy of a book between six of them and then use the same copy for a decade or more. This is great value for money but not a particularly sustainable business model. If you can, buy more copies of the books you use the most. That way less time is lost passing the books around for people to look things up and companies get more money to make more games and more materials. If you're feeling cheap you can always just buy the PDF or ebook version and slap it on your laptop or phone for emergencies. (You can also get useful things like dice-roller apps which make good back-ups if you forget your dice).

Contribute to Snackage

A game, especially if it goes on for some time, needs fuel. Traditionally this fuel may be in the form of energy drinks and crunchy snacks but some groups go in for a shared buffet or sending out for proper food. Some groups even play in pubs or other places where food can be ordered. Whatever the case, contribute something, even if you're skint.





Showing willing makes up for a lot and preserves goodwill with the other players. Bring some snacks, a big bottle of cola, contribute in some way and it's also a good way to 'pay' the Games Master for willing to run the game and put up with your bullshit if you gives them something yummy.

At the Table

Bring it

This advice is more specific to *Machinations of the Space Princess* than some games but, you need to 'bring it' when you come to the table. Try things, do things, forget your character sheet until it comes to the moment to make a dice roll. Put yourself in the position of your character and try to do big, bold, outrageous things. The worst that can happen is that your character dies and then everyone gets a cool story and you get to create a new character benefiting from what you've learned.

Be Mindful of the Group

A game is a group enterprise. Even if you're the only player you still need a Games Master to accommodate your desire to take to adventure in the stars. This means you need to compromise on things for the better entertainment and enjoyment of everyone. The game is not all about YOU and bogarting the spotlight and riding roughshod over all the other players (and the Games Master) is a dick move. Don't do it.

Make a character that fits the group.

If the game is aiming for a type of mood (or the other players are) don't rock up with something that goes against that.

Hand off to the other players. Bow to the expertise of the other characters and prompt the quiet player to offer their two cents.

If you're not feeling it or your mood doesn't match the game let other people take the lead. You can always pick up next session.

Respect my Authority

A successful game needs the Games Master to retain some authority. They have to be the one making the rulings and telling the players what happens and what is or isn't so. Don't argue the toss every time they tell you something or make a ruling, even if you don't agree with it; reserve speaking up for when the Games Master might - genuinely - overlook something. If you have problems bring them up after the game when they're not going to disrupt things or cause a problem. Also, give the Games Master the latitude that they need to ignore rules for the sake of the story and don't ruin it.



Give the Games Master Feedback & Hooks

If there's cool stuff that happens in the games that you want to see more of it's much better to let the Games Master know that it was cool and you want more stuff like that than it is to whinge and moan about the bits you hate. Getting a game ready takes a lot of time and effort and negative words and observations have a lot more impact than positive ones. In short, it's a lot easier to put someone off and steal their thunder than it is to encourage them. Do the latter and it's better for everyone.

When you come up with your character - and as you go along - throw ideas and bits of your character background and ideas at the Games Master. Give them ways to fuck with you or hook you and your background into the setting and the adventures. If you're a criminal maybe you've run into this cartel in the past? If you fought in the wars maybe you have some war stories or are more likely to give money to a homeless veteran. Phrase it as a question and it seems less like you're trying to get free stuff.

EG:

"My character used to run security for a slaver outfit. Have I heard of these guys before?"

"My race has a reputation for being good mercenaries. Are there any of my people amongst this mob?"

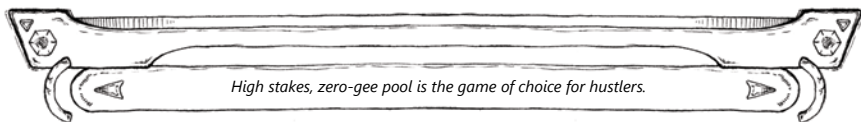
"In my background I wrote that my parents were asteroid miners if you want to use that, ever."

It's 'Just' a Game

It's good to care about the game and to get involved but you do need to remember that it is 'just' a game. I hate that phrase myself, which is why I used the scare quotes. Games can be very important to people, especially once you've sunk hours and hours into them and a lot of creative energy. Games can be art, the stories can be meaningful and you can grow as attached to your characters as any author may grow attached to their creations. Still, it's a game, not just a story and without risk - and failure - there's no reward and no meaning to success. Concentrate on having fun, remember that you're playing to have fun - even if you lose - and the game will be better for everyone.

Get Invested

Seemingly contrary to the advice immediately preceding this bit is the advice to get invested in the game and the characters. You need to care about what happens for the obstacles and challenges that you face to have real meaning and tension. You need to build up the details about your species, your world and your background because the Games Master doesn't have a huge amount of time for that. They can build off your work - as can the other players - and everyone has a better time as a whole because of it. You do need to give a damn and that just makes it all the more horrible/delicious when something bad happens to a character. If you care, the revenge will be even more sweet.





Support Your Local Games Master

The toughest job at the table is to be the Games Master. You have to juggle plot, players (some of whom like to act up), characters, monsters. Each player only has to look after themselves, the Games Master has to look after everybody. Be mindful of the fact that without the Games Master there is no game and give them the support and time they need to make the best game for everyone - not just for you.

Different Games Masters need different support. Mental breakdowns due to the demands of players vary from person to person but simple things like basic politeness at the game table, provision of caffeine and Haribo go a long way. All Games Masters do, however, need to know that you're having a good time, what makes the games good (or bad, or better) and that you're paying attention.

Zero-gee pool is played in an anti-gravity tank, a cube with eight 'holes' at each of the corners of the cube. Players may shoot from inside or outside the cube, provided they don't touch any balls as they get into position (which is a penalty).

Three-card slam is a popular card game in which you try to get a higher score than everyone else around the table in three cards or less. Ties being resolved by whomsoever had the fewest cards. This is complicated by the fact that scores over 20 wrap around back to one and that the first card is kept hidden until the reveal.

The Uralnth empire has a fortune telling tradition that uses the same cards as three-card slam. Divination sets are supposedly imbued with psionic energy giving them a limited power of augury and a tap into the collective unconscious.

Matesh is a holographic board game, superficially similar to chess except that the 'Emperor' must be taken and the 'warp' move allows for the random relocation on the board of any piece.



How to be a Badass Games Master

So you're the Games Master are you? You're the one calling the shots, making the frameworks of the stories, playing the monsters and aliens and holding the whole shebang together. When it comes to the game you are god, you are the great architect, you are the author stringing your characters along through pain and hardship.



Except you're not. Not really.

You're 'just' another player around the table. True, you're the arbiter of the rules and you determine what happens and where the story goes (somewhat) but you also get the lion's share of the work and have to herd cats (players) which is never an easy job. Being Games Master comes with some power, some responsibility and a lot of work.

Don't let me put you off though. That's a mistake a lot of games make in describing the job of the Games Master. They make it seem like an endless parade of problems, issues, difficulties and wankerish players who make the whole process of running a game a nightmare.

Sometimes they have a point, but, on the plus side:

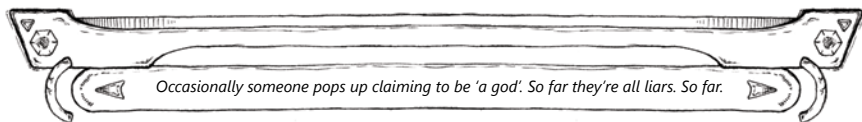
Creating your own worlds is amazingly rewarding.

Seeing the look on a player's face when they finally figure out what's going on is priceless.

The clamour around the table when people get excited is invigorating.

You'll love it when a plan comes together.

You and your players create your own, personal, wonderful mythology and legends. Games give you war stories.





Games give you a common point of understanding with other players and GMs. Access to community.

Players do unexpected things, which keeps your creativity honed.

Skills you learn as a GM carry over into other aspects of life and creativity.

It is the most work, but it's also the most rewarding role in a game. At least in my not-so-humble opinion.

Fairness

One of the most important things about being a Games Master is being fair. I don't mean being fair to the characters, giving them infinite second chances or having the villains act like dickheads. No, fuck that, be mean, nasty, challenging and deadly. Have your villains be total bastards.

Drop captured characters into vats of Sirian Piranha Wasps by all means. What I mean is that you need to be fair to the players.

Apply the Rules Evenly

Or, if you can't be even, at least be consistent. It'll cause problems between the players and between you and them if you make a ruling one way for one player and then do it a different way for another player. Of course, you can go back on it if it was a bad idea but then you need to rein the effects of that bad decision back in as you made it for the first player.

You're always free to improvise but if players start to feel like you're playing favourites the game may become... acrimonious.

Give Everybody a Chance to be in the Spotlight

Characters are good at different things and players want different things out of the games. If you spend all your time concentrating on one player and all the cool things that their character is doing then you are, necessarily, spending less time on the other players and the cool things that their characters are doing. That bums people out. They don't like to be just sat there twiddling their thumbs while Captain Awesome saves the day.

Sometimes this is unavoidable. If one character is unconscious or imprisoned there's not a lot you can do about that and play will have to pass to the characters that remain at liberty to run around and shoot aliens in the face.

Sometimes one character will naturally fall into the spotlight as the pilot or the only one that knows the alien language and that can't be helped either but you can make up for all of this from game to game, session to session by turning the attention to another character, playing up scenes that value the guy that's been overlooked and playing down those that give focus to a character that's already been being rockstar.

It's a skill that takes time to learn, but it's well worth investing time in.



Listen to Your Players

This should go without saying but some Games Masters end up thinking that they're masterful auteurs and steering their players through a labyrinth of overwrought toss that would have worked better as a novel. Contrary to what many games say you, the Games Master are absolutely not a storyteller. You are a story facilitator. You create a space in which stories and games happen. If you're dictating things (beyond the level that's necessary to make a game cohesive) then you're doing it wrong.

Listen to the things your players explicitly tell you and, if necessary, ask. What elements do they want in a game? What are they in the mood for?

Ask this regularly as you can't expect it to stay the same from session to session. Be ready to adapt and work some 'wiggle room' into your adventure ideas and prep if you can.

You also need to be aware of the things players aren't telling you. Make note of when everyone goes quiet and actually listens to you. When people start making more expansive hand gestures.

When they delay, nervous, before rolling the dice.

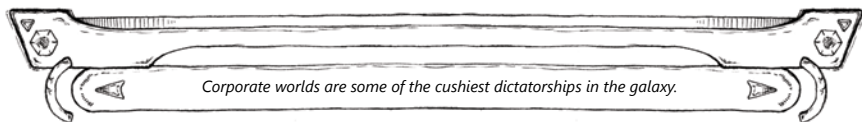
If you're alert and aware to the things that the players are telling you without speaking you can craft an even better game and even get called 'brilliant' even though its really just down to observing and reacting.

Don't be a Dick

You're in charge, sure. You make the rules more than I - your humble author - do. If you don't like something you can change it. If players do something you think is out of bounds you can stop it in its tracks and say no (though saying "Yes, but..." is usually better). Don't let this power go to your head though. The game depends on you more than anyone but a Games Master without players doesn't have a game. Take your time, be thoughtful, join in the fun and try not to get too angry or to piss anyone off too much.

Keep Yourself Happy

If you're not happy with the game, nobody's happy. From all my previous advice in this section you might think that you have to completely subsume your wishes to those of your players. Not true. You are also a player and your desires and needs from a game are just as important as everyone else's. When you ask your players what they want, what went well, what's fun ask the same questions of yourself. When you're thinking about what elements to put into a game, put your own elements in as well. You need to be excited, engaged and stoked to be playing just as much as everyone else - if not more!





Sexy, Sleazy, Swords & Sci-Fi

I describe *Machinations of the Space Princess* as 'Sexy, sleazy' swords & Sci-Fi' but what does that really mean? It's the style and content that I foresee the game being used for. This is by no means set in stone as a commandment from on high, but something to keep in mind and how the game has been designed.

It's Your Universe

Machinations of the Space Princess isn't packed chock full of lore and hundreds of pages of information about dynasties and borders and history that you need to remember. Everything in here - or in the adventure seeds at the bottom of every page - is meant to provoke and stir your own ideas. Your game will build as you play, you'll create your own lore, your own history, picking and choosing amongst the ideas in here or even rejecting them all out of hand if you want.

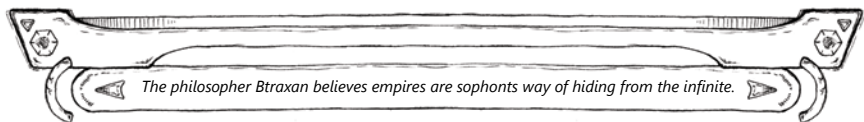
If you want to play the game more like *Star Trek* than *Space Raiders* that's entirely up to you, it's just not what the game was designed to do or to represent, nor how it's presented.

It's a Big Universe

The universe is huge and if you take into account the possibilities for multiple universes, timelines and other oddities of science fiction that becomes even bigger. The advantage for us in *Machinations of the Space Princess* is that this means that there's enough room for everyone's games to coexist as some sort of amorphous over-game with everyone able to share their war stories, aliens, monsters, empires and dramatic world-changing events without it having to screw up anyone else's game.

With the universe being at least thirty-billion light years across and with faster-than-light travel of all sorts existing in games it should be relatively easy for players to take their characters from game to game and for Games Masters to run games for anyone who has a *Machinations* character of appropriate level to hand.

A big universes also means that there's plenty of room for kinds of wild and crazy nonsense and for that wild and crazy nonsense to get lost in forever if it turns out to be too stupid or game-destroying. You've got the space, time and scope to do just about anything - no matter how weird and strange - you want to with this game. So go nuts.



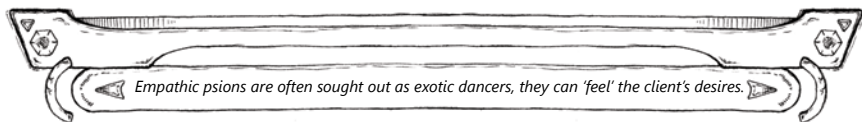


Sexy

Machinations is meant to be sexy. That doesn't *just* mean everyone has their bits flopping out all over the place though the sexy aesthetic for both male and female beings is entirely appropriate and to be encouraged. Hallmarks of the science fiction writing and fantasy art of the sixties, seventies and eighties were relaxed attitudes to nudity, sex and interspecies relationships so of course that forms a part of what *Machinations* is about, but besides all that it also means:

The technology is sexy and desirable

The guns, the shields, the armour, everything is better if it's cool in some way. I don't mean everything should look like it's been made by Apple because that's all a bit too clean and dainty for the Heavy Metal world of *Machinations*. Some things are going to be sleek and shiny in that way but when I mean sexy and cool I'm talking about WWII fighter planes, souped-up hot rods, heavy pistols, biker jackets, chrome motorcycles and bling. This is the kind of stuff that never goes out of style, a worn-in aesthetic of the much loved and the time-tested.



Empathic psions are often sought out as exotic dancers, they can 'feel' the client's desires.



The world is tactile and sensual

When you're describing things in the game you should, perhaps, be a bit more florid than you usually are. Taste, smell, sound, sight, touch all the senses need to be present whenever they can be to make the players feel the situation that they're in. It's a grubby, worn, soft world where the seats are broken in and the favourite spacesuit is patched. Food and drink are worthy of description, as is the lush, musky scent of whatever gods-forsaken weed that alien hippy is smoking and blowing in your face. Encourage the players to experience the world through the senses of their character and build your descriptive vocabulary to cope.

The people (and things) have base motivations

There's a thing in psychology called 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs' which is a pyramid divided into layers. The bigger layers at the bottom are the more important and direct things a person needs to live while as you travel up the pyramid the smaller sections are things that are less essential but which we nonetheless want.

Physiological needs form the bottom and these are things like air, food, water, shelter and sex.

Safety forms the next rung and constitutes things like maintaining resources, not being attacked, steady employment and so on.

Belonging is the next layer. Love, intimacy and friendship.

Esteem is the next one up. Confidence, self-esteem, respect from others.

Actualisation is the very top and smallest section. This consists of things like creative outlets, moral rectitude and acceptance.

The baser the need the more essential and important it is and in the world of *Machinations* the baser needs are often the ones that are missing and need to be secured. The universe is one of conflict and difficulty and the kinds of people that characters are - and interact with - are likely to be criminals, mercenaries and others who are still trying to secure the bottom two layers of the pyramid, let alone anything else.

People (and things) in *Machinations* will tend to have simple and understandable motivations. The desire for food, sex, money and power being the top four.

Charm and looks are as important as blasters and steel

A silver tongue and tight silver hot-pants should be as powerful in their own way as any number of blaster rifles or starships. A moment of distraction or a little flattery in the right ear can tip the tide of battle or the fate of planets. This needn't be limited to interactions with living beings (or robots) a whispered plea to a broken hyperdrive might get it going and a kiss to the barrel of a blaster rifle, 'Clementine', might tease one last shot out of a flat powercell.



It's a world for grown-ups

The universe of *Machinations* is an adult universe with adult themes of violence, sex, drugs and rock n'roll. The naughty side of human nature is also, most often, the fun side and if you look at what we do with modern technology, computers, advertising, cities, crime, drugs and sex and dial it up to eleven you have a pretty good model for what many worlds and places in *Machinations* should be like.

Sleazy

Oh, you know what 'sleazy' means, you've used the internet. It's a moralising judgement upon a person, a place, a district. If something is 'sleazy' it is shabby, dirty, vulgar; it's corrupt and disreputable, cheap and shoddy. Sleaze is a certain aesthetic, that of the bar and the strip club, that of biker clubs and bawdy houses, of adult book stores. When it has a certain pretension to class you might call it burlesque, when it doesn't you might call it whorish.

It's the back alleys and the frontier worlds that *Machinations* is typically played. It's where the rich and powerful come to slum it and indulge their peculiar tastes. It's the prefab town with the molly-house on a hostile world. It's a place populated by whores, strippers, rent boys, drunks, drug addicts, thugs, loan sharks and dealers. Its gambling dens and casinos, resorts and clubs; it's the cantina and the palace, Soho and Hooters, it's a New Jack Space Station, the Hellfire Club and the back alley fumble.

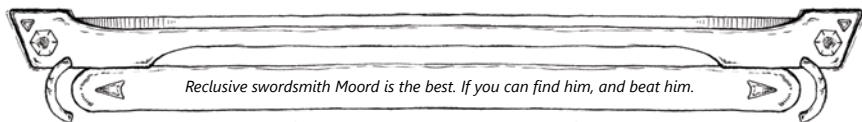
Even if the world itself isn't dirty, the people who inhabit it are. Very little black and white, many shades of grey.

Swords

A problem with a lot of science-fiction battles is that they end up being everyone behind cover blating away at each other with lasers. That's fine and dandy so far as it goes and the temptation is understandable when you're carrying a weapon that can burn a moon out of the sky on your hip but it does mean you tend to miss out on cool things like sword fights and brawls. That's not particularly in-genre when you have Malcolm Reynolds kicking a guy into an engine or backflipping Jedi having wire-fu lightsabre battles.

Machinations tries to address this - at least a little bit - by making people harder to hit and hurt at range (because of shields) and thereby making close combat a bit more desirable, and a bit more possible to get into. The other half of this equation is to play up how cool close combat is, to make it culturally and aesthetically desirable with duels, bar brawls, parried blaster bolts and interesting and cool close combat weapons that make people want to get into a tussle.

Face to face combat is more personal and also gives a lot more opportunity for heroes and villains to trade quips and insults without being drowned out by the drumbeat of a heavy assault gun.





Sci-Fi

Machinations is a science-fiction game, but not so much a serious and hard-science based game but rather a space opera and science-fantasy game. What this really means is that you replace magic items with technological doodads, magic itself with psionics and 'A wizard did it' with 'SCIENCE!'

Like the 'big universe' screed above what this is about is giving you as broad a canvas and as many paints as you need for the players to run wild and your adventures to be big, bold and brassy. Science fiction means infinite new and strange worlds to explore, it means instant travel between different stars, it means gigantic fleet battles and exotic phenomena.

The boundless imagination of science fiction means you can come up with exotic weapons, drives, vehicles, aliens and artefacts on even the flimsiest of justifications and a thin veneer of pseudo-scientific gobbledygook. You want a giant robot that in any feasible world would sink to its knees in the soft dirt? A) Ignore that fact and B) if anyone asks it has some kind of binding-field in its shoes. Also shut up. Also its shooting at you this turn.

The principles of 'sexy, sleazy, swords and sci-fi' can, of course, be combined together into one terrible and devastating whole:

Genetically reared gladiators are valued as playthings by rich, aristocratic women just as much as they are valued for their killer instinct.

Robotic geisha worm their way into the confidences of important and wealthy men, only to be turned into killing machines at a pre-determined signal.

A disagreement over whose turn it was for a lap dance turns into blaster-fire and stabbings between two lady bounty-hunters.

Mars needs women.

Venus needs men.

These mutants have only one thing on their mind.

Three tits? Awesome.



Kill Things & Take Their Stuff

That title is a semi-humorous way of describing what adventuring heroes do in an awful lot of role-playing games. It remains true for a large number of them and while it's not necessarily bad per se, role-playing does offer a hell of a lot more options and kinds of fun than kicking in doors, shooting 'evil' aliens in the face and stealing all their Flanian pobble-beads. Here's a few of the possible kinds of play you can do.

Big Secrets: The universe is full of secrets. There are ancient races to investigate, tombs to dig up and rifle through. Where did these ancient races go? What did they leave behind? What were these artefacts for? An example of this kind of story might be *Tomb Raider*, *Uncharted* or *Warehouse 13*.

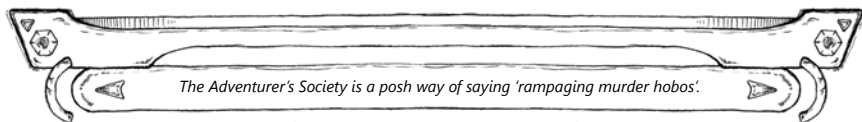
Criminal Masterminds: Your merry band of space-pirates are criminal geniuses. They move from job to job pulling off big jobs as a merry crew of thieves, cheats and liars. An example of this kind of story might be found in *Leverage* or *Hustle*.

Investigation: Your crew investigates, thefts, murders, whatever. You have a reputation as private investigators who can get the job done and deal with any situation. With the collapse of galactic society and the rule of law, you may get a lot of work. An example of this kind of story might be *CSI*, *NCIS*, *Elementary* or *Sherlock*.

Just Scraping By: You lurch from job to job just to get by. Maybe one game you're robbing a cargo ship and the next game you're smuggling medical supplies into a blockaded planet. Who knows what you'll be doing next? An example of this kind of story might be *Firefly* or Han Solo's background in *Star Wars*.

Kill things & take their stuff: You move around the planets and the galaxies, finding tombs and areas in which nasty aliens, bandits, pirates and other bugaboos live and shoot them in the face. Then you loot their bodies and homes. This has no parallel in popular fiction, but will be familiar to anyone who has played *D&D* before in a dungeon-bashy fashion.

Strong Right Arm: The characters are the enforcement arm, bodyguards and loyal inner circle of an ambitious crime baron, politician or would-be empire builder. There aren't many examples of this sort of campaign in popular culture.





Survival: Everything is turning to shit around you and you're just trying to find somewhere safe to hunker down, live and wait for the worst to be over. Maybe its an interplanetary plague or war, maybe its just the chaos of disintegrating society. Whatever the case it means hard decisions and hard people. Examples from popular culture might include *The Walking Dead* or *Battlestar Galactica*.

Wandering Do-Gooders: You picked up your skills somewhere and now you use them to make the universe a better place. You breeze into town and solve the local trouble, then you move on and help someone else. Examples of this kind of campaign would include *The A-Team*, *McGuyver* and *Burn Notice*.

The Knotted Onion

Adventures can be very simple indeed. They can consist solely of 'Go here, kill that, come back with proof' or 'Go and get this thing from this place'. That's all well and good but sometimes players like a story with a bit more meat on its bones. I've headed this section 'The Knotted Onion' because that describes how a more layered adventure or campaign might look.

The knot describes the mysteries and puzzles to be unravelled. If you tug one bit loose then the knot can be undone - at least a little - and then you can move on to teasing the next loop free. Finally, after a lot of yanking and pulling the knot unravels and you have the plain, straight piece of string, clear to see.

Plots and stories are like a knot, made up of all kinds of little bits that form part of a whole. To get it down to the 'string' you need to tease and pull by defeating enemies, gathering information and intelligence or uniting artefacts until you finally have enough there to unravel it.

The onion describes how a story or plot can exist in layers. The story can appear to be about one thing but as you solve each section you peel back the skin only to reveal another layer. The real story exists when all these layers have been pulled aside and there's nothing left but a final truth.

Here's an example of the kind of thing that I mean, layers and knots:

There's a settlement on a frontier world that's being targeted - repeatedly - by bandits. The settlers manage to scrape together enough cash to hire some people to take care of the problem, these are the players.

So our merry gang turns up and decides to confront the bandits. When they do they find them to be surprisingly well armed and equipped as well as being drilled in tactics. Something more is going on here.

With a bit of investigation, chasing up on the supplies, they discover that the bandits have been semi-covertly funded by Braxis Mineral Concern, a galactic mega-corp.



Investigating Braxis concerns they uncover the fact that the settlement is sitting on a huge resource of rare earths, much needed in starships, computers and weapons. BMC is now moving more overtly to take the settlement.

BMC is working to supply one of the warring princesses and this will give her a definite advantage.

The settlement know that they are sitting on the material and have been playing dumb.

The only way to protect the settlement against a corporate assault is to find another faction willing to deal with them.

Mind Maps

Adventures are messy, especially if you're not forcing your players down particular lines and avenues and want to let them explore and investigate on their own terms.

This doesn't lend itself to being written down in a conventional format particularly well and having half a dozen post-its or .txt files scattered around the place is no way to keep track either.

I've found that one of the best ways to keep track of the various factions and factors at work in a game is to create a 'mind map'. This is a bunch of scribbled notes, lines, circles and other symbols jotted down on a single sheet of paper.

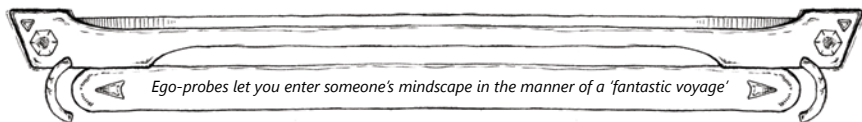
This will help you keep track of how various plot elements interlink and also has the advantage - especially if you have terrible handwriting like I do - of being near-incomprehensible to any players who try to sneak a peek at the adventure plan.

Mind maps aren't perfect, for complex adventures they can get messy really quickly, but they do at least let you have all your ideas in one place along with a vague idea of their relationships to one another. You can keep more conventional notes separately and refer to them when you need to.

Here's an example of a mind-map:

One of the really big advantages of mind-maps is that, unless you really know what you're looking at, they're not going to make a lick of sense to you.

These sorts of game notes aren't going to help the players out too much even if they do manage to get a peek at them.





The aliens are here to steal a rare mineral

They need it to live?

city planet, lots of cool places to hide

Survival horror 'vibe'

Aliens invade!



Pick on Trevor
He was a dick
last session

No food
No water
No ammo
No shelter

Fight or get
off planet?

shapeshifting
spies



Fifth columnists

giant city-crunching robots

Mini robots from bombs that eat your face!

All robots?
?



Good Adventures

Take all the advice given here with a large grain of salt. Nothing is set in stone when it comes to any chaotic and creative activity and role-playing games are no different. Don't stress it and go with whatever is working (or seems to be working) in the moment. Before you do anything you need to get to know your players, their characters and yourself. Once you know what everyone wants from a game and what their characters are capable of doing, then you can start in on putting together an adventure that suits them.

Risk

A good adventure will contain an element of risk. That risk doesn't have to be to life and limb, it can be many things. Perhaps the characters invested a lot of money in a scheme and that's at risk if they don't pull it off. Maybe they're risking a relationship, friendship, their status, imprisonment. There are all sorts of things that can be placed at risk.

The source of risk is another factor. Is it an enemy? Is it an alien monster? Is it a cache being dug up or a past misdeed being investigated? The source of the risk is often the driver for the plot, the thing that spurs the characters to action. Is something they love or enjoy at risk if they don't act? Are pirates threatening border settlements where they hide out sometimes? Are the police taking apart their criminal network and threatening to close in on them?

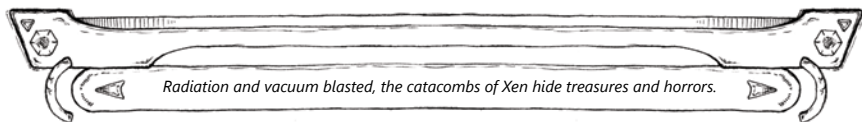
In accomplishing their goals the characters also need to place themselves at risk. This can be the more obvious, physical threats like fighting past some guards, dodging traps and hurling oneself bodily across rooftops. It can also be the less obvious things that can be placed at risk such as social standing, reputation or integrity. Are characters willing to do something bad for the greater good? Are they willing to go against their core values for the sake of a score? What's the fallout from that?

That's advanced stuff though, while you're fleshing out the background and getting people to be attached to their characters and the game world you can probably stick to explosions and gunfights.

Reward

Every adventure should have a reward. The obvious thing to dish out is money and other forms of loot, players do love the shinies, but you're not limited to these kinds of things as a form of reward. You have a lot of other options as well. All that risk has to be worth something, or a few somethings, or players are going to feel a bit cheated. Here's a few examples:

Contacts: Meeting new people and doing things for them may not make you friends but it does establish you as significant to them. Once you've met someone and made an impression they may contact you for jobs or may be contactable for jobs - though they may need a bribe.





Deferred Reward: Jam today is best, but the promise of twice as much jam tomorrow can also be good. A deferred reward that promises to be big and significant may be as good as a reward in and of itself. It also keeps people on the hook and is a good way of introducing a bigger-bad or a particularly needling enemy. Maybe they were beaten to the stash.

Favours: Even if people don't like you they may be willing to trade favours. Save someone's life and that's a favour you can call upon in the future. Reciprocity is common to most intelligent, social species in the cosmos and is what makes intergalactic society even possible. A good reward can be a powerful favour from a powerful person. Then when you find you can't cope with something you can get backup.

Friends: Sometimes characters will make a real bond with one of the non-player characters in the adventure. If people really react well to someone you may want to bring them back again and again. A connection with a beloved character, especially if they can help you or do things for you, is a fine reward. Lovers can be even more rewarding.

Hate: It may not seem like it at first but the acquisition of a new enemy can be rewarding to the players, even if it isn't necessarily a reward for the characters. Hating someone, wanting to get back at them, seeking revenge can be a powerful motivation and taking down a hated enemy after chasing them over several adventures is hugely satisfying

Secrets: Knowledge is power, as they say. This is especially true of things you're not supposed to know or that people don't want you to know. It could be the location of something, the pass code to something else, it could be blackmail material. Secrets are a great reward but they're one that must be acted upon in order to realise their value. Something that spurs the characters to action.

Technology: *Machinations of the Space Princess* doesn't have magic items necessarily, though there may be some on some backwater planets out there - not everything needs an explanation. There may also be psychic artefact but most of the groovy, physics-breaking stuff is going to come in the form of technological artefact. Many of these are either cutting edge prototypes that can be stolen or leftover devices that remain from ancient and wise - yet extinct - races.

Revelation

One of the best moments in any game for me is the moment that 'the penny drops'. That instant when the players work out something that has been going on and their jaw drops, they get angry or they get excited at finally grabbing an important puzzle piece that unravels a larger plot.

Building revelatory moments into adventures, "Luke, I am your father", is the equivalent of the cliffhanger ending.



It can be a big emotional payoff for the people playing the game and can keep them hooked as the story continues. Big drama and big secrets make for a big, bold game.

Meeting Expectations

Players come into a game with certain expectations and desires and these aren't always in line with one another. One player might want lots of blaster battles with alien space Nazis while another player might want to spend a lot of time politicking in the court of one of the renegade princesses. Somehow you have to juggle things so that you can meet the expectations of all the players and make sure they all come away having a good time and having had their expectations met.

Use their expectations for inspiration. If you ask what people want from the game you'll at least know and can work that with your own ideas to come out with some sort of adventure (or campaign) that hits as many of these notes as possible.

So long as you're playing more than one game you don't have to fit all of these things into a single game and can spread them about a bit so that everyone gets to play games where they get what they want and other games where they don't. Fair's fair.

You also have to manage your own expectations. The players might not be in to the kind of story you want to tell (and this will readily become apparent when, for example, the ambassador's ball turns into a gunfight over who was first in line for the buffet).

You can't really tell the players what you want and what you expect without giving away the plots and stories. As the Games Master your only real options are to bring the game to a halt (less than perfect as a solution) or to resignedly accept that things aren't going to go as you want and to selflessly concentrate on other people's fun.

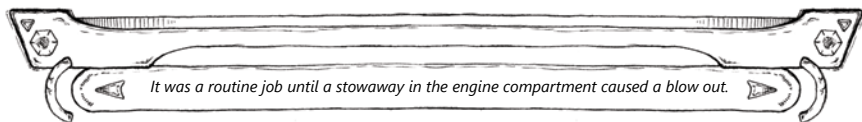
Managing Disasters

It is a truth universally acknowledged that if shit can go wrong, it absolutely will go wrong. Things are bound to go wrong when you're running a game from bad or wrong rules calls to you - or a player - losing their temper or regarding something as unfair treatment. Players are also wilful and fickle creatures and will often completely ignore your trail of breadcrumbs and your carefully crafted adventure chosing, instead, to get a wild hair up their arse and to vanish off for the high frontier far away from anything you had thoughtfully prepared.

Then there's those times where the dice are against you, or against the players, and everybody dies or a villain doesn't give a very good account of himself.

Don't panic.

Whatever has gone wrong, you can fix. At the most extreme you can wind back the things that have just happened to the point where they haven't happened yet and can replay the scene, the combat or the encounter. You've got plenty of options before that though.





You're the Games Master and you have 'ultimate cosmic power'™ at least as far as the game is concerned, so you should be able to find a way to sort things out. You can fudge dice rolls if need be - meaning you can lie about what you roll. You can alter the statistics on a monster or an enemy on the fly if they seem too weak or too tough. The only person who has seen your game notes is you so you can change the plot, the story, even the villain as you want.

The best way to deal with games anyway is to learn to think, plot and scheme as you go along and this will serve you doubly well when things go 'wrong'.

Bad Adventures

There's a 'law', called Sturgeon's Law (appropriately named after SF author Theodore Sturgeon) that states that '90% of anything is crap'. This is going to be as true for your adventures as it is for anything else but it's worth wading through the 90% to get to the 10% that's pure gold. It's also true that just because something is crap, that doesn't mean that it can't be enjoyable. B-Movies, such as those from which *Machinations* draws much of its inspiration, are gleefully crap and people watch kitsch because it's brilliant within its own standards. Still, there are some things you should avoid in order to dodge your adventures being genuinely crap.

Railroading

One really bad thing that happens in a lot of adventures run by new Games Masters is a thing called 'Railroading'. What this means is that the plot, the story, the adventure can only go one way, one thing after another as though it were stuck on rails. With published adventures this is particularly a problem as having everything written down tends to encourage that sort of linear thinking and can't hope to anticipate all the crazy shit that players might get up to.

The more you prepare - or at least over prepare - the more likely you are to railroad people because you've gotten more invested in the game you want to run rather than the game that is going to be run. You're better off - if you can - leaving ideas in a more vague and malleable form.

Sometimes, of course, railroading is inevitable. Its part of the plot, time marches on, things happen or events can conspire to push the characters into a series of unavoidable events. That isn't the same as railroading which is where you're forcing the players to follow what you want to happen, rather than letting it unfold naturally.

A less severe, but almost as game-smashing, version of railroading might be better called a 'straitjacket'. This is where you're determined to run a certain type of game and that runs at odds with the mood that the players are in and what they want today. If you're determined to run something super, super serious and the players are in a silly, joking mood then its going to fall flat.



The best Games Masters know how to shift to meet the expectations and wildly strange decisions of their players.

Mary Sues

There's a temptation, especially if you want to play but always end up running the games, to insert a 'super cool' non-player character into the game. This person is your character in all but name and they're great at everything, have all the answers and support the players' characters as they make their way through the adventure.

Never do this.

The character is *not* super cool from the point of view of your players and by bringing them in to save the day you're showing up the other characters and removing any real sense they might have that they're accomplishing anything or making a difference in the game world. It's fine to get attached to monsters, villains and NPCs (just not too attached hopefully) it is not fine to play in your own game. Try as you might to be fair, you are biased.

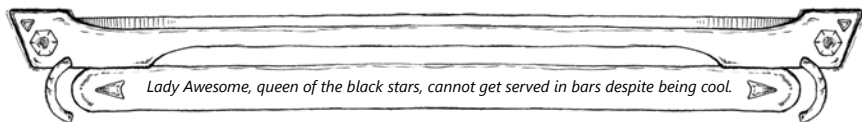
Mary Sues are not the only way to completely bugger up any sense of agency that players have. Ideally nothing should be 100% inescapable, indestructable, unsolvable or unresolvable. Players, through their characters, need to feel that their efforts accomplish something.

The best rule of thumb for anything players want to try is not 'No' but rather 'Yes, but...'

'Can we build an atomic bomb?'
'Yes, but you don't have the gear.'

'Can we use our ship to nudge the asteroid off course?'
'Yes, but how are you not going to get destroyed?'

'No' shuts everything down. 'Yes, but...' keeps things going and keeps them interesting.

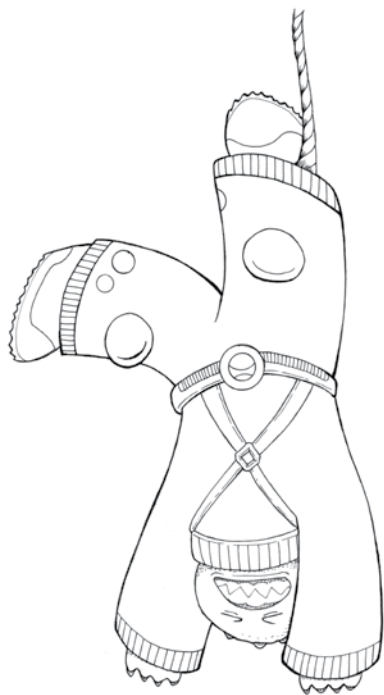




Making Traps

While alien ruins may contain elaborate death traps of the sort more commonly associated with the exploits of Indiana Jones the kinds of traps that Machinations characters are more likely to run into are landmines, alarms, laser tripwires, ambush turrets and the like.

Traps are defined by the following descriptors:



Name: What the trap is called.

Description: What the trap is - and how it works.

Disarm Skill: How easy or hard the trap is to disarm or bypass with a skill (-2 to +2). Traps can also be disarmed - without a roll - by doing something clever.

Save: The Saving Roll made to avoid the effects of the trap.

Effect: What triggering the trap does.

Experience: Bypassing or evading the trap is worth this much experience points. The experience award for avoiding a trap is worked out as follows:

Basic Award: 1xp.

Disarm Skill: -2 to +2, reverse the -/+.

Effect: An alarm adds +0, each die type of damage is +1 so that a D4 is worth +1 and a D12 is +5. An instant-death effect is worth +10 while an instant incapacitating effect is worth +5.

Multiply the end result by 5 to get the XP award (minimum 1xp).

Laser Tripwire

Description: A beam of laser light - usually in a non-visible part of the spectrum - which, if broken, sets off an alarm.

Disarm Skill: -1

Save: Reflex Save to avoid the beam.

Effect: Tripping the beam sets off an intruder alarm.

Experience: 10.



Plasma Mine

Description: A magnetic bottle of roiling plasma attached to a pressure sensor.

Disarm Skill: -2

Save: Reflex Save to leap away and avoid the explosion.

Effect: d12 damage.

Experience: 40.

Primitive Pit Trap

Description: A hole in the ground, obscured with leaves or other camouflage.

Disarm Skill: +2

Save: Logic Save to spot the pit in time.

Effect: D6 and drop ten feet into a pit that must be climbed out of.

Experience: 1xp.

Shotgun Mine

Description: A shotgun shell buried in the ground in such a way as it will go off if trodden on.

Disarm Skill: +1

Save: Reflex Save to throw yourself away from the blast.

Effect: d8 damage.

Experience: 15.

Unmatter Orb

Description: A minute dimensional gateway to a form of subspace where matter cannot exist.

Disarm Skill: -2

Save: Will to maintain integrity through sheer desire to live.

Effect: You are disintegrated.

Experience: 65.

Making Creatures

Sooner or later you're just going to want to bust out your blaster pistol and shoot someone or something and to that end you need 'baddies' that you can gun down by the billions without feeling the slightest twinge of remorse.

'Creatures' covers any and every living (biologically or otherwise) creature you might run into, whether its intelligent or not. Making up things to kill doesn't require as much effort as making up a full character but for the really important enemies you might want to do this anyway - at least for the intelligent ones.

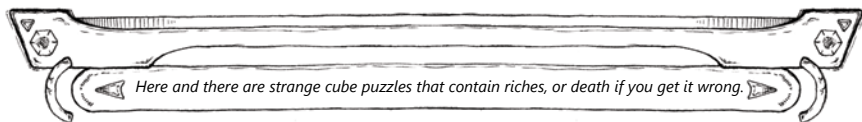
Otherwise...

Beasts

The universe is full of alien creatures and not all of them are intelligent tool-users. Many of these creatures can be trained and turned to the worthy task of helping star-hopping mercenaries clear out space-dungeons of other creatures. The rules for these beasts are also the rules for creating alien beasties and nasties in general.

Creature Statistics

Creatures don't need the full gamut of player statistics, they only need a much smaller sheet with the vital information needed should anyone try to kill it.





Close Defence: Close defence is the creature's defence against close combat attacks.

Ranged Defence: Ranged defence is the creature's defence against ranged attacks.

Armour: The amount of natural armour the creature has.

Hit Dice: The number of Hit Dice (d8) that are rolled to determine the creature's Hit Points.

Initiative: How fast the creature reacts in combat.

Movement: How fast the creature can move.

Attacks: How many attacks the creature can make and with what bonus.

Damage: How much damage the creature does on an attack.

Saves: The Saving Roll levels for the creature. If unstated these are five. Saves are: Charm, Looks, Toughness, Reflexes, Logic, Power and Will.

Traits: The traits and special abilities that the creature has.

Making Beasts

Step One: Basic Statistics

A simple, 1 Hit Dice Monster has the following statistics.

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 1 (4hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round (the creature generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+0

Damage: 1d4

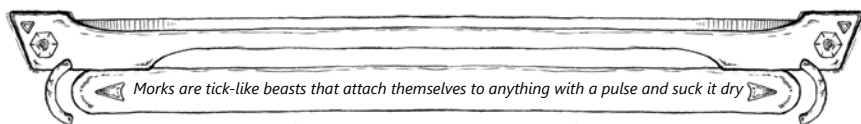
Saves: 5

Traits: Leave blank

Step Two: Advance Statistics

The most important and defining aspect of a creature is its Hit Dice. Hit Dice are somewhat analogous to the level of characters. Appropriate Hit Dice can be roughly defined by gauging the mass of the creature. Tougher creatures may have more Hit Dice at the same weight or size while smaller creatures may have more. Generally this shouldn't take a creature past 1/2 of its suggested Hit Dice or more than 150%:

Weight lbs/KG	Hit Dice
Up to 100/50	1
250/100	2
500/200	4
1000/450	6
2000/900	8
5000/2300	10
10000/4500	12
+5000/+2300	+2





Enemy Level/Hit Dice	XP Award
1-	5
1	10
2	25
3	50
4	75
5	100
6	250
7	500
8	750
9	1,000
10	1,250
11+	+250/Level

Each extra Hit Dice allows you to ratchet up the power of the creature:

Raise a Defence score by one.

Increase Initiative by +1.

Increase movement by 5m per round.

Provide an extra form of movement.

Increase attack by +1.

Increase attacks by 1 (only up to once for every +5 attack).

Step up the damage die by one type (1d4/1d6/1d8/1d10/1d12).

Increase a save by +1.

Provide armour step by step:
1/1d4/1d6/1d8/1d10/1d12

An extra trait.

Step Three: Traits

The creature is now, essentially, complete. You can now pick up to four Traits from the normal list to give the creature and note the differences these make.

If they increase the Hit Dice they do not boost the creature's points as they would in the previous step. Traits that would raise statistics instead raise the accompanying save when making a creature.

Your creature is now ready to cause havoc!

EG: We're designing a Bokaboo, a sort of flightless, predatory chicken. It has 3 Hit Dice so we spend the two extra Hit Dice points to give it +5m movement (they run like ostriches) and to make its beak a fearsome weapon of d6 damage.

We then assign up to four traits and choose: Combat Reflexes (+2 Initiative), Extra Action (+1 Attack), Fast (+3 movement), Foot Hands +1 Climb Skill. The final Bokaboo looks like this:

Bokaboo xp 50

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 3 (13hp)

Initiative: +2

Movement: 18m per round (running).

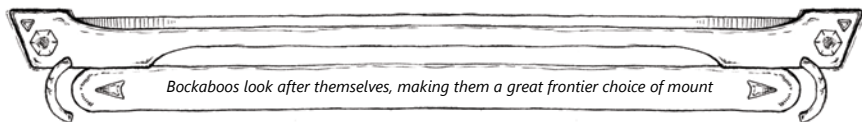
Attacks: 2/+0

Damage: 1d6

Saves: 5

Traits: Combat Reflexes, Extra Action, Fast, Foot Hands.

Skills: Climb 1.





Making Goons

Guards, soldiers, mercenaries, innocent bystanders, lynch mobs, there are plenty of intelligent alien adversaries out there for you to practice your quick draw on. Goons follow a similar - but not identical - process to being created as beasts do. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to make them.

Goon Statistics

Usually goons don't need the same amount of statistics as a full character, though for your big villains you might want to make them up as though they were 'proper' characters with all the detail that that would entail.

Close Defence: Close defence is the goon's defence against close combat attacks.

Ranged Defence: Ranged defence is the goon's defence against ranged attacks.

Armour: The amount of armour the goon has.

Hit Dice: The number of Hit Dice (d8) that are rolled to determine the goon's Hit Points.

Initiative: How fast the goon reacts in combat.

Movement: How fast the goon can move.

Attacks: How many attacks the goon can make and with what bonus.

Damage: How much damage the goon does on an attack.

Saves: The Saving Roll levels for the goon. If unstated these are five. Saves are: Charm, Looks, Toughness, Reflexes, Logic, Power and Will.

Traits: The traits and special abilities that the creature has.

Skills: What skills the goon has.

Building Goons

Step One: Basic Statistics

A simple, 1 Hit Dice goon has the following statistics.

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 1 (4hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round (the goon generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+0

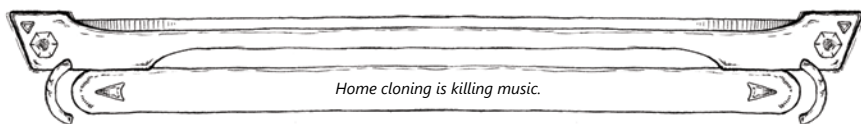
Damage: 1d4

Saves: 5

Traits: Goons start with up to three traits.

Skills: Goons start with one skill.

The goon's stats represent their equipment, so you don't need to kit them out.





Step Two: Advance Statistics

The most important and defining aspect of a goon is their Hit Dice. Hit Dice are somewhat analogous to the level of characters. Appropriate Hit Dice can be roughly defined by gauging the level of the goon. Tougher and more expert goons have more Hit Dice. Most goons will run from 1-6 Hit Dice representing their level of expertise.

Expertise	Hit Dice
Rookie	1
Green	2
Trained	3
Veteran	4
Hardened	5
Elite	6

Enemy Level/Hit Dice	XP Award
1-	5
1	10
2	25
3	50
4	75
5	100
6	250
7	500
8	750
9	1,000
10	1,250
11+	+250/Level

Each extra Hit Dice allows you to ratchet up the power of the goon. Each one allows you to do one of the following:

Raise a Defence score by one.

Increase Initiative by +1.

Increase attack by +1.

Increase attacks by 1 (only up to once for every +5 attack).

Step up the damage die by one type (1d4/1d6/1d8/1d10/1d12) - this is for the goon's natural attack. Goons get given weapons and armour.

Increase a save by +1.

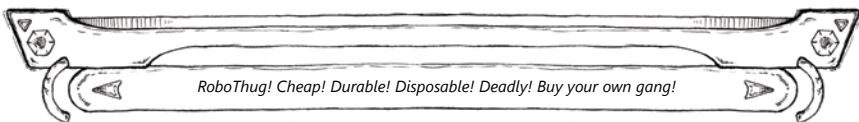
Provide armour step by step: 1/1d4/1d6/1d8/1d10/1d12 - this is for the goon's natural armour.

An extra trait or skill

Step Three: Traits

The goon is now, essentially, complete. You can now pick three Traits from the normal list to give the goon and note the differences these make to their statistics. If they increase the Hit Dice they do not boost the goon's points as they would in the previous step. Traits that would raise statistics instead raise the accompanying save when making a goon.

EG: We're designing a unit of human space marines who are going to turn up in an assault on the character's ship. These guys are the elite, best of the best, and so get six Hit Dice and everything that goes with it.





Northstar Axis Space Marine xp

250

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: 0 (1d6)

Hit Dice: 6+12 (39hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+3

Damage: 1d4 (Fists), 1d6 Shard pistol, 1d6 shortsword

Saves: 5, Toughness 7, Reflexes 6

Traits: Humanoid x3.

Skills: Combat Dodge 2, Juggernaut 2

Armed and armoured for ship assault, NSA Space Marines are armed with flesh-ripping cluster pistols and shortswords. Their compact armour is designed to protect in close combat while allowing for maximum movement in confined quarters.

Cannon Fodder, Goons & Hard Bastards

Sometimes you want the baddies to fall down easier, to be carved through in heroic battle. Sometimes you want them to be a reasonable obstacle, but not too much of one. Sometimes you want them to be tougher or to pick out a leader who is going to be more of a problem for the characters. If you need a baddie to fit one of these criteria then you can abandon the more usual way of doing things (rolling Hit Dice) and go for something different.

Cannon Fodder

Cannon fodder are easy to make. Just take the absolute bare minimum hit points for the enemy and reduce their defence scores by two each. Divide the XP award by 5 and you're good to go.

Cannon fodder NSA Space Marines, for example, would have the following statistics:

Northstar Axis Space Marine xp 50

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 10

Armour: 0 (1d6).

Hit Dice: 6+12 (18hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+3

Damage: 1d4 (Fists), 1d6 Shard pistol, 1d6 shortsword.

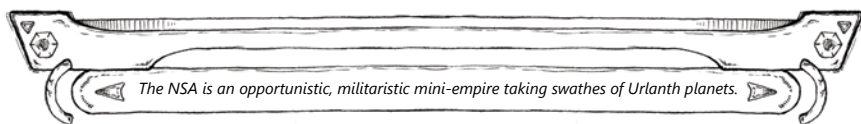
Saves: 5, Toughness 7, Reflexes 6

Traits: Humanoid x3.

Skills: Combat Dodge 2, Juggernaut 2

Goons

Goons are your 'middling' bad guys, these are the ones you take the average Hit Points dice roll for (4.5 x Hit Dice) and don't modify anything. It really just saves you keeping track of individual Hit Points so much and getting mixed up from one goon to another. You can even apply damage dealt to any goon to the goons in series to make record-keeping easier.





Hard Bastards

Hard bastards are the captains, the sergeants, the right-hand men. These are the bad guys that don't quite warrant the full hero treatment but which still need to be a little superior. To make a Hard Bastard double the XP award, add +2 to Close and Ranged Defence and increase their attack and Saves by +1. Hard Bastards have the maximum possible Hit Points.

An NSA Space Marine Hard Bastard would have the following statistics:

Northstar Axis Space Marine (Sergeant Benson) xp 500

Close Defence: 16

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1 (1d8+1)

Hit Dice: 6+12 (60hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

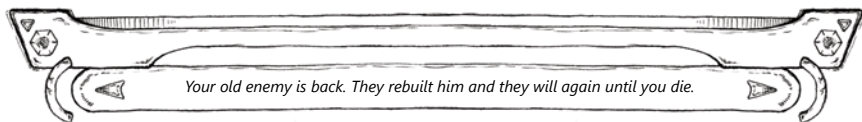
Attacks: 1/+4

Damage: 1d6 (fists) 1d8 shard carbine, 1d8 longsword.

Saves: 6, Toughness 8, Reflexes 7

Traits: Humanoid x3.

Skills: Combat Dodge 2, Juggernaut 2



Your old enemy is back. They rebuilt him and they will again until you die.



Getting the Band Together

Forming a Group

These days this is probably about the biggest obstacle to any successful game. Finding people to play it with you. It's possibly a downer to go over all the problems but if you're aware of them you can either give up without trying - and save yourself the trouble - or be aware of the issues as you're going into them and - thusly - be prepared.

There's a lot of competitors for gamer's time these days. Computer games, MMORPGs, card games, all sorts. Even if you get people who want to play, they're going to want to do a lot of other things as well, leaving less time for 'proper' gaming

Gamers are an aging demographic, that means we're shrinking in size and there's even more demands on a lot of gamers' time, partners, kids, work, all takes its toll.

Game shops aren't as common as they used to be, eliminating a major meeting place for gamers.

Gaming has gone from being Satanic (which is kind of cool) to nerdy. While there's some 'geek chic' going on it seems to only really exist/persist within existing geek culture.

These are problems, but they're not insurmountable with the right approach.

Some can even be turned into positives.

Friends with Benefits

It's pretty likely that when you started gaming (or if you are starting now) that the first people you gamed with were your friends. They're the ones you could rope into trying it out and if anyone stuck with it it's likely they were some of those original friends that you played with.

Friends make some of the best members of your gaming group, you know each other, know what you like, have a rapport with each other and are likely to be fairly forgiving with each other. You'll also be more likely to find some time to spend together, for whatever reason.

Friends are also more likely to offer up somewhere to play and partners are more likely to be understanding about you spending time with people you know.

Perfect Strangers

Meeting new people to game with can be a bit of a bind. Where are you going to meet?

Sure, there's some RPG clubs dotted about here and there and a few shops, but probably your best bet is running into people at conventions or the occasional serendipitous encounter.* It can be hard to suss out whether you're going to get on with someone from such a brief encounter and a chat, but it's better than nothing.



As with dating, go with your instinct to start with and don't be afraid to run, screaming, for the hills if they turn out to be a creepy psycho or a brony.

**I met some of my best friends and lifelong gaming friends only because another gaming friend mentioned monowire while playing laser tag. That's serendipitous indeed.*

Blind Dates

Another way of hooking up with new gamers is to answer ads in social media or forums and to find people near you in that way. This way of hooking up with gamers is even more random and unpredictable than chance encounters or stalking gamers in stores or conventions. You've really got nothing to go on other than the way they write, what they say and maybe a picture - if you're lucky.

Again, there's no harm in going and meeting up, but it might be a good idea to take a friend with you. These people aren't likely to be killer psychos, but things might get weird or uncomfortable and it's always good to have backup when you're meeting any stranger. As with the random encounters mentioned before you shouldn't be afraid to cut and run or to break off contact if it just isn't working. Sometimes things don't work out, even with other gamers.

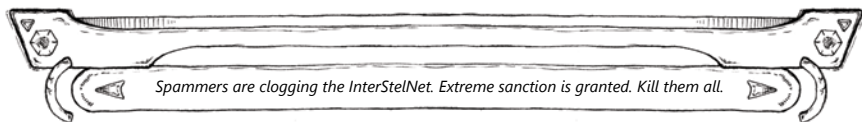
Conventions

For your part, when you're at a convention you and your existing group can do things to maximise your opportunities to meet new people, there's little point all just playing together like you were at home after all! Split up, maybe in pairs so you can feel a little comfortable and then mix it up by playing in or running as many events and games as you can. That gives you your best chance of meeting new people, making new friends and getting new gaming partners.

The Internet

There's plenty of forums out there, plenty of social networking sites, blogs, e-mail lists, twitter and so on that can get you together with other gamers. Getting you together with other gamers in striking distance of yourself is a little more difficult. Many clubs and groups do make their own websites and you can do the same thing. Make sure you're easy to find via e-mail and social media and that your general location is listed on such a site so that potential players can find you and get in touch with you.

The real problem is that the role-playing scene is completely fractured across many, many, many different sites and there's no real, universal, central point for you to find people and to communicate. Because of this you'll need to spread your efforts as far and wide as you can. Some ideas to draw interest might include...





Lots of pictures – people pay more attention to pictures than text. Not just you but your game collection, any miniatures you might have and cool stuff from other media that you like.

Podcasting – You could record some of your sessions on audio, or discuss them. You could also discuss products you've bought that you like. Gamers do value each other's opinions and that can draw an audience.

Play reports – Summaries of your sessions and some of the 'war stories' from them can give people an idea what your sessions are like and whether they'll fit in as well as giving clues to the game systems and types of games you like to run.

Schools & Colleges

Schools have a lot of activities after their official hours are over. Community schools may have rooms to hire for clubs and groups to use.

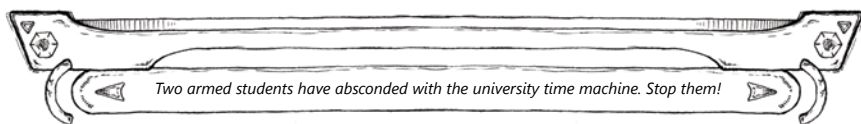
It's potentially creepy to play across a big age gap and some games might not be suitable for younger kids - but schools are often the hubs of communities and good places to get the word out about your group and your games. If you have a kid who wants to game, running an after-school gaming club can be a great way to support them.

College or university is also a great place to put gaming groups together, lots of people packed into one institution, away from home and looking to socialise and find new friends. There's usually plenty of rooms and facilities to host games and directories and notice boards upon which you can advertise. The gaming friends you make there might well be friends for life and universities might well be the hubs of any local gaming clubs in any case, whether you attend the university or not.

Hobby Shops

While there are less hobby shops around these days that does mean that the ones that remain are good hubs for meeting other gamers. You can also find out who plays what by seeing what they buy and what they look at. Many stores also host games and tournaments during or after hours and most will also have a notice board or let you set out some poorly photocopied fliers for your gaming group.

Hobby shops are an excellent place to be a stalker and you can lurk behind the miniatures racks ready to pounce out on whoever looks like they might play something you like. Games Workshop stores don't work so well, they don't like anyone talking about anything that isn't one of their games and you can get thrown out for doing so, so take it easier there or lurk outside and pounce people as they leave.





Where to Play

Once you've gotten a group together you need somewhere to actually play the games. You don't need a huge amount of space, just a table with room for a fistful of people, enough space to roll some dice and a bit of peace and quiet for a handful of hours.

Can't be too difficult to get, can it?

Home

The obvious place to choose to play is at home, either in your home or that of another member of your group. You've got the advantages of comfort, familiarity and you – or whoever else it is – doesn't have to lug their entire gaming library to the new location. On the downside there might be a lot of non-gaming people around, interrupting you, getting under your feet and otherwise causing all sorts of mayhem and mishaps.

Sometimes spouses and flatmates can be less than understanding about tramping hordes of gamers descending upon the house and messing up the place and that's another disadvantage - you might have to tidy up.

It can also be a little difficult to get people to leave once the gaming is over. Releasing the hounds can be helpful in this regard.

School

Schools often offer rooms for hire or for after-school activities and you can use these to game in.

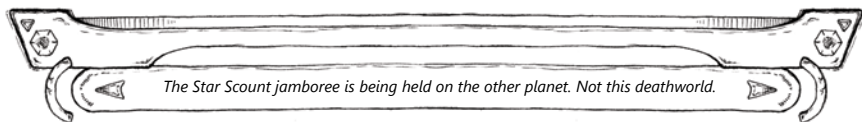
Schools are often central to areas and can help you get a bit of publicity for your gaming group, plus you can recruit some new gamers from the fledgling hordes of acne-ridden adolescents in need of some power fantasies.

On the minus side you might have to include students from the institution in the club, be attending, or have a kid going there in order to use the facilities. Other after-school groups may well interrupt or cause problems for you by running up and down the corridors or – badly – practising the trombone in the next room.

Pub

Pubs often have rooms for rent that you and your group can use. The disadvantage here, as with the schoolrooms, is that this costs money, but with a big enough group – or a couple of groups – you can spread the cost and then it's not going to be so much. You're also going to be restricted on time, usually the rooms are paid for by the hour and the pub does, eventually, close. Another drawback is that pubs sell booze, that means no underage players.

It also often means that your players get plastered (the landlord will expect to be selling drinks) which, while occasionally funny, can also be a bloody nuisance when someone vomits on their character sheet or starts telling you why they love you in the middle of a scene.





Shop

Gaming shops often have play spaces that you can use to meet up at. Some of these are only open after hours and some of these are only open while the shop is open. Each approach has its own issues. If they're only open during shop hours then that's no use to you if you work. If they're only open after hours then time may be restricted and the shop gaming room is more likely to be oversubscribed. In either case there's likely to be a lot of interruptions and, being surrounded by all that swag, you might be tempted to spend a lot of money on gaming stuff that you wouldn't otherwise buy. A boon for the shop owner, but not necessarily for you.

Room Sharing Issues

Sharing rooms with multiple role-playing groups has its good and bad sides, on the plus side you get a nice, vibrant feel to a room with lots of people in it and you get to mix with and meet a lot of other gamers, whether you know them already or not. On the minus side the noise makes it difficult to play and if you're trying to have an intense and serious session of one game while someone else is having a boisterous game of *Paranoia* or *Sea Dracula* then you're shit out of luck. It also tends to be the case that some people don't take such good care of rooms as the rest of you, but you all end up carrying the can for one person's bad behaviour.

Burn them in effigy and they might get the hint.

Teh Interwubz

There's some other possibilities but one that's really worth mentioning is the use of the Internet. You can use e-mail lists, IRC, chatrooms or Google Plus (especially hangouts) to coordinate and run a game. If so inclined you could also spend a small fortune setting up a *Second Life* area to play in, but that's not really going to conform to the rules of the game.

The Internet is great for all sorts of communication and you can play across it but there's disadvantages as well. If you're using a dice-rolling program then all your rolls will be open, making 'fudging' the rolls towards a certain outcome more difficult. Not everyone can type quickly either and this can really slow things down no end if you're playing in a text format. This gets even worse, to the point of exclusion if they're dyslexic or just relatively illiterate and that makes it no fun for people to play at their end either.

Playing online tends to really slow things down unless the system you're using is really abstract, so reckon on things like combat taking even longer than they normally do. Using voice and webcams offsets this somewhat, but not completely.

There's some nice tools out there that can give you virtual tabletops and tools to help you with the rule of the game but these tend to be amateurish, complicated and not very intuitive to use and they also tend to only cater to a few of the major systems on the market.



At the time of writing Wizards of the Coast still haven't brought out their 3D virtual tabletop and it's become something of a joke in any case. It remains to be seen if that – or some similar software – can truly provide a real, full suite of online role-playing options that works, is adaptable and is user friendly. Don't hold you breath!

The universe being so big there are all kinds of strange places that adventures can take place in. Many of these make great backdrops for adventures and can add new dimensions to space battles and other conflicts.

Fragments of diamond from an exploded star, moving in a loose cloud, far from their origin point.

A cloud of breathable gas around a heat/light source.

A planet wreathed in permanent lightning storms.

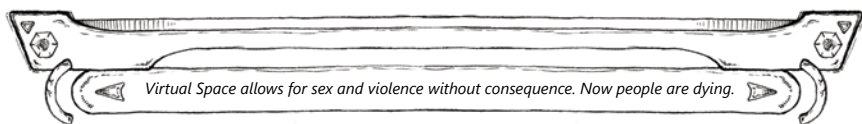
A permanent beam of electromagnetic energy from the gas giant to one of its moons.

A low gravity ocean-world where you can dive deep, very deep, without being crushed.

A shattered planet with a thin atmosphere that still clings to the chunks of the world that remain.

A planet in the process of collapse, volcanic, crust breaking into pieces, oceans boiling, falling apart while people move.

A dead ocean world reduced to columns of salt and giant fossils.



Virtual Space allows for sex and violence without consequence. Now people are dying.



A Trillion Worlds

The universe is a big place, full of all kinds of different worlds but some are far more interesting than others. There's a tendency in a lot of science fiction to create mono-worlds, that is worlds that only have a single, planet-wide environment. Across science-fiction media you'll find desert worlds, jungle worlds, island worlds, ocean planets and artificial planets of blinking lights and metal panels.

These kinds of worlds are far more interesting to the kinds of games that take place in *Machinations of the Space Princess* than an endless procession of hard-science star systems empty of life or interest - save a particular type of mineral or an esoteric orbital peculiarity.

In *Machinations of the Space Princess* sophont species tend to seek out and inhabit planets that are habitable and/or interesting in some way. You can, of course, feel free to ignore this advice as you please and to use other rules or ideas to make up and fill-out your star system but this section is written from this point of view.

Worlds of Adventure

The absolute and most important thing about any world you create for *Machinations of the Space Princess* is that it be somewhere that interesting adventures can take place.

Adventures need hooks and while you'll find hundreds of little plot seeds at the bottom of the page throughout this book, sometimes you'll just want to make up a world randomly for your players to interact with. So here's a table you can roll on to get an instant, planetary, adventure hook for your game.

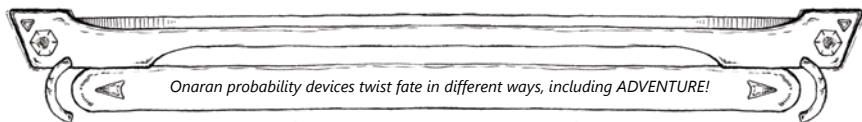
Besides all these planets, star-systems and stellar phenomena there's also the possibility of exploring other times and dimensions. When exploring in time it's probably best to 'coincidentally' make it relevant to known Earth history, so that people can relate, or to their own adventures. That's why TV series do it, so people can get a handle on where - and when - they are.

Other dimensions are more fun. You can do whatever the hell you want with them, even apply cartoon physics. If anyone complains just shout "Quantum!" at them loudly and wave your hand around in the air.

If you fancy a more mystical bent they can explore the collective unconscious, the world of dreams or even the many heavens and hells of the gods.

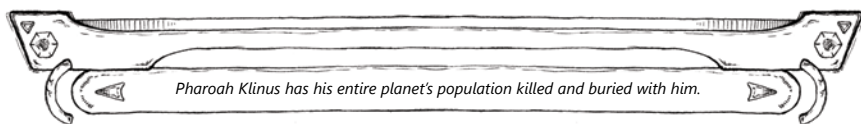


Roll d100	Plot Hook
1	The planet is ravaged by disease and under a limited quarantine while they sort it out.
2	Zombies.
3	A comet is on a collision course with the world, which is desperately trying to find a way to prevent it striking.
4	There is a revolution (robotlution?) amongst the planet's mechanoids.
5	The planet is in the middle of a massive election process with all the divisiveness and angst that entails.
6	A war between two planetary factions provides plenty of mercenary opportunities.
7	Spacelanes to and from the planet are plagued by pirates.
8	A powerful, intergalactic, corporation is exploiting workers on the planet.
9	The planet produces a unique mineral/resource/drug.
10	The planet is corrupt, insular, xenophobic and authoritarian. Smuggling is potentially very lucrative.
11	'Mars' needs (1d6) 1-2: Men, 3-4: Women, 5-6: Other.
12	A huge intergalactic media star is present on the planet at the moment.
13	The planet is a staging post for one of the Space Princesses.
14	The planet is under occupation by an alien force.
15	The planet is struggling to deal with an infestation from an invasive species.
16	The planet is under military blockade.
17	The planet is surrounded by a refugee fleet who are demanding safe haven.
18	The planet plays host to ancient relics and tombs.
19	A rare cosmological event is happening near the planet.
20	According to local legends, the end is nigh.
21	Archaeologists on the planet have uncovered a space ark. They're not natives!
22	During a rare conjunction an ancient ruin opens up - what lies beneath?
23	The planet is host to an extremist faction of terrorists that keep blowing shit up.
24	The planet is a tax haven and safe retirement location for space criminals.
25	Pirates use the planet as their base of operations.
26	Duels are common practice for settling disputes - outside the law.
27	The planet has made all manner of drug use and sexual commerce completely legal.
28	The planet has made all manner of drug use and sexual interaction almost completely illegal.
29	A powerful religious body holds sway over the planet and is more than a little oppressive.
30	The planet is a suspiciously calm and gentle utopia. What's going on?
31	Everyone here is very, very rich by galactic standards. Why?
32	Everyone here is very, very poor by galactic standards. Why?
33	The planet is playing host to gladiatorial games championships between several worlds.
34	The charismatic planetary leader has just been assassinated.
35	A revolutionary body has just overthrown the planetary generalissimo.
36	It is the time of a significant planetary holiday, like Christmas, Easter and Burning Man rolled into one.
37	The population of the planet is kept tranquil by gas/psi-waves/drugged food.



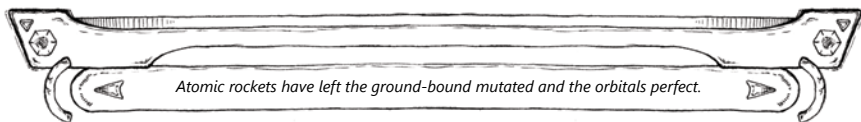


38	The planet is in a post-apocalyptic state of survival.
39	The planet is a colonial, wild frontier with little law and little civilisation to speak of.
40	A notorious criminal has made the planet their hideout.
41	A terrible beast roams the wilder parts of the planet, preying on the populace.
42	A postphysical entity on the world demands sacrifices.
43	Mutants and psionics are persecuted on this world.
44	Mutants and psionics are treated like gods here.
45	Secretive cults of a dark god run this world from behind the scenes.
46	A planet-wide music festival is being held.
47	Total crop failure means there's widespread starvation.
48	A massive solar flare has wiped out most of the planet's electronics.
49	A goldrush is taking place in the system's asteroid belt.
50	A planetary pogrom is removing non-natives from it, sometimes with extreme prejudice.
51	The planet is at war with another world.
52	An important treaty signing is taking place at the planetary capital soon.
53	The planet is only just making first contact with greater galactic society. Hijinx ensue.
54	The planet is in the grips of anti-technology riots.
55	The population of the world is at the very cusp of going post-physical.
56	A massive Starliner has crashed in-system and rescue (and blaming) is underway.
57	Natural disasters - earthquakes and supervolcanoes - shake the planet to the core.
58	A massive construction project (a beanstalk perhaps?) is completed on the planet.
59	The space navy is in 'town' with thousands of astronauts and space marines on leave on the planet.
60	A new phase of exploration on the planet or in the system is about to get underway.
61	Criminal gangs run the world under a thin veneer of respectability.
62	The planetary government, or a force that has paid them off, is conducting experiments on intelligent beings on this world.
63	Mysterious saucer-craft have appeared all around the planet but - for now - remain inscrutable.
64	Financial inequality on the world has lead to massive protests and riots.
65	An imperial force is trying to levy taxes on the planet.
66	The planet is extremely sexist, perhaps with reason - for this species - but they apply it to everyone.
67	The planet has just declared independence from whatever grouping it was part of.
68	The planet has a host of ancient, outdated and peculiar laws which it nonetheless enforces with great vigour.
69	The planet suffers from periodic, planet-wide storms. This is one of those times.
70	The government of the planet has just successfully tested a doomsday weapon of some kind.
71	A new religion, philosophy or ideology set to take the universe by storm is starting here.
72	A ruined hulk of some gigantic hulk has just drifted into the system.
73	The planet is in mourning for a much loved public figure.
74	The presence of an artistic exhibit offers the opportunity for the heist of the millennium.





75	The remains of a gigantic and non-native beast are found in the system.
76	Look out! Space locusts!
77	The planet is undergoing rapid and massive industrialisation with lots of social upheaval.
78	Miracles and other strangeness are being reported across the planet.
79	The planet has become a pilgrimage destination due to some big, alleged, supernatural event.
80	Strict new laws and standards have come into place and the planetary authority demands to look over all incoming ships to ensure they're up to code.
81	The planet has descended into lawless anarchy.
82	A new wormhole has been discovered close to the planet.
83	Technology that helps keep the planet stable is under threat and if it goes, so does the planet.
84	A strident prohibition movement is trying to ban flarns. They're making a lot of progress despite entrenched opposition. What the hell flarns are is up to you.
85	After a string of incidents paranoid conspiracy theories run rife on this planet and any outsiders are likely suspects.
86	The planet has a lot of nefarious slaving operations and visitors are prime targets.
87	The planetary government is engaged in a protracted 'war' with drug producing cartels.
88	The system has a particularly zealous customs agency that works hard to prevent the 'moral degeneracy' of the wider universe from infecting their planet.
89	An aging population fetishises and is fascinated by youth and naivety.
90	A young population fetishises and is fascinated by age and experience.
91	The planet is virtually abandoned for some reason and its population choose - instead - to live in a number of space stations.
92	A particular alien race finds the planet to be an irresistible tourist destination - for reasons that aren't readily apparent to other species.
93	The planet's population have mysteriously vanished, leaving the planet intact - for the most part.
94	Time-locked vaults from the founding of the colony are about to open giving everyone an insight into the deep past of their world.
95	Galactic media attention is focussed on the world due to a huge scandal.
96	The characters' reputation 1-2 good, 3-4 bad, 5-6 bizarre has preceded them.
97	The planet is very, very keen to attract new settlers.
98	The world is home to a large dissident-in-exile movement from a neighbouring system.
99	A game-changing technological advance has been made on this world, but not all the kinks and drawbacks have been worked out.
100	Roll Twice





The Big Bang

It can be very helpful to the Games Master to come up with a whole sector of space in which the various worlds of your upcoming adventures are situated. The interaction between the worlds writes itself - in no small part - as you go along and what you roll - or decide - triggers decisions and thoughts elsewhere.

A sector is a grid of squares 5 x 5. Distance doesn't really come into it per se but each square is assumed to be a cubic light year. These actually represent cubes, but there's no need to worry about that as it all gets very complicated and hard to represent without computers so let's keep things simple while also keeping in mind that each square is actually a stack of 5 cubic light years.

For each square roll a D6, on a 5-6 that square has a star in it (you can make this target lower or higher for closer to or further away than the galactic core). For each star roll a dice again. If you get a 4-6 that star has an interesting and inhabited world on it.

Four sectors make a quadrant and this is probably about the right size area that you need for a campaign to be set in.

On average this means each sector will contain approximately eight stars and four interesting and inhabited planets.

If you need more detail you can roll on the following tables.

These are absolutely not scientific in any way and are designed to produce interesting and game-worthy planets. Not ones that make any sort of coherent or academic sense. Many things are simplified and lots of detail is missing. That gives you the space to go nuts!

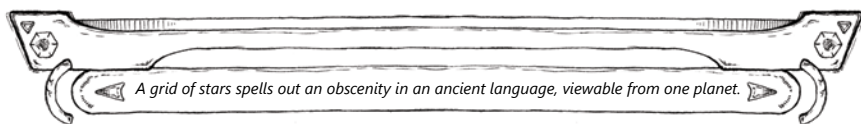
Planet Creation Tables

Stars

Roll 1d4 to see how many stars there are at the centre of the system. 1-3= 1 star, 4 = Binary star. If you roll binary roll again and if you get another 4 there are 3 stars. Keep rolling and adding stars until you don't get a 4 any more.

Roll 1d8	Type	Primary Colour
1	Subdwarf	Blue
2-3	Dwarf	Blue
4	Subgiant	Yellow
5	Giant	Yellow
6	Bright Giant	Red
7	Supergiant	Red
8	Exotic	Exotic

Exotic star types might be pulsars, variable stars, proto-stars (hot nebulae) or even artificial stars (or star equivalents) created by hyper advanced species. They may even be black holes! Most stars are blue, yellow or red. There are other classifications as well but most stars fall into these categories. Exotic stars do not and their colours can be outside the norm either within known science, or outside.





For exotic colours roll on the following sub-table:

Roll 1d8	Colour
1	Black
2	Brown
3-4	Orange
5	Ultraviolet
6	Infrared
7	Green
8	Purple

Planetary Size

2d8	Result	Moons?*
2	Asteroid/Asteroid Belt	1d6-5
3	Planetoid	1d6-4
4	Tiny Rocky Planet	1d6-4
5-6	Small Rocky Planet	1d6-4
7-8	Medium- Rocky Planet	1d6-3
9	Large Rocky Planet	1d6-3
10	Huge Rocky Planet	1d6-2
11	Rocky Megaplanet	1d6-1
12	Small Gas Giant	1d6-2
13-14	Medium Gas Giant	1d6-1
15	Large Gas Giant	1d6-1
16	Gaseous Megaplanet	1d6-1

*If you roll a 6 when rolling for number of moons, roll again and add on and keep doing so until you don't get a 6 any more. EG: Ed is rolling for moons around a tiny rocky planet, he rolls 6, 6 again and then 2 for a total of 14. $14-4 = 10$. This tiny and otherwise unremarkable world has ten moons!

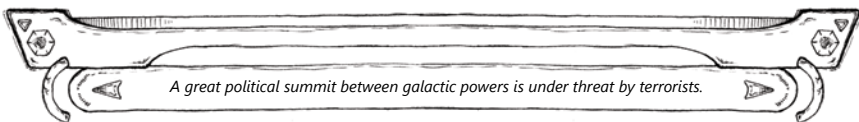
Notes:

Smaller worlds are going to have lower gravity, larger worlds are going to have higher gravity. On really large worlds this gravity may be dangerous to anyone without a gravity shielded suit and/or special training. On some really weird worlds the gravity may even be strong enough to distort light and time to an amount that is perceptible to sophonts!

Planet Type

Planets with a single environment are a staple of so much science fiction its incredible. Hothouse, Dune, The Smoke Ring, exotic, single environment worlds capture our imagination and spark our interest. Because of that most worlds in *Machinations of the Space Princess* are of this type. If you need a justification for that, it turns out that most sophont species find 'interesting' to be a priority for planetary settlement.

If you want to be super-boring and make plausible star systems with realistic planets and more 'normal' looking societies you could do worse than pick up a copy of *Traveller* (any edition) which has great, big and plausibly scientific methods for creating planetary profiles.





Roll 1d20	Planet Type
1	Deathworld (Roll again for type)
2	Desert World
3	Ice World
4	Tundra World
5	Plains World
6	Vacuum World
7-8	Mixed Environment (Earthlike)
9	Forest World
10	Jungle World
11	Mountain World
12	Volcanic World
13	Waste World
14	City World
15	Tropical World
16	Island World
17	Water World
18	Exotic Environment
19	Tomb World
20	Roll Twice

Notes:

Deathworlds are planets that are very, very deadly in some way. Outside of the settled areas it may be very easy to be killed, either by the environment itself or by the creatures that live there. Think of it as being as deadly as Death Valley or the North Pole or like Australia dialled up to eleven.

A waste world is a planet that is used as a dumping ground by other worlds for things like radioactive waste, ship-breaking and recycling. That and/or it may be a world that has suffered a devastating environmental collapse.

Exotic environments can be anything. These are worlds with energy or data beings, complex magnetic fields, seas of alcohol or mountains of meringue. Go crazy, just make sure you come up with a reason why it is the way it is.

A tomb world is a dead planet, either because its original population died back - and left their artefacts - or because it was singled out for the building of a great burial chamber or vault by some ancient alien race. Such worlds are often targets for chancers, tomb robbers, archaeologists and adventurers.

Other System Planets

You'll need to know how many other planets in the system and what type they are, even though they're not the main point of interest. If you feel the need to expand on the details of the system just roll 1d12-1 and add that many extra planets to the system, though you really only need to roll their size and no other details.

Planetary Government

Determining the governmental type of a planet in Machinations is a two step process. First you need to determine what type of government is in place and then you need to determine its style of rule. Type is a straight roll, though to keep things changeable and interesting it isn't weighted. The style of rule is based on the Political Compass (Google it) and is based on two rolls of 1d6-1d6 to give you a position on two axes. You combine these results to describe the government of the planet.



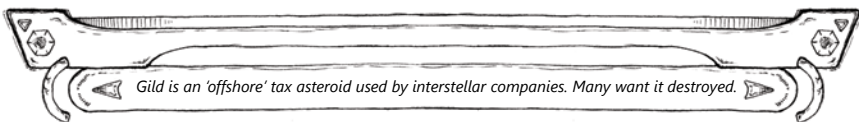
Governmental Type

Roll d20	Governmental Type
1	Anarchist
2	Communist
3	Socialist
4	Conservative
5	Environmentalist
6	Feminist
7	Masculinist
8	Liberal
9	Libertarian
10	Nationalist
11	Racist
12	Theocratic
13	Monarchical
14	Meritocratic
15	Technocratic
16	Consensus
17	Dictatorship
18	Corporatist
19	Balkanised (Many competing governments, do not bother to roll any more).
20	Roll twice (or more times if you roll this again)

Style of Rule

Roll One: Authoritarian Vs Liberal: 1d6-1d6

- 5: The state does not involve itself at all in the lives of its citizens.
- 4: The state is minimal and distant from the lives of most.
- 3: The state is extremely laissez-faire.
- 2: The state limits itself to aspects such as defence and public order.
- 1: The state has a relaxed and liberal view and loosely enforces laws.
- 0: The state concerns itself with a basic caretaker role.
- +1: The rule of law is strong on this world.
- +2: The government is a moralistic and/or nanny state.
- +3: The planet is a legalistic, surveillance society.
- +4: The planet is a police state.
- +5: The state wields absolute power over every aspect of people's lives.





Roll Two: Left Vs Right: 1d6-1d6

-5: The collective good completely overrides individual rights.

-4: The state operates with the collective good in mind at all times.

-3: Duty to the state and collective overrides other concerns.

-2: The state is strongly prescriptive of social harm.

-1: The government emphasises duty and social responsibility.

0: The government is even-handed on collective/individual rights.

+1: The government emphasises personal freedom.

+2: Rights are championed over responsibilities.

+3: Only excessive actions receive social censure.

+4: There are few checks and balances on individual power/rights.

+5: Individualism is supreme. Individual rights trump all.

Example:

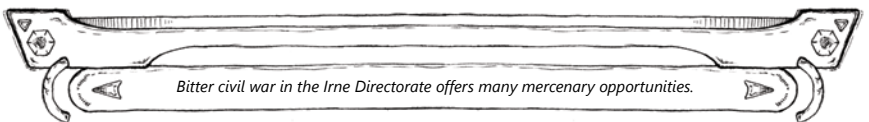
Jake is rolling up a planetary government. He rolls a 5 on his d20 for a result of 'Environmentalism' and a +2 and +5 for his other rolls. This gives him an environmentalist nanny state where individualism is regarded as supreme. This may seem like a contradiction but you can turn it around by making the planet an extreme state where the individual is held absolutely accountable for everything that they do.

They have total freedom but must make it right. Environmental harm that they cause - individually - is taken out of them individually. A citizen of this planet must track everything that they do and pay surplus charges for environmental damage that they cause.

Planetary Allegiance

Planets will have an allegiance, even if it is only to themselves. Just because an Empire is breaking up doesn't mean that some don't still cling to the old ways. This table is tailored to *Machinations* loose background, feel free to change it if you want to do something else.

Roll 2d6	Result
2-4	Rival Empire
5	The Old Empire (and whoever wins)
6-8	Independent
9	One of the Princesses
10-12	Pocket Empire





Planetary Religion

Planets often have their own spiritual traditions. If you need to make one up, use this table as a guide point. Note that this is the *tradition* of the world, not an absolute guide to the beliefs of everyone there:

Roll	Result
1	Ancestor Worship
2	Animism
3	Polytheism
4	Monotheism
5	Occult/Magic
6	Mysticism
7	'New Age' beliefs.
8	Meditative Philosophy
9	Agnosticism
10	Atheism

Planetary Population

Some frontier worlds may have much smaller populations while some worlds may be absolutely teeming. Use the following table to determine the scale and then roll a d10 to determine the actual number.

Roll 2d6	Result
2	Single digits
3	Thousands of people
4	Hundreds of thousands of people
5	Tens of millions of people
6	Billions of people
7	Hundreds of millions of people
8	Millions of people
9	Tens of thousands of people
10	Hundreds of people
11	Tens of people
12	Trillions of people

Planetary Religiosity

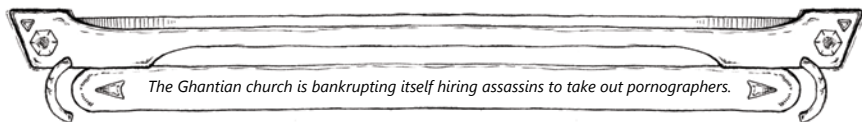
Even if ruled by a theocracy a planet may not have a particularly high level of religiosity. The ruling class may just cling to it as justification for their rule. On the other hand, even very advanced, technological societies can also be very religious. Roll on the following table to determine how religious the overall population is.

Roll 1d6	Result
1	Less than 1% true believers.
2	Around 5% true believers.
3	Around 10% true believers.
4	Around 25% true believers.
5	Around 50% true believers.
6	Over 99% true believers.

Cosmopolitanism

Some worlds are insular, others are gregarious. You can use this table to determine how cosmopolitan the world is.

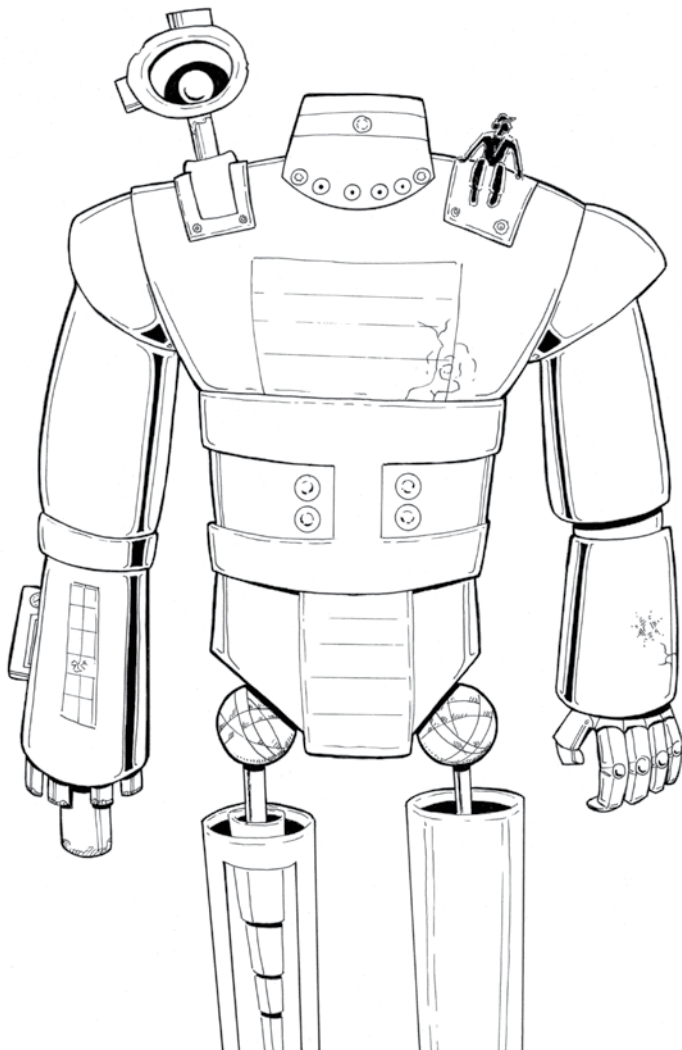
Roll 2d6	Result
2	Completely isolationist
3	Parochial
4	Planetary culture
5	System culture
6	Cluster culture
7	Imperial culture
8	Galactic culture
9	Interstellar ideals
10-11	Open society
12	Completely multicultural





Interesting Features

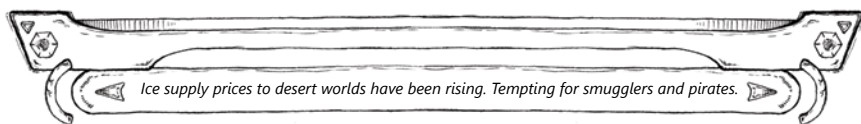
A planet's not a planet without something interesting to draw people to it. If you want an interesting feature for the planet you can roll one at random on this table:



Gamma ray bursts have increased on the fringes and seem to be coming inward.



Roll d100	Result
1-2	The planet has a spectacular ring system.
3-4	The planet is littered with mysterious and ancient alien ruins.
5-6	Beautiful and sprawling caverns wind beneath the planet's surface.
7-8	The planet plays home to an endangered near-sophont species.
9-10	The planet produces a unique commodity of biological origin.
11-12	The planet produces a unique commodity of mineral origin.
13-14	The planet has a particular psychic resonance.
15-16	The planet is the end site of a pilgrimage.
17-18	An ancient and mysterious spacecraft lies in one part of the world, a wreck.
19-20	The shattered remnants of ancient space stations orbit the planet.
21-22	The planet has powerful and beautiful aurorae.
23-24	The planet is an important tourist destination.
25-26	The crust of the planet resists conventional scanning and teleportation technology.
27-28	There is a field around the planet that prevents long distance communication.
29-30	Most of the water on the planet is of an unconventional colour.
31-32	A thick layer of dust is carried around the world by a strong wind.
33-34	In addition to its other satellites the planet has a captured moonlet orbiting at an odd angle.
35-36	The planet's flora is famed for its beauty and diversity.
37-38	The planet's fauna is famed for its beauty and diversity.
39-40	A particularly powerful and addictive narcotic can only be produced on this planet.
41-42	The system occupies an important position on several space routes.
43-44	The planet's life engages in breathtaking mass migrations.
45-46	The planet is noted for its spectacular architecture.
47-48	The planet's population is noteworthy for its strange superstitions and taboos.
49-50	The planet is known for its great festivals and parties.
51-52	The planet produces a particular foodstuff that can only be found here and is much sought after.
53-54	The planet as a whole is known for a bustling nightlife.
55-56	The planet is home to a great many artists, musicians and eccentrics.
57-58	The planet is renowned as a romantic destination.
59-60	The planet is known for its strong underground/counterculture.
61-62	The planet is an exemplar of a particular imperial style or era.
63-64	The planet's waterways are known throughout the sector for their urban beauty.
65-66	The planet is a key hunting destination.
67-68	The planet has a thriving and powerful media business.
69-70	The planet has an immensely powerful and important business sector.
71-72	The planet is home to a criminal cartel whose empire spreads to other worlds.
73-74	The planet was site of a contentious and controversial historical battle.
75-76	The system was the site of a contentious and controversial historical fleet engagement.
77-78	A unique geographical feature of the planet draws large numbers of extreme sports fans.
79-80	Unique mineral formations on the planet attract scientists and tourists.
81-82	The system plays host to spatial anomalies that warrant study.
83-84	The planet is the first colony of a spacefaring civilisation of the past.
85-86	The civilisation currently on the planet is a successor to a previous one, built on its bones.
87-88	Mysterious statues dot the planet, their purpose and makers unknown.
89-90	Time passes more slowly - by a small amount - on this world.
91-92	Time passes more quickly - by a small amount - on this world.
93-94	The planet's gravity is extremely uneven.
95-96	'Tame' volcanoes make for spectacular scenery.
97-98	Weirdly, the planet is home to only one native organism, a simple algae.
99-100	The system's Lagrange points collect ship debris and asteroids, perfect for scavenging.





Sample Adventure

The Siege of the Proxima Bar Introduction

This is a very simple, introductory adventure which is meant to be nothing more than a big fight. Its uncomplicated and straightforward and while it won't be particularly satisfying as a story it should provide ample opportunity for players to get used to the rules, how to fight and survive, how to pull off crazy stunts and should get them familiar with the default setting of the game. There's also a few plot hooks here and there if you want to use The Siege of the Proxima Bar as a springing off point for your own campaign of adventures.

The characters are a team and are at the bar because a sponsor wishes to hire them for a job. What that job is turns out to be entirely inconsequential as they get caught up in something else far more deadly, interesting and potentially rewarding.

Read the whole adventure through twice before running it.

Enchelada Station

Enchelada Station is a 'spinning top' space station, orbiting a thousand kilometres above the ring system of the largest gas giant in the Malang system.

The system has no inhabitable or inhabited worlds and Enchelada station was originally built as a mining platform. Now it makes its money as a free port, a home to pirates, mercenaries and rebels.

The station is, loosely, run by Nitairaz, a komanth (lizard man) crime lord. While plenty of money flows through the station and into Nitairaz's hands he spends only the absolute minimum on station maintenance making the station something of a death trap. There is effectively no law and order and few questions are asked about the business that anyone conducts on the station.

In many ways it's the perfect hide out.

The Proxima Bar

The Proxima Bar is one of the most important locations on Enchelada Station and is famous throughout the sector. Its not famous for its food or drink - both of which are distinctly average - but rather for its atmosphere and the opportunities that it creates. The Proxima Bar's selling point is that it is a melting pot, a place where people of all different cultures and species can find drink, food and narcotics that tickle their fancy and can mix together, learn about each other and come to deals.



The bar is run by Jox Hankam, a former Novawaii space marine sergeant, dishonourably discharged. He's a human man in his early forties, obsessed with get-rich-quick schemes though the only one that has ever worked out for him is the bar itself.

The Bar Entrance

A large airlock, big enough for two burly men in spacesuits to pass through at the same time, marks the entrance to The Proxima Bar. You know you're in the right place because its name is spelled out both in icons and a Terranglic holo-sign. It's just off an unassuming corridor in one of the less salubrious parts of the station but the sound of music and conversation drifts out through the open doors, showing it to be a busy place.

The airlock is permanently open to allow people entry and exit. In a depressurisation it is meant to automatically close but has been open for so long that it is jammed. The door controls can be overridden to force it to close, but that would take a Tinker Skill roll or a Strength Save to manually force it shut. It can still be burnt through but that takes time and would be rather noticeable.

The Main Room

The Bar's main room is a great big rectangle. As you come in your eyes sweep across and see the booths on the far side, rolling in their own specialist atmospheres. Along the back wall is an enormous, armoured window providing a spectacular view of the gas giant's ring system.

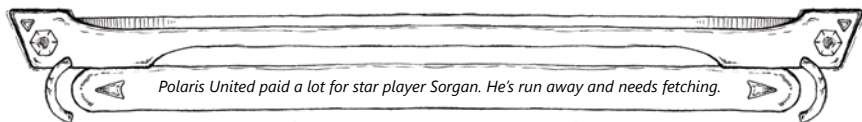
It's all too easy to get distracted by the amorous gyrations of the stripper bots winding their way around their poles. The less exotic patrons are scattered around the tables and at the bar, talking, eating, drinking and watching the flexible motions of the dancing gynoids.

The main chamber of the bar is bare hull metal. The walls are covered with posters and bills for bands, political groups and wanted posters. Most of these are rendered indecipherable by time and graffiti. The floor is dirty from the tramp of many boots and has probably never been cleaned.

The air smells funny in here. This is due to a combination of narcotics, alien sweat, alien breath and the ozone smell of shorting electrical devices along with the smells of so many different foods and drinks, many of which smell terrible to one alien palate just as they smell amazing to another.

The layout is a random assortment of tables and seats of varying sizes to accommodate different sized species. The chairs are loose but the tables are bolted to the floor and immovable without first being cut or blasted free.

Cortankhmar, the player's contact, is sat at one of the tables near the stripperbots and will wave them over to try and get their attention when they enter.





The Booths

At the far side of the room are three, spacious, booths. These are sealed and can be filled with their own atmospheres while the main room is filled with a standard oxygen/nitrogen mix. This way more exotic aliens can sit in comfort and talk to their fellows or to other bar patrons through the holocomm.

One of the booths appears to be occupied, filled with a greenish-yellow cloud of chlorine gas and what looks like it may be some sort of nightmarish sea anemone.

The other two booths are unoccupied, but smell like farts. The one that is occupied is occupied by Being 7ZR who, while polite and thoughtful, is really just here for a quiet drink of boiling arsenic and doesn't want to get caught up in the affairs of 'lesser beings'.

The Dance Tables

A shining metal pole provides the centre of the table around which the elegantly designed stripperbot revolves, twists and teases. Designed to appeal to as many species as possible her features are humanoid in only the most general sense, breasts, hips and a 'fit' physique shape. Most everything else is disturbingly blank, but there's still something erotic about their gyrations, it's just that the fact that it is arousing is unsettling.

Stripperbot001 and Stripperbot002 strut their stuff here.

Stripperbot001 is a purely mechanical device with no consciousness while Stripperbot002 is a full, emancipated AI. Despite this its almost impossible to tell them apart purely from looks, it is only when they talk - or don't - that it becomes apparent.

The Bar

The bar is a simple slab of metal that curves around along a large part of the wall. Behind it are a mass of bottles, boxes, tins and strange looking devices that seem to cover a broad gamut of the favourite 'poisons' of as many species as possible. It's a bewildering array that doesn't seem to conform to any discernable filing system. You hope that you actually get what you order rather than something noxious that some other species consumes. The grizzled looking man behind the bar looks up from polishing a stone cup with protective gloves. "What can I get you?"

The bar, basically, stocks two drinks for most starfaring species. A middle-tier beer or equivalent and a cheap spirit. In the case of humans he stocks a weak, fizzy lager called Spacial Brew and a cheap bourbon whiskey called Harkness' Peculiar. Other species are served with a variety of narcotics, stimulants, drinks, herbal remedies and other bits and pieces some of which can be used by carbon based humanoids and any many of which cannot - at least not without serious internal damage.



The Storeroom

The smaller airlock behind the bar leads to a cramped storeroom. Shelves and wall-nets are crammed with boxes and bottles and two gigantic chest-freezer completely block the exit airlock to the street. Some of this stuff is making strange noises, fizzing and crackling. Some of these alien beverages and foods cannot be entirely stable or safe. That would explain the massive biohazard and danger of death decals you passed on the way in.

The storeroom contains the stock that serves the bar, though Jox keeps as much of the stock as possible out on the shelves to be seen or in the kitchens to be made into food as quickly as possible.

Many of these ingredients are, indeed, volatile either in their own right or when mixed. There's a lot of potential for improvising explosives, acids and firebombs from these materials - even poisonous gases.

The Kitchen

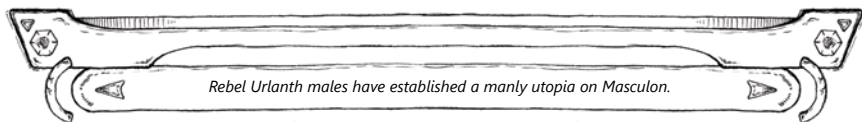
The kitchen is dominated by a gigantic robot that looks to all the world like someone crossed a spider-on-its-back with a surgical supplies catalogue. The only thing that goes against that suspicion is the pretend chef's hat perched precariously on the central body. All around the room are burners, heaters, freezers and vats of bubbling chemicals along with hanging meat and a variety of disgusting and intriguing alien delicacies.

"Please clear the kitchen area while preparation is in progress. This is for your own safety." Is all the robot will say, albeit in a New York accent (It's a Borr-Dyne 9000). Most of the food in here, apart from bread and burger patties, is toxic or distasteful to humanoids and the robot is a dangerous blur of knives and graters when its working. Anyone moving through the kitchen suffers an attack at +1 to hit doing d6 damage. Disabling or reprogramming the chef-bot is difficult as its programming is already rather complex and eccentric. Any Skill rolls to do so are penalised by -1.

Opening Scene

The characters have been asked to come and meet Cortankmahr at The Proxima Bar. He told them he has an excellent and high paying job for them but has been cagey about details. He's offered them 10gp just to turn up and listen to him. The Proxima Bar - and Enchelada Station - could well become common starting points for the characters' adventures in the future so this is a chance to describe the place and to get them familiar with the ambience (dirty rock bar).

Cortankmahr will not start talking about the job until everyone has a drink. Someone will have to go to the bar and get the beers in. Once they're in place and everyone's finished nosing around the place to make sure its safe that's when Cortankmahr will take a deep breath and be about to tell them about the job when...





Wave One

A gang of loping, naked, grey men burst into the bar and start firing in all directions indiscriminately. Cortankmahr takes a shot through the chest and promptly dies. Everyone else starts diving for cover. The characters are going to have to make a fight of it if they want to survive.

These clones aren't the most intelligent of enemies and appropriate rolls will reveal them to be clone troopers from the Arken Mercenary Company. There are twice as many of them as there are characters (minimum four). While they will brutally attack anyone and everyone in the bar they will particularly single out the Captain and marines from the Liberation fleet. They should survive this wave without too much difficulty, blasting their table and tipping it over to provide cover.

When this wave are dead, momentary quiet and chances to heal, hide and explore the bar present themselves. The characters will also be able to question the others in here and have some sort of plan. Anyone trying to leave will be met with a fusillade of gunfire from all the remaining clones and their leaders, waiting behind cover in the corridor outside.

Nitairaz, owner of the station, knows full well about all this and has accepted a decent bribe to stay out of the way and to let the mercenaries have their way with the bar. Such is life on Enchelada.

Wave Two

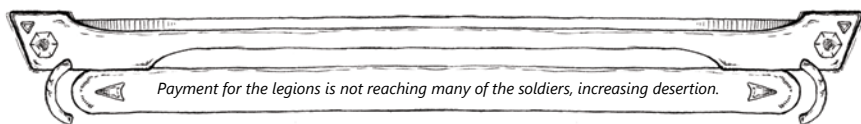
Darmok and another two naked mercenary clone-troopers will enter some time after the first invasion, waving a white flag and offering to make a deal. The clones are armed though Darmok does not appear to be (even though he actually is).

He wants the Liberation crew and the drugs they have in their briefcase (worth some 100,000 gp if sold at full value) and will try to turn the characters against the Liberation crew. Not that the Arken have any intention of keeping any bargain that they strike.

If the characters do turn on the Liberation crew they'll die with no real fuss (go cinematic). If negotiations last too long or his offer is rejected, Darmok and his clone allies will attack and his hidden blaster hand gives him one free shot as a cunning ambush attack.

Wave Three

If negotiations have failed then Galton and the remaining clone mercenaries (a number equal to the number of characters multiplied by 3, minimum 6) will prepare to storm the place. Over the next few minutes they will cut the power to the bar, get their plan in order and will then storm the bar in another all-out attack. If this is repulsed then everyone will be able to leave and escape and the Arken will return to pursue the Liberation fleet members at some point in the future, rather than more random blasting.





The characters will now be free to go though they may well have made some friends in the Liberation fleet and in Jox who will appreciate their assistance in defending his bar. Good for them.

From here you can springboard into further adventures with the Liberation fleet, the Arken or some of Jox's get rich schemes. You may also end up with the characters taking issue with the current state of station governance and seeking a chance, a leader who won't accept bribes to allow them to be murdered in their beds for example.

Enemies & NPCs

Clone Mercenaries XP 2

Close Defence: 13

Ranged Defence: 17

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 1 (1hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+0

Damage: 1d4 (Fists), 1d6 Blaster Pistol with 1d6 bayonet.

Saves: 5

Traits: Humanoid x3

Skills: Combat Dodge x4

"Muhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Grey, naked men with barcodes on their heads. These are disposable soldiers turned out by the thousands by the Arken Mercenary Company for use as cannon fodder and shock troops. They are fleet and agile and armed with simple blaster pistols.

They attempt to swarm their targets and get into close combat where they are most effective.

Mercenary Lietuentnat Darmok Feldcarp XP 50

Close Defence: 16

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1d4+1d4

Hit Dice: 2+2 (18hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m.

Attacks: 1/+3

Damage: 1d6 (claws), 1d6 Blaster pistol

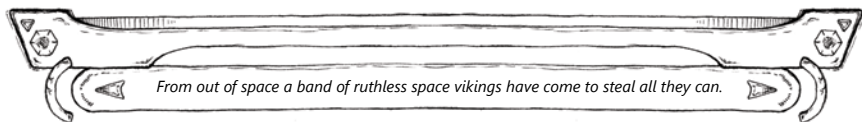
Saves: 6

Traits: Humanoid, natural armour, claws.

Skills: Juggernaut 2.

"We sseem to have gotten off on the wrong foot. Can we not discussss thiss like rational beings?"

Lieutenant Fedcarp is a leathery-skinned, scaled humanoid and a low ranking officer in the Arken Mercenary Company. Following an unsuccessful first assault he will enter (supposedly unarmed - the blaster pistol is concealed in his cybernetic right hand and fires through the fingers) and try to reason with the characters to get them to hand over the Captain, Marines and drugs.





Mercenary Captain Galton Boudrey XP

100

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 3+2 (26 hp) +20hp Shield.

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m.

Attacks: 1/+2

Damage: 1d6 (Claws), 1d8 Blaster shotgun.

Saves: 6

Traits: Humanoid, natural armour, claws.

Skills: Juggernaut 2

"Die you interfering bastards, die!"

Captain Boudrey is a mercenary captain of the same race as his lieutenant. Failure is punishable by death in the Arken so he will lead the final assault in a desperate attempt to fulfil his contract. He moves and acts openly, devoted to attack rather than defence.

The following NPCs are unstatted and should only be used 'cinematically'. The text here gives you some idea of what they are like though and how they might act.

Captain Kanan & The Liberation Marines

"I'll ask you to mind your own business."

Captain Kanan is a blue-skinned Urlanth male and captain of one of the vessels in the liberation fleet that has sprung up in the wake of the imperial collapse. He is here to try and find a buyer for a drug haul the fleet had when they looted an asteroid palace belonging to the matriarchal nobility.

Unfortunately for him - and the characters - a mercenary group has been hired to put him down and to recover the drugs - with extreme prejudice.

He is accompanied by two fleet marines in dark green uniforms. All three of them are armed with blaster pistols.

Jox Hankam

"What'll it be?"

"Any money in that game?"

*"Uh huh" *nods**

Jox is a former military man, though he never really fit in. He left the military after taking a shot to the face - which explains his crude cybernetic eye. He's protective of the bar though disinclined to risk his life. He also keeps a blaster shotgun behind the bar, just in case of emergencies.

Stripperbot001

"Please insert coin to continue."

Stripperbot001 is five feet tall and made of flexible, mirror-silver plastiform over a double-jointed robotic endoskeleton. Her belly contains a device for processing as many forms of physical and electronic currency as possible. She is purely a machine, incapable of having a conversation and programmed to fulfil dance requests - but that's all - upon receipt of sufficient funding. She belongs entirely to Jox, lock stock and barrel, and is just an unfeeling, unthinking mechanism.



Stripperbot002

"Hi there! New to the station? If there's anything I can do to make your stay more pleasurable just let me know."

"Zarq! I can't die! I haven't finished paying for these working genitals yet!"

Stripperbot002 is five feet tall and made of flexible, mirror-golden plastiform over a double-jointed robotic endoskeleton. Unlike Stripperbot001 she wears clothes and unlike Stripperbot001 she is an full AI, a robotic person and not just a machine. Formerly a ship repair drone she mustered out of the navy and bought the Stripperbot body before seeking employment at The Proxima Bar. Always fascinated by the relationships of organic beings she has, rather naively, hooked into sex and sleaze as the speediest route to understanding, developing and exploiting human emotions.

Glashan Pack

A jabbering group of tiny creatures huddle together in constant motion, climbing over each other and jabbering incomprehensibly "Ak-chak-ak-bak-dak!"

The glashan are a pack species that resemble little, hairy, toothy dwarves. While individuals that are primarily a pack and rarely stray far from each other. This pack was just here in search of some live food (glashan are carnivorous) when they got caught up in events. Despite their vicious appearance they are cowards who will only set upon creatures smaller than them. Once any shooting starts they'll take cover under a table and refuse to come out.

Borvis and Behe

"Like, wow. People are, like, dying and stuff."

"Yeah man, that's harsh."

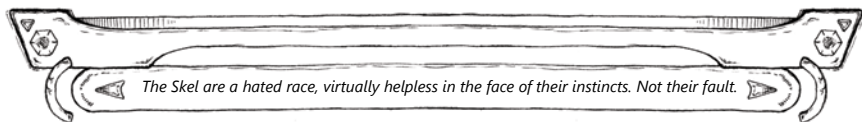
A pair of short green aliens in loud clothing and with tentacular dreadlocks Borvis and Behe are stoned out of their gourd on jenka weed and will stare confusedly at anything and anyone doing anything near them. They're too baked to move or even dodge but luck is on their side. Unless something really drastic happens they won't get hurt, they'll just keep smoking their drugs and giggling while the bar turns to hell around them.

Cortankmahr

"I have the job of a lifetime for you guys. It's risky but the rewards are potentially massive and it has the possibility of changing the future of the whole quadrant!"

"Oh dear... I appear to have been shot. Urrgghhh..."

Cortankmahr (Cort to his friends) is a mouse-like alien with twitchy ears and an immaculate suit. He's a fence, a wheeler and a dealer and a facilitator of 'stuff' (which usually means missions, thefts and other adventure-type behaviour). Whether he actually had a fantastic job or not we'll never know as he's going to get blasted to death in the first encounter.





Billiam

"The doctor says its polyps. No, not that kind, even worse."

"My wife left me for a cloud of sentient nanobots. They were pink."

"The shielding is gone in this whole section. We're probably all getting brain cancer."

Billiam is a hulking human from a high gravity world. Soft(er) living on Enchelada has caused him to start to run to fat. He is also a walking wall of misery and depression who props up the bar sinking drink after drink until the fighting starts. When the first shots are fired he'll show a remarkable amount of concern for self-preservation given his miserable outlook and will hide behind the bar.

Being 7ZR

"I will stay in here, thank you."

"May I taste your excretions?"

Being 7ZR is an odd looking sea-anemone creature of roughly human size. It currently squats in one of the pressurised booths enjoying a reasonable approximation of its natural environment and is unlikely to come out, even (or especially) when the shooting starts. Its space suit is hard to get into and it can only drag itself along very slowly with its tentacles.

The Conflab of Kakraphane

"We're the last of our species you know."

"So, what's your story?"

The Conflab of Kakraphane looks like a cross between coral, a table and an octopus. It has four sturdy legs and two bifurcated tentacles as well as a body made up of a multitude of mouthed polyps. It claims to be the last of its species but nobody is sure if this is true or not. Either way the Conflab is rich and has a lot of contacts. He (she, it?) is here to make the deal with Captain Kanan.

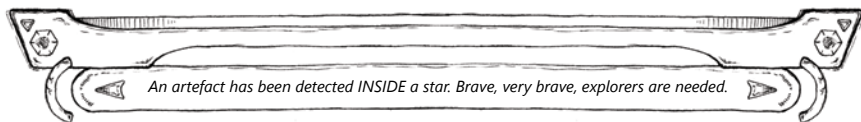
Sardonica Klem

"Here's your beers and burgers. Enjoy."

"If it touches me, it gets cut off. No matter what body part it is. This is your only warning."

"I'm not paid enough for this shit."

Sardonica is the Proxima Bar's waitress. A human girl of around nineteen years of age she wears grubby old rock band t-shirts, jeans and spike-heeled boots. She carries a bowie knife in a sheathe in the small of her back and is absolutely seriously about cutting anyone who gets too fresh.





A simple fight, with a bit of hidden depth to it, doesn't make a great adventure but it does make for a great introductory adventure. Combat and fighting - and all the other actions around it - work as a robust introduction to any role-playing system.

This adventure doesn't necessarily represent quite how I would anticipate *Machinations* being played, but it contains seeds of it. The seedy space bar, the robots, the aliens and the sudden and abrupt violence.

If you want to take anything from this adventure take the references, the feel, the weirdness and the seeds for later adventures present in every race and every non-player character.



An orbital blast wipes out power and tech on planet, plunging it back into the stone age.



Rogues Gallery

Goons

Civilian Rabble 2xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 1 (1hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round.

Attacks: 1/+0

Damage: 1d4 hand to hand, 1d6 (improvised close combat weapons)

Saves: 5

Traits: Humanoid.

Skills: Profession (random) 2

Civilian rabble are the kind of torch-wielding mob that rises up from amongst 'regular folks' when things become intolerable to them. Unskilled and not especially dangerous they only become so when they attack en masse. Even then they're cowardly and easily spooked.

Security Guard 25xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 13

Armour: 1d4

Hit Dice: 2 (9hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round (the goon generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d4 hand to hand, 1d6 blaster pistol, 1d6 cudgel.

Saves: 5

Traits: Humanoid

Skills: Security 1, Wrestle 1.

Your typical security guard is a uniformed thug who didn't make the cut to join the military or a proper police service and resents it. They make up for this with excessive swagger and zealotry for their duties which they carry out with blaster pistol and cudgel.

Planetary Guard 50xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1d6

Hit Dice: 3 (14hp)

Initiative: +1

Movement: 10m per round (the goon generally only has one form of movement).

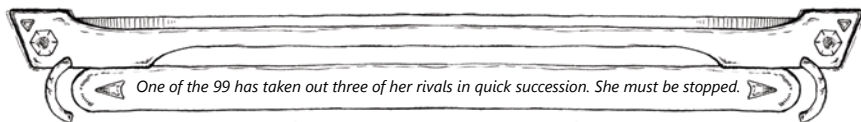
Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d4 fists, 1d6 cudgel, 1d8 blaster.

Saves: 5

Traits: Humanoid

Skills: Security 1, Wrestle 1





Basic planetary police and militia, the planetary guard are likely to be the regular soldiers and security forces that characters will encounter on a regular basis.

Uralnth Space Marines 75xp

Close Defence: 13

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1d8

Hit Dice: 4+4 (22hp)

Initiative: +1

Movement: 10m per round (the goon generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+2

Damage: 1d4 fists, 1d6 combat blade, 1d10 blaster carbine.

Saves: 5

Traits: Humanoid x2

Skills: Survivor 1, Combat Dodge 1, Juggernaut 1

The Uralnth space marines are distinctive in their midnight-blue armour and blank, expressionless helmets. They were the stormtroopers of the Uralnth Matriarchy, earning pairing rights through fierce battle. They remain much sought after by princesses, liberationists and mercenary employers alike.

Kikuratt Assassin 200xp

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 17

Armour: 1d4

Hit Dice: 5 (40 hp)

Initiative: +2

Movement: 10m per round (the goon generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+3

Damage: 1d4 claws/teeth, 1d6 stabbing sword, 1d8 heavy blaster pistol.

Saves: 6, Reflex 9

Traits: Humanoid, Sneaky, Tail

Skills: Stealth 2, Sneak Attack 6

A race of rat/kangaroo-like people the Kikuratt pride themselves on their stealth and discretion, something best observed in the elite assassins that they offer out for hire. Kikuratt assassin guilds are feared and sought after, always professional, always meticulous.

Northstar Stormtroopers xp 250

Close Defence: 13

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1d10

Hit Dice: 6+12 (39hp)

Initiative: +1

Movement: 10m

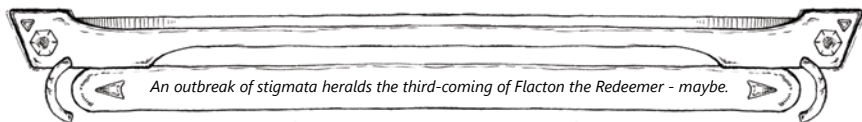
Attacks: 1/+3

Damage: 1d4 (Fists), 1d8 Shard rifle, 1d6 shortsword

Saves: 5, Toughness 8, Reflexes 8.

Traits: Humanoid x3.

Skills: Combat Dodge 1, Juggernaut 2, Combat Reflexes 1





Dressed in black carapace, hunched over and armed with deadly shard rifles the Northstar Stormtroopers are the infantry expression of the NSA policy of 'Nova War'. Dropped from space they secure key objectives and enact scorched earth policy in order to terrify the local population.

Weefles the Thief 500xp

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 15

Armour: 1d4

Hit Dice: 7 (30hp)

Initiative: +1

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+0

Damage: 1d6 natural weapon (coils).

Saves: 5, Reflexes 8

Traits: Bioluminescent, Brother Machine, Defensive Cloud

Skills: Tinker 4, Security 4

Resembling a tangle of worms interlaced with a filigree of wire, Weefles is a notorious space thief but hard to recognise by those more used to humanoid features. Weefles body shape and cybernetic interfaces grant him great advantage in controlling and altering technological systems and breaking into secure areas.

The Eight-Armed Kid 1500xp

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 17

Armour: 1d8 (sealed suit)

Hit Dice: 8 (64hp)

Initiative: +2

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 4/+6

Damage: 1d4 tentacles, 1d8 heavy blaster pistol x4

Saves: 6

Traits: Extra Action x2, Water breathing.

Skills: Weapon Expert (Blaster pistol) 3, Combat Reflexes 2

A centauroid body encased in water-filled armour, a head with many tentacles sprouting in all directions. The Eight-Armed Kid is a terrifying gunslinger from the Boktan Expanse. He works hard to hone his skills and to keep his reputation as one tough cephalopod and has several outstanding bounties on his head.

Captain Klepp 1000xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 15

Armour: 1d4

Hit Dice: 9 (38hp)

Initiative: +2

Movement: 10m

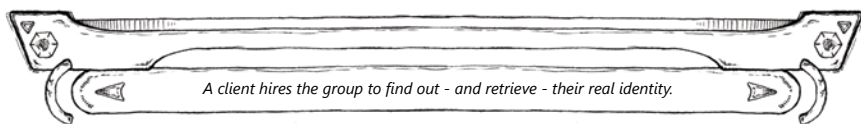
Attacks: 1/+2

Damage: 1d4 fists, 1d10 blaster pistol, 1d6 dagger.

Saves: 5, Reflexes 8, Will 8

Traits: Humanoid x3

Skills: Deadly shot 2, Tactical Command 2, Pilot Starship 2, Lover 2





Captain of the Green Lady, Captain Kleep sails the stars in search of plunder and booty. Mostly booty. He's a dilettante pirate and more of an adventurer. He's in love with the idea of being a space pirate, rather than the brutal reality of it. Something of a romantic figure his cause and his ship attract other, similarly-minded pseudo-pirates and adventurers from the wrong side of the tracks.

Princess Glorion Urlanth 2500xp

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 17

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 10 (80hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d4 fists, 1d6 dagger, 1d6 blaster pistol

Saves: 6, Looks 10, Reflexes 9,

Traits: Humanoid x2, Beautiful.

Skills: Lover 5, Tactical Command 6. Web of Contacts 6

The 32nd daughter of the Empress, Glorion Urlanth is not particularly favoured as a successor in the civil war that has erupted. Glorion may yet surprise people though. Unlike many of the other princesses she is cosmopolitan rather than parochial and uses her non-Urlanth contacts and lovers to spread her influence beyond the bounds of the old empire. If she can bring together enough foreign forces under her sway she may be able to lead a re-invasion of the empire and that may stand a chance of taking control of it.

She may well be a target or a sponsor for adventurers seeking their fortune and willing to work for the old aristocracy.

Creatures

Hullskitters 2xp

Close Defence: 10

Ranged Defence: 10

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 1 (1hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m

Attacks: 1/+0

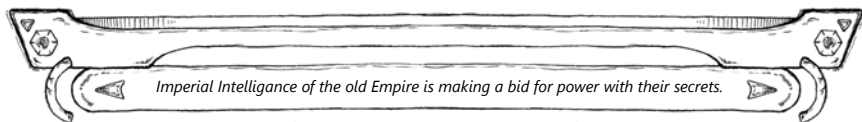
Damage: 1d4 bite

Saves: 5

Traits: Acute Hearing, Acute sense of Smell, Ambush, camouflage

Skills: Sneak Attack 1, Stealth 2

Green, beetle-like creatures, hullskitters stow away on starships and eat waste food, plastics and insulation. They're a terrible pest on many ships though they do make for an emergency source of rations. 'Hullskitter' is used as an insult across cosmopolitan space and implies someone to be sneaky, untrustworthy and disgusting.





Hullskitter Swarm 50xp

Close Defence: 14

Ranged Defence: 14

Armour: 1d4.

Hit Dice: 2 (16hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round.

Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d4

Saves: 5

Traits: Acute Hearing, Acute sense of Smell, Ambush, camouflage

Skills: Sneak Attack 1, Stealth 2

When food runs out on a ship hullskitters can become much more dangerous. In such conditions they form into swarms and burst out of panels and access ports to viciously attack anything they can eat - this is typically members of the crew.

Grun Hound 50xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 3 (13hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 12m

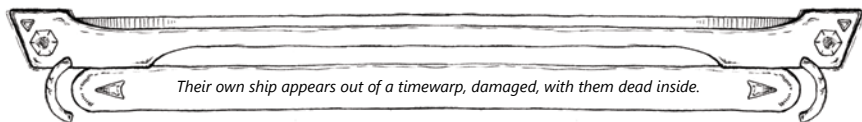
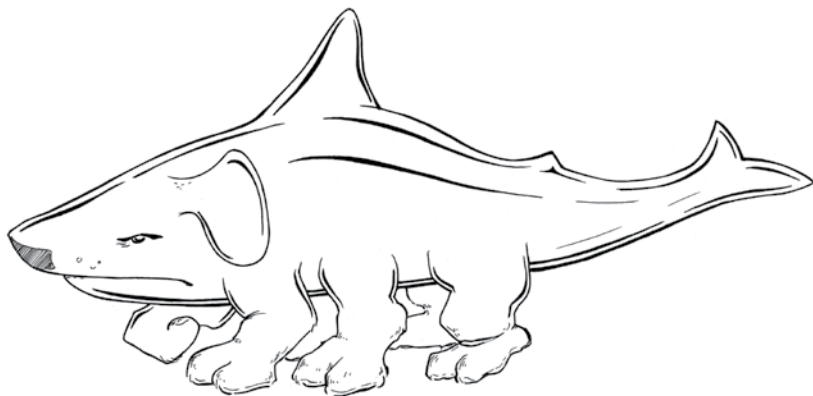
Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d8 bite, 1d6 claws

Saves: 5

Traits: Natural Weapons, Regeneration 2, Fast

Grun hounds are muscular hunting beasts that are kept as pets and guard animals by many people throughout the expanse of the old Urlanth Empire. Fiercely loyal this hyper-metabolic, mammal-like reptile, six-legged animal can be fearsome to those who would harm its owner.





Lurking Death 75xp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: 1d6

Hit Dice: 4 (18hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: N/A

Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d4 sting +1d4 Venom

Saves: 5, Toughness 6, Reflexes 4

Traits: Cannot Move, Venom, Stone Body, Reach 5m, Camouflage

Skills: Stealth 4

Disguised as a rock the Lurking Death waits for unsuspecting creatures to wander within range of its tentacle. Then it stings them and drags them down for feasting and digestion. Some have evolved to look like 'interesting' rocks which attract more attention from animals and sophont species and - while deadly - have become collectors items.

Arcturan Mega-Shrew

Close Defence: 13

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: None.

Hit Dice: 5 (22hp)

Initiative: +1

Movement: 12m.

Attacks: 1/+1

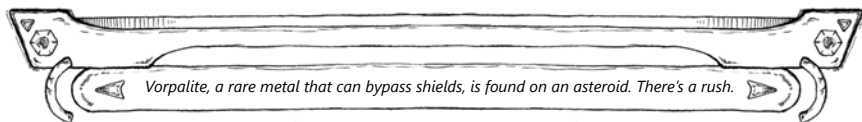
Damage: 1d6 bite

Saves: 5, Reflex 7

Traits: Fast, Acute Sense of Smell, Tail, Foot-hands

Skills: Climb 2

A gigantic mouse-like creature the Arcturan Mega-Shrew can be tamed but is usually found on agricultural worlds living in trees and burrows and wreaking havoc on crops and small animals. The shrews can be vicious and dangerous when cornered and are surprisingly nimble and fast - given their size.



Vorpalite, a rare metal that can bypass shields, is found on an asteroid. There's a rush.



Arboreal Jaspering Shrimp

Close Defence: 12

Ranged Defence: 12

Armour: 1d6

Hit Dice: 6 (27hp)

Initiative: +0

Movement: 10m per round (the creature generally only has one form of movement).

Attacks: 1/+1

Damage: 1d12 claw

Saves: 5

Traits: Natural Weapons x2, Natural Armour, Amphibious.

Skills: Climb 2

A huge crustacean, the arboreal jaspering shrimp breeds and lives mostly in water but leaves that safety in order to hunt. Climbing into the trees where it hides against the bark and amongst the foliage it awaits prey and then attacks it with its massive claws that whip out at several times the speed of sound and can snap open even tough armour. When prey is subdued the shrimp drags it back into the water to eat and to share with its fry.

The shrimp is adaptable and tough. Its sticky eggs are only the size of a pinhead and can survive total dehydration. They are, thus, spread easily between worlds.

Inspiration for aliens - and non-player characters - can be found everywhere.

Your cat does something stupid? Turn it into a creature for the game.

Weird smelling guy on the train? Charicature him.

Teacher or politician pissed you off? Put them into the game as a bad guy.

It doesn't matter even if you draw on TV, movies, comics, books or anything else that's out there. This is no longer called plagiarising, but rather 'making references' and your fellow geeks and nerds will get a kick out of spotting them.



Afterword

Writer's Comments

I'd been wanting to do a game in the *Heavy Metal* aesthetic for a while. It wasn't going to be this sort of game though. I was going to make something more rules-light and pulpy. Reading *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* convinced me, though, that emphasising the approach and aesthetic could be as powerful in some ways as creating a system from the ground up - especially if you used a system that many people are already familiar with.

Originally this whole game was just going to be an adventure - with some guidelines - for running as a science-fantasy game using the *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* rules but after a *Kickstarter* for that adventure failed - despite garnering a lot of support and a wedge of potential cash - going for it as a fully independent game seemed like a no-brainer.

Of course, I couldn't resist fiddling with the rules and what you have here is the result. Something that has all sorts of optional bells and whistles and, hopefully, inspires a Games Master to create the kind of high adventure and surreal weirdness suited to the material that inspired it.

Machinations of the Space Princess is - rules wise - open source, so you can create whatever the hell you like for it.

If you want the 'seal of approval' send me a copy of what you plan to publish and I'll give you the yay or nay and a nice little graphic to show that it is 'Grim approved'. Lets get a community going around the game and the world, visualised by Satine's brilliant art.

Grim

2013

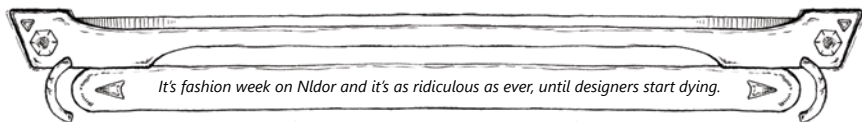
Artist Comments

Satine's been a joy to work with. Her relentless enthusiasm acts like a creative bulldozer, pushing everything else before it. She's not so much on making with the words type stuff, that's my job, but without her involvement I doubt this project would ever have gotten finished.

Satine says:

"Working on this project was so fun! I love Sci Fi but usually just end up working on Fantasy stuff. This really got me imagining my perfect sexy sci fi world and what the aliens would be like. Apparently they're very colorful!"

I hope we end up working together again someday!





Reference

Sample Races

Humans

Humans can be found everywhere in the galaxy, like rats. They breed fast, adapt well and use technology, religion, politics and anything else they can lay their hands on in order to live in all kinds of conditions and societies. Many other races simply cannot comprehend how humanity is so successful or how it comes in such a bewildering array of different appearances and societies.

Humans are admired - and feared - for their tenacity and adaptability.

Humans range between four feet and eight feet in height.

Humans have bare skin apart from tufts of hair on the head, face, armpits and genital area. This hair can be any colour but is more typically grey, white, brown, black, orange or yellow.

Humans have the 'Adaptable' Trait three times, providing them with +3 Skill Points at character creation.

Urlanth Female

Urlanth women are members of a privileged class. Women in the Urlanth culture hold all the rights to property and rule and take to it with natural ease. All their leaders are women, all decisions are taken by women.

The Urlanth Matriarchy ruled uncountable systems for a great many cycles before their collapse. No clear successor has emerged and the empire has declined into civil war between the 99 princesses vying for the absent throne.

Urlanth women range between five and seven feet in height.

Urlanth women are hairless save for the tops of their heads and very, very fine, sensitive hairs all over their skin that are virtually invisible.

Urlanth women have blue skin, ranging from a light sky-blue to almost black.

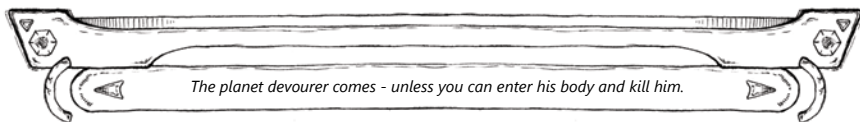
Urlanth women's hair has the same shade range as their skin.

Urlanth women can only get pregnant by choice and can select the sex of their child.

Urlanth Women have the Adaptable trait twice and the Beautiful trait once. Their Comeliness is raised by +1 and they start with two additional skills at character creation.

Urlanth Male

Urlanth males are the workhorses of the empire. There are something like ten times as many Urlanth men than women, despite the attritions of war and risky work.





Urlanth menfolk are driven to prove themselves worthy of selection as a mate through martial, business and other forms of prowess. This makes them intensely competitive and capable of taking enormous risks to prove themselves.

Most Urlanth men continue to serve their princesses though a breakout fleet of male liberationists is seeking to change the order of their society and carve out a male-led future.

Urlanth men range between six and eight feet in height.

Urlanth men are hairless save for the tops of their heads. They lack the sensitive hairs of the Urlanth women.

Urlanth men have blue skin, it tends to be slightly darker than that of the women.

Urlanth men have blue hair in the same colour range as their skin.

Urlanth men have the Adaptable trait twice, the Beautiful trait once and the Soldier trait. They gain two extra Skill Points at character creation, increase their Comeliness by +1. They also have natural weapons that do D6 damage (fists), +1 Strength, +1 Constitution, -1 Intelligence, -1 Wisdom and -4 Charisma.

Xef

The Xef are a race of mildly psychic, vaguely humanoid beings. They are made up of a semi-organic, semi-solid 'gas' that assumes a vaguely humanoid shape contained within a telekinetic field.

They evolved from swarm-life on Xadrin, a world of dense and complex gases and vapours where much of the life has low-level psychic capabilities. Xef tend to be philosophical and reactionary and rarely take the initiative.

Xef take up a volume of around 1.5 cubic metres.

Xef are just barely opaque and can be tinted almost any colour.

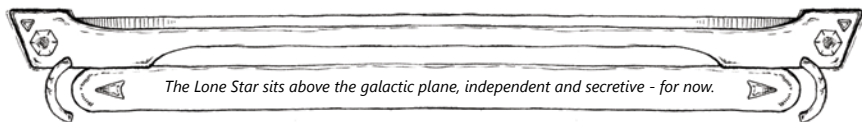
Xef have the Adaptable trait once and the Air trait. They start with one additional skill point at character creation and gain +1 Dexterity and +2 to their Reflex save.

Kattimah

The Kattimah are a squat race of mammalian humanoids with oily, thick skin, deep set eyes and a permanently angry expression, no matter what they're actually feeling. The Kattimah come from a high-gravity world replete with toxic metals and chemicals where life is hardscrabble and dangerous. The Kattimah retain adaptations from their past meant to protect them from Kattimah's apex predators (now extinct). Many Kattimah retain a racial phobia of flying creatures.

Kattimah range from three to four feet in height and are extremely squat and broad shouldered.

Kattimah skin is covered in a rainbow, oily sheen. One colour is usually more dominant though all skin is brown beneath.





Kattimah are covered in thin, glass-like spines that end in bulbs. These can stick into an enemy or be used to spray toxic gas, the result of Kattimah digestion.

Kattimah can spray a cloud of toxic gas over two metres requiring a Toughness save or the taking of D4 damage. Their spines will also stick anyone who hits them in close combat but fails a Reflex save, causing D4 damage. Kattimah are also adaptable, gaining +1 Skill point at character creation.

Hesk

The Hesk live in the polar regions of their world, a world of high spin and a runaway greenhouse effect that has wiped out its equatorial life. The Hesk themselves produce an extreme amount of heat from their body-chemistry in a reflection of their world's status. Unrepentant polluters and technologists the Hesk view intelligent life as being more important than any other life and do not so much terraform as desecrate. With a reputation for selfishness and metaphorical as well as literal hot-bloodedness the Hesk are a big presence in galactic corporations.

Hesk range from four to six feet in height and are thin with angular, rather human-like features.

Hesk skin is ruddy and constantly flaking pinkish flakes of skin. A side effect of their body chemistry.

Hesk are bald, but wear hats and wigs as a fashion statement.

Hesk have one nostril.

Hesk start with two additional Skill Points at character creation. They take half damage from heat based attacks and double from cold based attacks.

Sample Weapons & Armour

Armour	Protection	Defence	Cost
Ultralight	1	-	10
Very Light	1d2	-	20
Light	1d3	-	50
Medium	1d4	-	100
Heavy	1d6	-1	200
Very Heavy	1d8	-1	500
Ultra Heavy	1d10	-2	1000
Juggernaut	1d12	-3	2500

SpanCorp Stealhsuit

Protection 1, Penalty 0, Cost 65

Active Camouflage (one Stealth re-roll per encounter)

Camouflage: Urban, Desert, Jungle, Woodland, Grassland +1 Stealth skill in these environs.

A 'spray on' latex-like suit that provides excellent stealth, but poor protection.

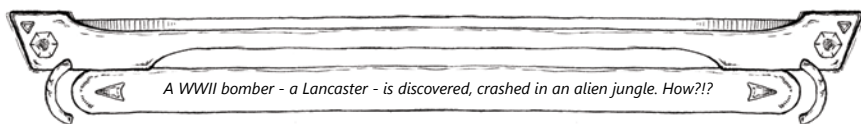
Fauxdry Military Concepts Modular Combat Armour

Protection 1d4, Penalty 0, Cost: 410

Camouflage: (Pick one environment).

Gunner: +1 Ranged Defence.

Life Support





A simple set of carapace body armour that can double as a basic space suit. Additional options are available, this represents the basic and commonly available set.

Shai-Han Honour Suit

Protection 1d12, Defence Penalty 0, Cost 32,500

Battle Computer: +1 Initiative

Power Assist: 3

Power Enhancement: +3 Power, +3 Melee Damage

A heavy suit of battle-scarred and rune-encrusted armour. The Shai-Han maintain the same suits for generations, repairing and upgrading them as needed. For a non Shai-Han to have one is a grave dishonour.

Forcefield	Protection	Cost
Light Deflector	+1	5
Medium Deflector	+2	50
Heavy Deflector	+3	500
Light Absorption	5hp	10
Medium Absorption	10hp	100
Heavy Absorption	20hp	1000

Small One-handed Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D4	1gp
Martial	D6	2gp
Deadly	D8	5gp

Cocodan Clawpick

Damage D6, Cost 7

Armour Defeating: Reduce armour die by 1.

Double Attack, Vicious

A small, two-pronged 'pick' that somewhat resembles a chicken-foot. The tips are made from superdense material and able to tear into and through armour.

Fauxdry Security Concepts Stun Baton

Damage D6, Cost 17

Concealable

Damage Type: Volt

Shocking

A short baton with a button-like tip, used for beating, jabbing and shocking people.

Xicillix Fuso-Knux

Damage D20, Cost 60.

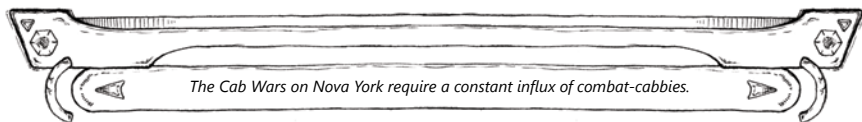
Armour Defeating: Reduce armour die by 3 types.

Vicious x3

A deadly, flaring knuckle duster. Prolonged use has been known to cause bone-cancer in the hands.

Medium One-handed Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D6	5gp
Martial	D8	10gp
Deadly	D10	20gp





Urlanth Officer's Dress Sabre

Damage D6, Cost 6.25

Thrown

A short, curved blade with a heavy tip the dress sabre is designed for use in ship-board combat and can also be thrown over-arm with surprising accuracy.

GIBS Grind Glove

Damage D20, Cost 120

Armour Defeating: Reduce armour die type by 1.

Vicious x3

A heavy, armoured glove whose palm is covered in rotating, grinding and sawing blades. The Grind Glove can double as a personal 'buckler' physical shield, increasing Close Combat defence by +1.

iBlade Hardlight App

Damage D10, Cost 180

Armour Defeating: Reduce armour die type by 1

Damage Type: Light.

Concealable

An installable app that produce a 'hard light' hologram of a blade which can then be used to stab people. It does not manifest until projected which makes it a perfect stealth weapon.

Large Two-handed Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Cost
Simple	D8	20gp
Martial	D10	50gp
Deadly	D12	100gp

B'Gran Piezo-Club

Damage D8, Cost 70

Damage Type: Bludgeon/Volt

Shocking

A stone club studded with B'gran ultra-quartz. On impact these crystals release a jolting shock of electricity.

ZeroOne Cyberclan Bakakami Extendo-Staff

Damage D10, Cost 350

Concealable

Double Attack

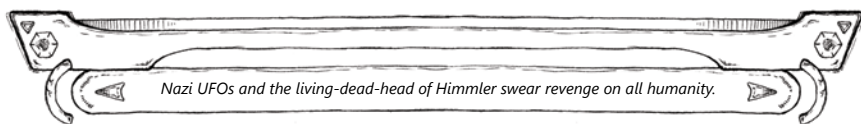
A pneumatic staff that can be extended from a small casing somewhat smaller than a cola can.

Northstar Axis Panzerblade

Damage D12, Cost 1300

Armour Defeating: Reduce armour die type by six steps.

A two-handed sword with a double-edged blade the Panzerblade is intended for smashing through power armour and there are even apocryphal tales of this massive blade cleaving through tanks.





Pistols

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D4	Point Blank	18	25gp
Medium Calibre	D6	Close	16	50gp
High Calibre	D8	Medium	14	100gp

Carbines

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D4	Close	18	50gp
Medium Calibre	D6	Medium	16	100gp
High Calibre	D8	Long	14	200gp

Rifles/Shotguns

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D6	Close	18	100gp
Medium Calibre	D8	Medium	16	200gp
High Calibre	D10	Long	14	500gp

Heavy Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Range	Ammo Save	Cost
Small Calibre	D8	Medium	14	200gp
Medium Calibre	D10	Long	12	500gp
High Calibre	D12	Extreme	10	1000gp

ACS Gigantor Revolver

Damage D12, Range Medium, Ammo Save 12, Cost 675

Vicious x2

Reduced Capacity

An enormous revolver favoured by people who know nothing about guns or combat.

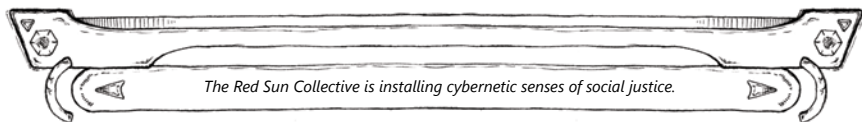
Also a big favourite of the galactic media.

Bankat Rota-Canone

Damage D6, Range Medium, Ammo Save 10, Cost 700

Autofire x3 (four dice/targets)

A submachinegun made up of many small, rotary barrels with a ruinous rate of fire. Its ominous hum as the barrels spin up can be quite intimidating.





Carstairs-Z'bri Flock-Smasher

Damage D12, Range Long, Ammo Save 0,

Cost 2,625

Explosive: 2m radius.

Reduced Capacity (single shot)

Vicious x1

An enormous double-barrelled shotgun whose effect is akin to that of a shrapnel landmine or hand grenade going off. It must be reloaded after every shot.

Paree-Dakkar-Dakkar Autolaser

Damage D8, Range Medium, Ammo Save 20 (infinite), Cost 1800

Autofire x1 (two dice/targets)

Damage Type: Light(laser)

Overload (2d8 damage) - burns out power unit.

A heavy autolaser, the PDDA makes up for its bulk and weight with its sustained autofire and its emergency overload capability.

Sample Ships

Fighter/Hopper

Crew: 1

Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total

Scale: 2

Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 10

Speed: Fast

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 5

Reflexes Save: 8

Power Save: 5

Cost: 2,000

Frigate/Transport

Crew: 10

Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total

Scale: 4

Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 8

Speed: Moderate

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 7

Cost: 10,000

Cruiser/Heavy Transport

Crew: 30

Attack: +0 bonus or +5 total

Scale: 6

Hit Points: 5HD (22 hp)

Armour: 1d4

Defence: 6

Speed: Slow

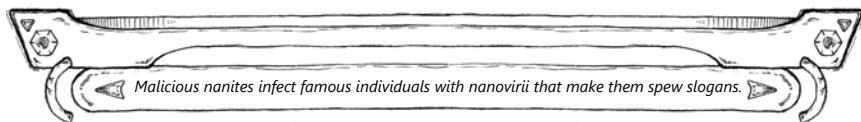
Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 8

Cost: 50,000





Battleship/Bulk Transport

Crew: 50
Attack: +0 bonus or +6 total
Scale: 8
Hit Points: 6HD (27 hp)
Armour: 1d4
Defence: 4
Speed: Crawling
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 8
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 8
Cost: 250,000

Zippy-Incorporated Fast Courier

Crew: 1
Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total
Scale: 2
Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 13
Speed: Racing
Weapons: D4 simple defence laser Scale 1
Toughness Save: 5
Reflexes Save: 8
Power Save: 5
Cost: 8,425
Can't Land
Faster
Foil Hull
Deflector Shield +3
Basic Quarters

A flimsy but fast craft the ZIFC is designed to zip from planet to planet and transmit and pick up data. It is only meant to make occasional stops at orbiting stations for its singular crew member to get some R&R.

Cympulse Light Trader

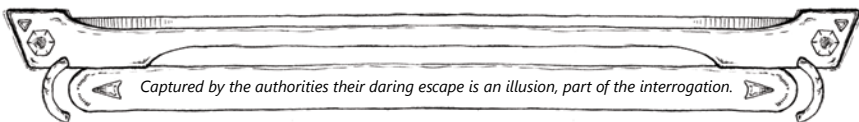
Crew: 2
Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total
Scale: 4
Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)
Armour: 1d6
Defence: 8
Speed: Moderate
Weapons: Defence Laser D6 Scale 4.
Toughness Save: 7
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 7
Cost: 40,400
Armour Plating x1
Cargo: 200,000 tons.
Automatics x8
Defence Laser

A two-man trading ship with decent cargo storage. Tough and capable the Cympulse is one of the most common trading ships to be found in the more lawless areas.

Sample Vehicles

Personal Transport

Crew: 1
Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total
Scale: 1
Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 11
Speed: Fast
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 5
Reflexes Save: 8
Power Save: 5
Cost: 500





Group Transport

Crew: 1/4
Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total
Scale: 2
Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 10
Speed: Moderate
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 7
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 7
Cost: 1,000

Cargo Transport

Crew: 2/15
Attack: +0 bonus or +5 total
Scale: 3
Hit Points: 5HD (22 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 6
Speed: Slow
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 7
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 8
Cost: 2,000

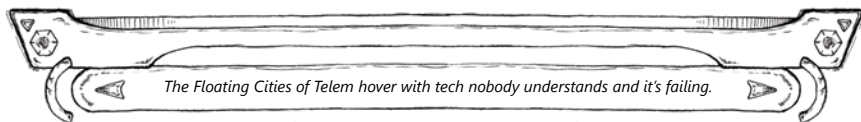
Oversize

Crew: 10/50
Attack: +0 bonus or +6 total
Scale: 4
Hit Points: 6HD (27 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 8
Speed: Crawling
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 8
Reflexes Save: 5
Power Save: 8
Cost: 4,000

Zootayanaha 1000SR Hoverbike

Crew: 1
Attack: +1 bonus or +3 total
Scale: 1
Hit Points: 3HD (13 hp)
Armour: 0
Defence: 11
Speed: Racing
Weapons: None
Toughness Save: 5
Reflexes Save: 8
Power Save: 5
Cost: 3,00
Faster
Killer Paint Job (Street)
Overthrust

A horrendously overpowered 'superbike' the Zoot is a fashion statement, especially on frontier worlds. It is built entirely for speed with little regard to safety or manoeuvrability.





Jasper Mundano

Crew: 1/4

Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total

Scale: 2

Hit Points: 4HD (18 hp)

Armour: D4

Defence: 11

Speed: Moderate

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 7

Cost: 3,500

Armour Plating x1

Basic shield

The Jasper Mundano is a typical suburban ground vehicle. A simple lozenge with wheels the Mundano is prized amongst the relatively well-to-do for its relative levels of protection from its strong chassis and simple, civilian defence shield.

NSA Hilde APC

Crew: 0/5

Attack: +0 bonus or +4 total

Scale: 2

Hit Points: 5HD (22 hp)

Armour: 1d8

Defence: 13

Speed: Moderate

Weapons: Scale 2 D12 Cannon.

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 7

Cost: 11,850

Armour Plating x3

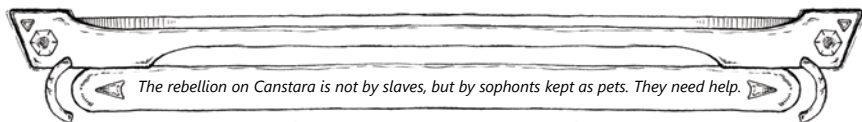
Automatic Systems (Self-drive)

Shields x3

Solid

Travel mode - water (surface)

A standard troop-transport for the Northstar Axis its hover-systems allow it to traverse land and liquid with relative ease. It has no pilot but does come equipped with a rather limited and literal minded AI which will transport the five man units within at the behest of their ranking officer.





Chubb Podular Transport Truck

Crew: 1/16

Attack: +0 bonus or +5 total

Scale: 3

Hit Points: 6HD (27 hp)

Armour: D4

Defence: 6

Speed: Slow

Weapons: None

Toughness Save: 7

Reflexes Save: 5

Power Save: 10

Cost: 9,100

Armour Plating x1

Automatic Systems

Cargo Storage 6 tons.

Improved Power Save x2

Solid

A solid and well-loved truck in use on many frontier and interior worlds alike. The back pod is interchangeable and can be replaced with refrigerated, heated or seated accommodation. Chubbs end up used for everything from school buses to troop transportation.

Random Trait Generation

If you can't decide or end up paralysed by the sheer amount of choice available when making up a character then you can, instead, choose to roll randomly and then try to make some sense of it. You'll roll a number of traits according to this table:

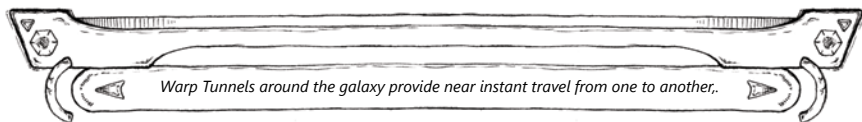
Roll 2d6	Traits
2	1
3	1
4	2
5	2
6	3
7	3
8	3
9	4
10	4
11	5
12	1+ the result of your next roll

Don't forget that once you have four traits you start taking penalties to your Attributes. When it comes to working out what your traits actually are, you roll in the following, much larger table. Roll a D6 first for each trait:

1-3 Column One, 4-6 Column Two.



Roll D100	Column One	Column Two
1-27	Adaptable	Adaptable
28	Dart	Cybernetics
29	Dead Flesh	Colony
30	Defensive Cloud	Combat Reflexes
31	Earth	Confident
32	Echo-Location	Consort
33	Educated	Cunning
34	Electrosense	Chemical Feast
35	Electroshock	Chitin
36	Emotive	Code Body
37	Enduring	Coils
38	Energistic	Cold Blooded
39	Engineered	Bioluminescent
40	Engulf	Boiling
41	Excess	Brother Machine
42	Extra Action	Camouflage
43	Fanatical	Cannot Move
44	Fashionable	Charming
45	Fast Metabolism	Air
46	Fast	Ambush
47	Faz	Ascetic
48	Fear Attack	Avatar
49	Fearful	Beautiful
50	Fire Breathing	3D Thinking
51	Fire	Acute Hearing
52	Fleet	Acute Sense of Smell
53	Flexible	Rocky
54	Flight	Scales
55	Flowering	Sealed System
56	Foot-Hands	Self-Protecting
57	Frozen	Self-Sustaining
58	Fruiting	Separate
59	Fuel-Eater	Serene:
60	Fur	Sexy
61	Gasbag	Shapeshifting
62	Goo Body	Shell



Warp Tunnels around the galaxy provide near instant travel from one to another.



63	Graceful	Slow Metabolism
64	Gregarious	Slow
65	Heat-Feeder	Small
66	Herd Mentality	Sneaky
67	Hi-G Adapted	Soldier
68	Host Powers	Sonic Boom
69	Immaterial	Spines
70	Infrared Vision	Stalker
71	Interface	Stone Body
72	Intimate of Nature	Strong Stomach
73	Intrusive	Strong Willed
74	Keen Sight	Strong
75	Killer Instinct	Survival
76	Large	Swimming
77	Light Body:	Tail
78	Limited Shapeshifting	Tech-Savant
79	Linguist	Tech-Zen
80	Live On	Tentacles
81	Mind Control	Thoughtful
82	Mindful	Tough
83	Narrow	Tourist
84	Natural Weapons	Toxic Gas
85	Night Vision	True Shapeshifting
86	No Vitals	Unusual Chemistry
87	Non-Combat	UV Vision
88	Pack Mentality	Venom
89	Painless	Very Strong
90	Paralytic	Very Tough
91	Poison Resistant	Vibration Sense
92	Poisonous	Warning Sign
93	Power Up	Fighter
94	Psi Power	Wary
95	Psi Talent	Water Breathing
96	Queen	Water
97	Radiation Resistant	Weapon
98	Rapid Reaction	Woo
99	Regeneration	Worker
100	Resilient	Zero G



Appearance Table

Random Alien Appearance

While the Race Traits a character possesses immediately provides some ideas as to their appearance, sometimes it's simply fun to roll to determine skin or fur colour, or to see what kind of ears they possess.

Players and GMs may use the following optional tables to roll for any or all elements of appearance, or select from or use them as inspiration as desired. All of the traits, however odd-sounding, are entirely cosmetic, providing a character with no advantages or drawbacks beyond an exotic appearance. After all, in *Machinations of the Space Princess*, even the most human-like aliens often possess strangely-shaped ears, odd skin colours, or other visual distinctions.

Random Color (d20)

Use to determine colour of skin, eyes, and hair as appropriate. Shade is your choice.

1. Red
2. Orange
3. Yellow
4. Green
5. Blue
6. Indigo
7. Purple
8. Brown
9. Black
10. White
11. Gold
12. Silver
13. Copper
- 14-18. Blend – roll twice and blend
- 19-20. Metallic – metallic version of colour

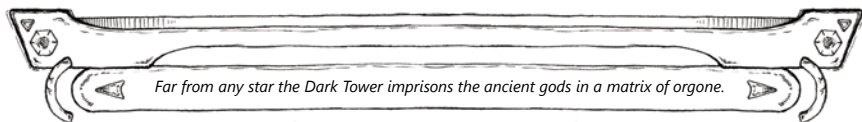
Skin Style (d20)

1. Accented – skin is one colour, lightly accented here and there (such as eyelids and lips) with a second colour
- 2-6. Basic – body is entirely one colour
7. Graduated – body to extremities (body is one colour, shading to second colour at extremities)
8. Graduated – head to toe (head is one colour, shading to second colour at the feet)
- 9-15. Human-like – in the normal human range
16. Opalescent – skin is single colour but with rainbow-like sheen
17. Scaled – skin is single coloured layer of supple scales (no extra protection)
18. Scaled – skin is single colour layer of supple scales edged with second colour (no extra protection)
19. Spotted – skin one colour, spots another
20. Striped – skin one colour, stripes another

Number of Eyes (d12)

Arrange on upper front of head to taste; no giving yourself eyes in your palms or back of your head!

- 1-2. One
- 3-8. Two
- 9-10. Three
11. Four
12. Five





Eye Style (d20)

1. Compound
2. Crystal-like, polished or faceted
- 3-8. Human-like – in the normal human range
- 9-11. Single colour – no visible iris or pupil
- 12-13. Single colour – faintly glowing
- 14-15. Single colour – metallic
16. Slit-pupilled
- 17-19. Two colour – schlera one colour, iris/pupil another
20. Two colour – main colour with faintly glowing iris/pupil of second colour

Ear Style (d20)

1. Antennae – long and curling
2. Antennae – small upright and “ogre-ish”
3. Antennae – small and pointed
- 4-6. Earholes with no exterior ear
7. Fin-like
- 8-12. Human-like – in the normal human range
- 13-14. No visible ears
- 15-16. Pointed – long
- 17-18. Pointed – small
19. Round – large
20. Round – small

Hair Style (d20)

- 1-2. Covered in short felt-like fur
- 3-4. Crest of bone or cartilage and skin
- 5-7. Hairless
- 8-12. Human-like – in the normal human range
13. Lion-like mane
- 14-15. Mohawk-like crest of hair
- 16-17. Shaggy pelt
- 18-20. Tentacle-like tendrils (1d6)

Other Traits (d20)

Roll 1d2 of these if desired; too many makes your character a freak rather than unique!

1. Decorative horns – crown of small horns
2. Decorative horns – 1d4 small horns
3. Fanged – upper canines are somewhat long and decorative
4. Fingers/toes are notably long and slender
5. Forehead ridged
6. Hands/feet have three large fingers/toes
7. Hands/feet have an extra finger/thumb/toe
8. Legs are digitigrade
9. Nose – decorated with small ridges
10. Nose – not visible at all
11. Nose – only nostril slits
12. Shaggy fetlocks on forearms and lower legs
13. Tailed – big and bushy
14. Tailed – long, elegant and hairless
15. Tailed – short and stubby, fluffy optional
16. Tattooed – single obvious tattoo of single colour, e.g. a large black star covering one eye
17. Tattooed – whole body covered in tattoos of single colour
18. Tattooed – whole body covered in faintly-glowing tattoos of single colour
19. Tongue – forked
20. Tusked – small decorative tusks adorn lower jaw



Live Fast! – Optional Carousing Tables

In *Machinations of the Space Princess*, any money not spent following a session is assumed to have been spent carousing. This optional table gives Players the opportunity to roll percentile to see how their characters spent the bulk of their left over money and what happened as a result. The details are largely left in the creative hands of the games master and can provide many adventure possibilities. For the sake of ease of gameplay, the games master may also rule that a given result applies to all of the PCs.

1-2: Acquiring Treasure!? [d4] Through charm, luck, theft, or a lucky gambling win, you acquired...

- 1: the coordinates to an undetermined treasure!
- 2: the deed to a barely functioning derelict spacestation!
- 3: the deed to an asteroid!
- 4: the deed to a seedy and violent dive!

3-8: Battling! [d10] You were involved in a...

- 1-8: bar-room brawl! Make a Toughness Save or start the next session with d2 less hit points (minimum 1).
- 9-10: shoot-out! Make a Reflexes Save or start the next session with d6 less hit points (minimum 1).

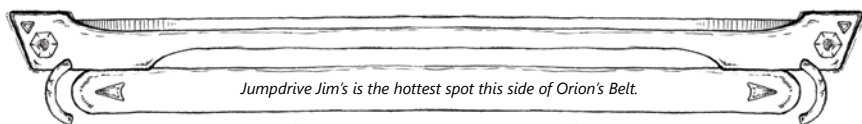
9-10: Being Captured! [d6] You awoke imprisoned in...

- 1: a perfumed pleasure palace! Someone really likes you...
- 2: a slaver's pen, possibly bound off-planet!
- 3: a space pirate starship! You've been press-ganged or held for ransom!
- 4: a zoo of curiosities!
- 5: jail! What crime are you accused of?
- 6: someone's private dungeon!

11-16: Blindingly Intoxicated! You indulged beyond all normal bounds! Make a Toughness Save or suffer a -1 penalty on all actions for the next session of play while you suffer the residual effects of mild intermittent hallucinations and a headache no amount of painkillers can seem to ease.

17-20: Boasting Of Future Exploits! [d4] You boasted, in front of all and sundry, that you would...

- 1: bring an end to local space pirate predations!
 - 2: clear out a dangerous spacehulk!
 - 3: steal a famous and expensive item from a public building!
 - 4: take down a local crime lord!
- Locals probably consider you a potential hero; your target may take a dim view should word reach them, however...





21-24: Causing Criminal Damage! [d4]

Deliberately or accidentally, you...

- 1: defaced a local landmark! Fine: 2d10 x 20gp
- 2: smashed some windows! Fine: d6 x 20gp
- 3: started a fire! Fine: d10 x 100gp
- 4: were caught painting graffiti on a public building! Fine: d10 x 10gp

If you are unable to pay your fine, you face criminal proceedings and likely incarceration!

25-26: Challenging Others! [d6]

You challenged someone to a duel (blade, handgun, or unarmed, your choice) for some slight while drunk, and...

- 1-2: they're d4 levels lower than you!
 - 3-4: they're the same level as you!
 - 5-6: they're d4 levels higher than you!
- Now you're sober and the duel is imminent, the idea may not seem so appealing...

27-28: Discovering Unexpected Possessions! [d6]

You don't remember acquiring it, but you awoke to find yourself in possession of...

- 1: a truly bizarre piece of exotech that does something unexpected!
- 2: a chip containing sensitive information!
- 3: a piece of costume jewelry!
- 4: a piece of real jewelry!
- 5: a random melee weapon!
- 6: a random ranged weapon!

The games master will determine its value, as well as if you purchased it, won it, stole it, or it was planted on you...

29-30: Donating To Others!?

[d4] It turns out you're not a complete bastard after all!

- You donated most of your money to...
- 1: a con artist pretending to be a local with a sob story!
 - 2: a local charity (Save the Space Whales)!
 - 3: a local with a sob story!
 - 4: the local poor!

31-36: Embarrassing Yourself! [d10]

You were playing it cool when...

- 1-2: you belched or broke wind in spectacular fashion!
 - 3-4: you emptied your bladder or soiled yourself!
 - 5-6: you fell over unconscious!
 - 7-8: you suffered a wardrobe malfunction!
 - 9-10: you threw up all over yourself!
- Make a Charm Save or you'll find that you've become a local laughingstock.

37-44: Enjoying Company! [d12]

You woke up next to...

- 1: a corpse!
- 2: a dead animal (or part of one at least)!
- 3: a living animal!
- 4: a random Player Character!
- 5-10: someone of your favored gender and physical configuration!*
- 11: someone who claims you married them!*
- 12: the spouse/son/daughter/favourite concubine of an important, very protective and unforgiving local NPC (roll as in Insulting Others!)*

* Make a Charm or Looks Save (your choice). If successful, they were attractive. If not, roll a d6. 1-3: plain, but the beer goggles helped, 4-5: ugly, 6: pass me a bucket!



45-48: Experiencing Befuddlement! [d12]

You awoke to find...

- 1: all of your body hair depilated; eyebrows, head, the whole lot!
- 2: yourself in a zoo enclosure!
- 3: yourself in a starship's hold, possibly bound elsewhere!
- 4-9: yourself facedown in the gutter or sewer!
- 10: yourself on another planet!
- 11: yourself on a rooftop!
- 12: yourself dyed a random colour! It'll wear off in a few weeks. Probably.

49-56: Experiencing Theft! [d4] While you were otherwise occupied, some utter bastich stole...

- 1: all of your clothes!
- 2: your most-obvious weapon
- 3: your most-treasured possession!
- 4: your single most expensive-looking belonging!

57-62: Gaining Body Art! [d6] You spent your money on a tattoo that is...

- 1: awesome and enhanced (animated, glowing, or colour-changing, for example)!
- 2-3: good!
- 4-5: fine, but has a minor flaw some might notice!
- 6: awful or has an obvious and embarrassing flaw!

63-70: Gambling! [d8] You bet heavily on...

- 1: a bar-room arm wrestling contest!
- 2: a bar-room card game!
- 3: a bar-room drinking or eating contest!
- 4: a beast fight!
- 5: a beast race!
- 6: a vehicle race!
- 7: a hyper-wrestling bout!
- 8: an arena combat!

Roll a d6 to see if you were lucky. 1-3: You lost, 4-5: You kept your bet and gained d10 x 10gp, 6: You kept your bet and gained d6 x 100gp!

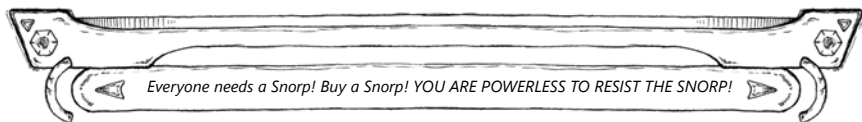
71-72: Gathering Followers! [d4] You've somehow picked up a devoted follower in the form of...

- 1: a dirty urchin!
- 2: a stray alien beast!
- 3: an odd little robot!
- 4: an unhinged cultist who believes you're a prophet or incarnated god or something!

73-78: Indulging Poor Taste! [d10] You spent your money on a truly gaudy but otherwise unremarkable...

- 1-3: garment!
- 4-6: piece of jewelry, costume or real!
- 7: random weapon, real or replica!
- 8-10: knicknack or decoration, such as a starship dashboard bobblehead doll with semi-precious eyes!

What the item is, and its actual value and construction, will be determined by the games master based on the character's tastes and how much they spent on carousing.





79-82: Insulting Others! [D6] You loudly and publicly insulted a...

- 1: local crime lord!
- 2: local gang leader!
- 3: local government official!
- 4: local law enforcement leader!
- 5: local noble!
- 6: local thug!

You may or may not have done it to their face, but they will make your life very difficult and potentially dangerous if you remain.

83-84: Investing Wisely!? [d6] You invested the bulk of your money on a space merchant's venture set to return in 2D6 months, shipping goods or livestock such as square pigs, and it...

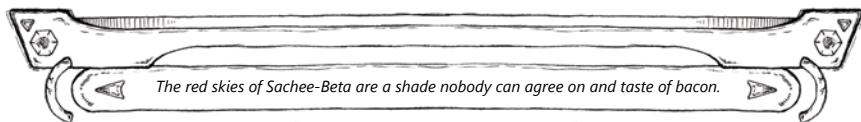
- 1-3: actually succeeds! You'll enjoy a return of $d10 \times 100gp$ should you still be alive!
- 4: ends in disaster as the merchant is lost in space or ransacked by space pirates!
- 5: simply failed financially!
- 6: was a con!

85-88: Running Up Debts! You spent all of your money on ridiculously expensive drinks, foodstuffs, and companions. In fact, you far spent more than you could afford, and now owe a local crime lord $d6 \times 100gp$. He charges 100% interest per month, and we're sure he'd never send bounty hunters after you...

89-96: Showing Off! [d10] You tried to show off! Roll to see what you did and make an appropriate Save as indicated to see if you impressed others with your style (or luck) or ended up looking like a laughable blowhard!

- 1: arm wrestling! (Power)
- 2: drinking a competitor under the table! (Toughness)
- 3: eating more bar snacks or live food than a competitor without puking! (Toughness)
- 4: juggling random objects, such as knives and shot glasses! (Reflexes)
- 5: leaping from table to table across the bar without falling or knocking over folk's drinks! (Reflexes)
- 6: letting random folks punch you and shrugging it off! (Toughness)
- 7: lifting random heavy objects, such as barstools and the patrons sat upon them! (Power)
- 8: regaling folks with exaggerated tales of your exploits! (Charm)
- 9: winning a game of five-finger (or however many digits you've got) fillet! (Reflexes)
- 10: winning a game of multi-level 3-D holo chess! (Logic)

97-00: Roll Twice, you party animal!





Species Traits

3D Thinking: Most ground-dwelling species tend to think in terms of two dimension, flat planes. For whatever reason your species has a much more intuitive grasp of three dimensional movement. This may be due to flight or swimming capabilities or for some other evolutionary reason. You naturally think in three dimensions which makes you a consummate pilot. Gain a +1 Bonus to your Pilot skill.

Acute Hearing: You may have large, multiple or sensitive ears. You can hear noises higher and lower than most and at greater distances with greater clarity.

Acute Sense of Smell: You have evolved a very powerful sense of smell. Prey animals may develop this as an early warning system, predator animals may develop this to track prey. Scavengers may develop this to find suitable meals at long distances. Other creatures may develop a strong sense of smell for avoiding poisons or detecting ripeness. You can detect the tiniest variations in scent and even track people by it. Your Survival and Search skills start one point higher.

Adaptable: The mentality of your species is flexible. They adapt using technology and different ways of thinking, which is a much more speedy means of adapting to new situations than waiting for evolution or genetic engineering. +1 Skill Point that can be spent anywhere.

Air: Your species is quasi-mystical, invested with powers and capabilities that resonate with the qualities and movement of gas (air). +1 Dexterity, +2 Reflex Save. You are surrounded by wind and may seem partly transparent.

Ambush: Your species has evolved to strike from cover to take prey or has evolved in a dangerous environment where stealth and speed have great survival utility. Your Sneak Attack skill is raised by +1 for free.

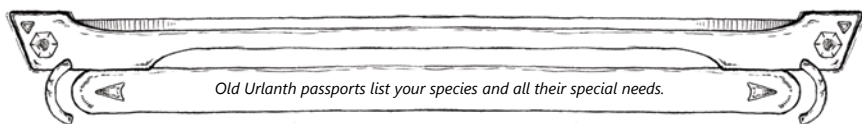
Ascetic: At a deep level you are designed or habituated to make do with less. Begin play with a free point in the Investment skill.

Avatar: You can pair up with a particular machine or ship and act as its Avatar. This is a permanent bond but anything you roll or do to do with that ship, vehicle or device is at +1 and can be done at a remote distance.

Beautiful: Intense sexual selection in your species or culture rates physical appearance very highly in importance. +1 Comeliness.

Bioluminescent: Your skin, specialist organs or a symbiotic organism can be stirred to give off a low level of light. You can cause yourself to glow, casting light up to five metres away.

Boiling: Your body chemistry takes place at a high (compared to most other species) temperature. You take half damage from heat-based attacks and double damage from cold-based attacks.





Brother Machine: You have an intuitive understanding of machines. Gain a boost of +1 to your Tinker skill.

Camouflage: Stealth has been important, historically, for your species. You can change to hide in many different kinds of terrain. Adaptive skin lets you change your colouration and even texture providing a +2 bonus to your Stealth skill when naked.

Cannot Move: Your species is rooted to the spot - without technological aid. Plenty of time to think, but a great deal of personal vulnerability. You have to take this trait and it means you cannot move unassisted. It counts in place of reducing an Attribute to take positive traits.

Charming: Social intensity and competition has made social skills pre-eminent in your species. +1 Charisma.

Chemical Feast: Your biology is unconventional and is able to make use of materials that most other species consider toxic. You eat noxious gases and substances rather than food.

Chitin: Your body is made of natural, jointed, armour plating giving you an insectoid appearance or that of a pangolin or armadillo. Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Code Body: You do not have a physical body per se. Your mind, your consciousness, your 'self' are pure information. Your mind exists separate from your body - which is a constructed artefact. You can survive the death of your body and 'restore from backup' into a new shell.

Coils: Your body is a weapon. You can entwine and crush your enemies or prey. Your grapple attacks gain a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. Trying to break free is penalised by -1.

Cold Blooded: You do not produce your own body heat and as such have a certain considered quality to your options and a biochemistry that slowly shifts gears as temperatures rise and fall. +1 to Will and Toughness Save.

Colony: You are not a single organism but rather a collection of smaller organisms. As with cells in a conventional organism your intelligence and feelings emerge from the interactions of all these tiny body-parts. Any attack that is not an area effect or ongoing damage (such as fire) can only ever do you a maximum of one Hit Point of damage. However, a loss of a part of you is a loss to the whole. For every 10 Hit Points you take you take a -1 penalty to every roll.

Combat Reflexes: In a hazardous and predatory environment speed of reaction earns survival. Your Initiative is increased by +2.



Confident: Social boldness and certitude has brought success to your species. In others it may be seen as arrogance but the confidence still gives you a resilient mind. +2 Will Save.

Consort: In a caste system the consort class is biologically and psychologically adapted as a companion, mate and protector of the 'queen'. A fertile male and companion to the queen. +1 Strength, +2 Constitution, -1 Intelligence, -1 Wisdom.

Cunning: Your species has adaptable tricks and good situational awareness that contributes to its survival. +1 Wisdom.

Cybernetics: You are enhanced and complemented by various mechanical and computational augmentations and enhancements. You may take this multiple times. Each time you take Cybernetics you get a free, basic, cybernetic augmentation (found in the equipment section).

Dart: You can grow sharp tools from your body which can be used for defence or attack. You can shoot a dart or quill from your flesh as a ranged attack with a range equal to your Strength in metres. It does D4 damage. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage and to increase the range by 2 metres each time.

Dead Flesh: You were, perhaps, once alive but you are no longer. The material that you are made of is dead, insensate and tough. Your Hit Points are doubled.

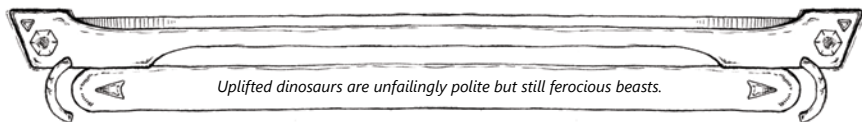
Defensive Cloud: Confusion can greatly aid the survival of a species and you can create your own confusion. Once per day you can release a cloud of ink, smoke, dust or similar to obscure you as if you were hiding in a smoke cloud.

Earth: You have a quasi-mystical connection to solid matter. +1 Constitution, Armour rolls are increased by +1. Your body is made of stone, craggy and tough.

Echo-Location: In the night or in darkness other means than sight may evolve in order to aid navigation or hunting. You can use sound to 'see' up to fifteen metres in all directions by sending out a pulse. This is not normally audible to other species.

Educated: Your species or culture invests great effort and great value in knowledge for its own sake. Spend a free skill point on a Lore skill.

Electrosense: In murk or where other senses fail the ability to pick up on electrical impulses is extremely helpful for hunting and survival. Even in total darkness you can sense electrical signals and patterns as though you could see them. Devices and the bioelectrical current in living things.





Electroshock: Specialised organs provide an unusual means of defence. You can build up and exert a powerful charge from your body. You can discharge an electric shock through your body. This is a Hand-to-Hand attack, resisted by a Toughness Save. If they fail they are stunned for 1d6 turns.

Emotive: Emotional closeness, openness and interconnectivity is valued in your civilisation. Instinct over reason. +1 Wisdom.

Enduring: Forbearance and toughness are necessary amongst your people to survive. Perhaps they travelled over great distances on foot in their evolutionary ancestry or withstood predation by endurance. +1 Constitution

Energetic: Your body is made up of self-sustaining fields and charges of energy, particles or pure energy. You take half damage from energy attacks and double damage from physical attacks (normal damage if you're immaterial).

Engineered: In the recent past your species has engaged in a process of refinement and improvement of their base genetic capabilities. Gain a +1 to any Attribute.

Engulf: Your body is plastic or you have an enormous mouth or specialised feeding organ that can envelop a target. You have a special hand-to-hand attack option. You can engulf a target which means you automatically hit every single turn with a hand to hand/natural weapon attack. Any attacks that hit the target also hit you.

Excess: You come from a society of plenty and conspicuous consumption. You - and most of your civilisation - are used to indulgence on a whim. Increase Constitution by +2 and reduce Wisdom by -1.

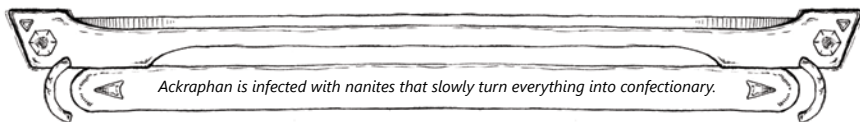
Extra Action: Your species has developed lightning reflexes or independent control of many limbs which enable you to make an extra attack - or similar action - each turn.

Fanatical: Your culture values absolute devotion to ideological or religious principles. +1 Will, +1 Constitution.

Fashionable: Dress, clothing, jewellery. In a secure and wealthy society fashion becomes a powerful statement of social worth and power and keeping on top of these trends pays dividends. +1 to Looks and Charm Saves.

Fast Metabolism: Your biology operates at a fast rate. This means your lifespan is reduced but you gain short term benefit in terms of physical capabilities. Your Dexterity is increased by +2 but you suffer a -5 penalty on Save rolls against poison and disease.

Fast: Being fleet of foot has advantage for both predator animals and prey animals. Your species is no exception. Your movement speed is 20% faster.





Faz: You have the ability to sense the motion, temperature and scent of the atmosphere around you and to interpret it with the same facility most species use sight and hearing. You can sense movement that disturbs that atmosphere ten metres in all directions if your antennae are exposed to the air.

Fear Attack: You have a powerful display or call designed to intimidate and terrify rivals or dangers. You can make a Charm save, once per encounter, to make a fear attack. Enemies within fifteen metres of you must make a Will save or flee.

Fearful: Perhaps your species is vulnerable to predation. You are constantly aware and on edge of risks to your physical wellbeing. Your Reflex and Will saves are raised by +1 each.

Fire Breathing: You have specialist organs capable of spraying a flammable fluid which is ignited by bioelectricity or a scraping organ that creates sparks. You can breathe a plume of fire up to five metres. This does D4 damage to anyone hit by it. They can make a Reflexes Save to dodge. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage.

Fire: You have a quasi-mystical connection to fire and your body exhibits a constant corona of flame. Your hand-to-hand attacks do D4 fire damage and anyone hitting you in close combat must make a toughness save or take D4 fire damage. You take half damage from heat based attacks and double damage from cold based attacks.

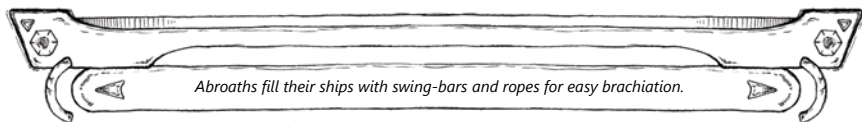
Fleet: Your nervous system is streamlined for speed and reaction as a general survival adaptation. +1 Dexterity.

Flexible: Your body is extremely flexible and resilient. Perhaps rather than bones your body is supported by cartilage or rings of muscle. Your Reflex and Toughness saves are increased by 1.

Flight: Most typically via wings but also potentially via other possibilities, your species is capable of taking to the air. You can fly at double your normal ground speed.

Flowering: You may or may not be a plant but you 'flower' as a display or as part of your reproductive cycle. Increase your Comeliness by +1.

Foot-Hands: Like primates your feet are as dextrous as your hands. Toes are as long as fingers and able to articulate in the same way. You also have a foot-thumb (or thumbs) allowing you to grip. Gain a +1 bonus to your Climb skill. You can also use your feet with equal dexterity to your hands.





Frozen: Your biochemistry operates at a much lower temperature than most species. You take half damage from cold-based attacks and double damage from heat-based attacks.

Fruiting: Your body contains excess energy in storage 'fruit' which can then be used later or doled out to others - though some may find this unpleasant. You can store excess energy in your body and offer it to others as food.

Fuel-Eater: Your physiology is capable of processing a wide variety of hydrocarbons directly. Your metabolism can digest hydrocarbon fuel such as oil, gas and petroleum.

Fur: Many species have fur, patchy or all-over. It is warming and can be important for camouflage or display. A thick pelt gives you +2 to your Toughness saves to resist harsh weather.

Gasbag: You have bodily sacs filled with lighter than air gas that enable you to float and to navigate the atmosphere. You may not take 'humanoid'. You can fly at walking pace. Your hit-points are reduced by half.

Goop Body: Your body is semi-fluid, it can flow, churn and shift to an extent and has no particular vulnerable organs. You have the Limited Shapeshifting trait and physical attacks made against you do half damage. Your Constitution is reduced by -1.

Graceful: Smooth and careful movement has been necessary in your species' past perhaps due to sexual display or a dangerously precarious environment. +1 Dexterity.

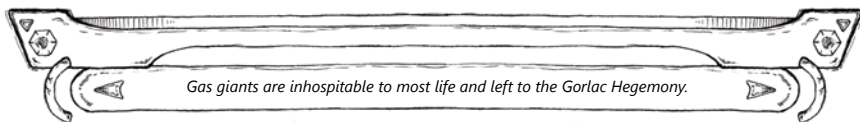
Gregarious: Socialisation is considered very valuable in your culture or species and life is a constant social whirl full of people to remember and to impress. +2 to Charm Save.

Heat-Feeder: Your body-chemistry uses heat in much the same way as plants use light. You regain a Hit Point when exposed to extreme heat or fire.

Herd Mentality: Your species forms packs, herds or large, extended family groups for mutual support, protection and aid. You may claim a free +1 to any roll (including skills) a number of times equal to 1+Charisma Bonus. The minimum is 1 and it must be when helping/assisting others.

Hi-G Adapted: Your species (or sub-species) is adapted for life on worlds of high gravity. You are more likely to be squat, broad and muscular. Away from your home world you may seem supernaturally strong. +2 Power Save, +2 Toughness Save, -2 Reflexes Save

Host Powers: As a parasitic or symbiotic life form you can draw on the power of the animal or being to which you attach yourself. Latching onto a host you can use one of their traits or special attacks as your own.





Immaterial: Your body has no physical presence. It is energy or exists in a substrate of reality resonant with but separate to this one. You are like a ghost or spirit. You cannot directly interact with much in the physical world but are immune to physical attacks.

Infrared Vision: Living in darkness or in the night makes the ability to see beyond the normally visible spectra great value. You can sense heat and see in the dark up to fifteen metres.

Interface: Through augmentation or particularly unusual evolution your species has developed the ability to interface with machines. You can directly jack in to computers and other devices to control them. Your Security skill gains a boost of +1.

Intimate of Nature: Your species is closely tied to the seasons of your home world and the broader biomass. You are - perhaps - more dependent upon the wild and natural world but this gives you a more intuitive understanding of the wild. Your close connection with planetary cycles and life grants you a +1 bonus to your Survival skill.

Intrusive: Your species has an insatiable curiosity and drive to investigate and understand with little respect for personal boundaries. Your Security skill is raised by +1 for free.

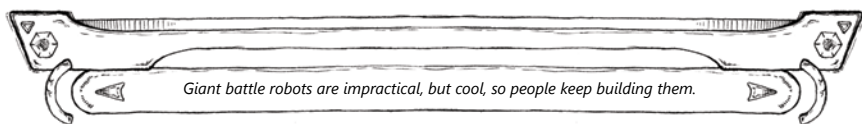
Keen Sight: Acute vision can be useful to many species. Your eyes are much more effective than those of other species seeing greater detail with greater discernment. You can see an extra 50% as far in all conditions than normal sight and your Search skill is increased - for free - by +1.

Killer Instinct: Your species has evolved to react with violence and to offer no quarter to their prey or enemies. Failing to attack is a sign of weakness. +1 bonus to your Close Attack.

Large: Most intelligent species are roughly the same sort of size as each other. You are much larger, over eight feet tall, large and powerful. Reduce your Ranged and Close defence by -1. You gain an additional +1 Hit Point per level and do an additional +1 damage in close combat.

Light Body: Hollow bones, low muscle mass. There are many adaptations that can make a species light and fast at the cost of their resilience. You may trade Constitution for Dexterity on a one-for-one basis but cannot lower that Ability beneath 2.

Limited Shapeshifting: Your body is fluid, able to shift and contort in ways that can seem impossible. You can fit through a hole or gap the size of a fist without having to make a roll, slip bonds and otherwise ooze and slop around.





Linguist: +1 to Languages or Xenopsych.

You've had to spend a lot of time learning how to communicate all over again, and you've gotten pretty good at it.

Live On: You can persist beyond the death of your body and, perhaps, enter a new body. Even if your host dies you can move on to another one. When you are killed (reduced to -10 hit points) you may pull free of your host (at 1 hit point) and try to find another. You keep the same statistics from host to host, a reflection of your demands and capabilities on the body. You can only infect hosts in the general, humanoid range of size.

Mind Control: This may be psychic or biological in nature. You are able to extend your will to modify the behaviour of your host or victim to your advantage. You can not only directly control your host but also partially infect other hosts with a melee attack, taking control of them - if they fail a Will save - for 1d6 hours. They can make the save again if you cause them to self-harm or engage in suicidal actions.

Mindful: Your species or culture values measured, considered and self-aware thought as a process. Hasty and unconsidered actions are rare. Add +1 to your Logic and Will saves.

Narrow: Your body is - or can be - slender and long. A serpentine body is lengthy and thin - relative to breadth. You can fit through a fist-sized hole or gap.

Natural Weapons: Claws, teeth or other more exotic close-combat weaponry may be inherent to your species. You always have some sort of fall-back should you be deprived of weapons. You may take this multiple times. Each time you take it the damage you can do with your natural weapons increases by one dice-type. EG: D4 (the starting amount) rising to D6, then D8. You may not raise it above D12.

Night Vision: Large or sensitive eyes are better able to gather limited light. You can see in reduced lighting as normal, but not in total darkness.

No Vitals: The vital processes of your biology are distributed throughout your body without being concentrated in efficient - but vulnerable - vital organs. Half hit-points. Take only one damage from physical attacks. Take normal damage from energy attacks.

Non-Combat: Your species has, largely, evolved beyond the biological, psychological and social imperatives to prosecute violence against others. In the rough and tumble of interstellar society this may make them vulnerable. You may reduce your Close and Ranged Attack by -1 instead of taking an Attribute penalty. You may only do this twice.



Pack Mentality: Your species runs in close-bound units similar to a wolf-pack or a pride of lions. You are used to backing up others and having them there to support you. You may claim a free +1 to any roll (including skills) a number of times equal to 1+Charisma Bonus. The minimum is 1 and it must be when helping/assisting others.

Painless: Your species has evolved or developed the ability to ignore or switch off pain. You gain an additional Hit Point per level and your Toughness save is increased by +1.

Paralytic: Your body carries a venom that can cause temporary paralysis as part of a predation or defensive attack. Your hand to hand or other natural attack carries a venom with it that causes paralysis. The target must make a Toughness Save or be unable to act for D4 turns.

Poison Resistant: Perhaps your home environment plays host to an arms race between different species with many deadly venoms. Perhaps you simply have an unusual body chemistry. Whatever the case you are resistant to toxins. Against poisons your Toughness is increased by +5.

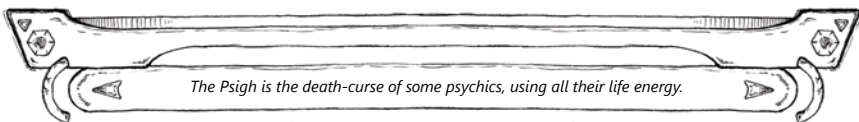
Poisonous: You do not have a venomous attack but your flesh and blood contains material that is toxic, designed to prevent your species being predated upon or parasitized. Any enemy or creature biting you must make a Toughness save or take D6 damage. You can coat your own weapons with your toxin by cutting yourself, taking 1 hit point of damage. This lasts for a single hit.

Power Up: Your body has the unusual ability to produce a charge not for an attack but to imbue your surroundings with that power. You may sacrifice a hit point to recharge an energy weapon. You may sacrifice more hit points to charge/jump-start other devices at the Games Master's discretion.

Psi Power: Psi powers can evolve naturally and as such can be selected for in evolution. You have an extra Psi point to spend to activate powers.

Psi Talent: Psi powers can evolve naturally and as such can be selected for in evolution. You have an extra point with which to buy psychic powers, even if you're not a Psion.

Queen: A caste species often places the queen at the apex. She is the one that the rest of the castes exist to serve. This can be as constricting to an intelligent being as it is self-serving. A fertile female, larger than most other castes, progenitor of the whole colony. +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, -1 Dexterity, move reduced to 75% of normal.





Radiation Resistant: There are many environments high in radiation due to the lack of protection of a magnetic field or other cover. Many stars - and gas giant planets - have harsh radiological environments to which you are positively adapted. You take half-damage from energy attacks.

Rapid Reaction: Your species has evolved a great number of rapid reactions that take place without conscious thought and allow you to avoid danger instinctively. Your Reflexes save is increased by +2.

Regeneration: Your physiology heals at a vastly increased rate. You can literally watch wounds close and bones knit back together. This may be due to artificial enhancement or due to your natural biology. You regenerate one hit-point every turn.

Resilient: Your species has a history of needing power and toughness in order to survive. They can suffer and exert themselves in a useful way. Increase Toughness and Power Saves by +1 each.

Rocky: Your flesh is solid and encrusted with bone or mineral outgrowths. Your armour rolls have a +1 bonus.

Scales: Your body is armoured with flexible scales that give you protection with a high degree of movement. Your armour rolls are made with a +1 bonus.

Sealed System: Your body is self-sustaining to a massive degree and, perhaps, capable of shutting down or hibernating to protect itself. You can voluntarily close down your external vulnerabilities. You can live indefinitely in a vacuum without being surrounded by gas or liquid.

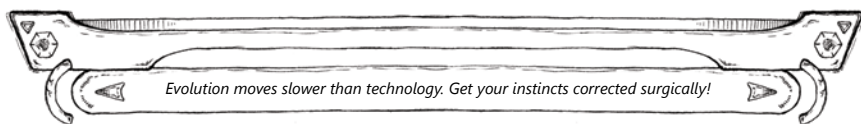
Self-Protecting: Your species is risk averse and analyses every possible outcome before taking any sort of action. Your Logic and Will Saves are raised by +1 each.

Self-Sustaining: Your body is able to create its own food provided you have exposure to a breathable atmosphere and light. You do not need to be fed provided there is sufficient light.

Separate: Your body is a single whole but is able to break apart for a limited period. You can disconnect parts of your body, separate and reintegrate to an amazing degree. You can break off a part of yourself and give it a very specific mission such as 'pull that switch'. You assign this part a number of Hit Points and off it goes.

Serene: Your species or culture values detachment and mental peace and teaches it or naturally manifests a certain amount of distance from the events and emotions around them. +1 to Charm and Will Saves.

Sexy: Your species or culture has extremely strong sexual selection and is incredibly open to sexual options and opportunities with a very liberal and libertine attitude. +1 to Looks and Charm Saves.





Shapeshifting: Your biology is able to shift to a much stronger degree. You can mock or mimic your surroundings or even other creatures of similar size. You must have Limited Shapeshifting. You can now alter your appearance into a perfect physical disguise or to hide yourself. Gain +1 to your Stealth skill.

Shell: Your body is protected by a solid shell that protects your most vulnerable and life-preserving organs. You have a natural armour of D4. This can be taken multiple times, increasing the dice size (D6, D8 etc).

Slow Metabolism: Your biology is sluggish and doesn't react very quickly to the introduction of new elements whether they are beneficial or not. You add +5 to your saving rolls to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

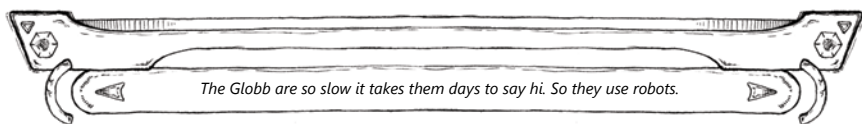
Slow: Your movement is ponderous and slow. Such may evolve in large organisms or those from dangerous environments where moving quickly is to invite injury or death. In place of taking a hit to an attribute for taking multiple traits you may halve your speed, you may do this twice.

Small: You are much smaller than most intelligent species, less than two feet in height. This has both advantages and disadvantages for you. Increase your Ranged and Close defence by +1. You gain one less Hit Point per level (minimum 1).

Sneaky: Some species are naturally quiet and capable of moving without being seen. Such a defence is valuable in a great many different situations with a great deal of survival utility. Your Stealth skill is raised by +1 for free.

Soldier: In a caste species the soldiers exist only to fight and die for the good of the whole. In intelligent species despite genetic predisposition soldiers may become dissatisfied with this state of affairs and seek broader opportunities. An infertile male specialised for combat and defence. Natural weapons D4 damage, +1 Strength, +1 Constitution, -1 Intelligence, -1 Wisdom.

Sonic Boom: Some species evolve to use sound as a weapon or it becomes a weapon as well as a powerful communication tool. Perhaps your vocal chords are particularly powerful or you can whip-crack a limb or claw at supersonic speed. Perhaps you can even modulate powerful sound to the resonant frequency of your target. Whatever the case you can cause damage through this sound. You can discharge a powerful sound at a range of up to five metres. This does D4 damage to anyone hit by it. They can make a Toughness Save to resist the effect. You can take this multiple times to step up the damage.





Spines: A defensive adaptation to protect your species from attack. You are covered in thick spines. Anyone hitting you in close combat must make a Reflex save or take D4 hit points of damage. These spines often break off and remain in the attacker to cause further irritation and discomfort.

Stalker: Your species has evolved to follow prey creatures over long distances without being detected. Your species then uses this advantage to choose the most opportune moment to strike. +1 level to Stealth skill.

Stone Body: Your body is constructed largely of solid-state minerals giving it an inherent toughness and resistance to harm far beyond most organic beings. You have an Armour of D4 and your Toughness Save is raised by +1. You lose -1 Dexterity.

Strong Stomach: Perhaps your race has evolved from scavengers or particularly well-adapted herbivores. Whatever the case your digestive system is tough and capable of eating things that other species might regard as rotten, poisonous or lacking in nutrition. You can subsist on food matter that other species could never consider.

Strong Willed: Independence and personal autonomy is important in your culture or an inherent and individualistic quality found in your species. In the second case they may be evolved from independent and non-social creatures - typically predators. Increase your Will Save score by +2.

Strong: Your species has evolved powerful muscles for digging, predation, construction or cracking open difficult fruit, nuts or shells. +1 Strength.

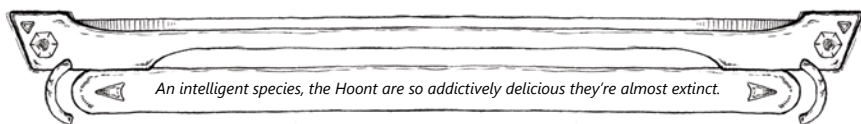
Survival: Your species has evolved in a harsh and dangerous environment and is well adapted biologically and psychologically to living through hardship and maximising every opportunity for survival. +1 level to Survival skill.

Swimming: You are adapted to life in the water and move through it with a natural facility for speed and grace. You can swim 50% faster than normal.

Tail: Many species have a tail as a social signal, an additional limb or an aid to balance. +1 to Reflex save (from balance). If taken twice you can hang from the tail and leave your hands free. If taken three times the tail is also prehensile and can wield weapons for an extra attack.

Tech-Savant: Your species have been tool-users for a very long time and have evolved a close relationship with the machines that exist alongside them. Your Tinker skill is raised by +1 for free.

Tech-Zen: Your species has an almost supernatural affinity for machinery and mechanisms and an ability to get them to function perfectly according to their own desires. Your Experimental Tech skill is raised by +1 for free. This can take it over 6.





Tentacles: Adaptable and grasping limbs, tentacles are able to flex and move in ways that more conventional fingers or claws cannot. They are stronger when grappling or grasping, but less strong when it comes to lifting and manipulating. This trait describes any tentacle-like appendage, not just tentacles themselves. Your grapple attacks gain a +1 bonus to hit and to damage. Trying to break free is penalised by -1.

Thoughtful: Your species is given to deep thought and consideration. It dwells as much in the mind as in the body. +1 Intelligence

Tough: Redundant organs, limited regeneration, adaptable physiology. Whatever the cause your species is tough and hard to kill, like a cockroach. Increase your Toughness Save score by +2.

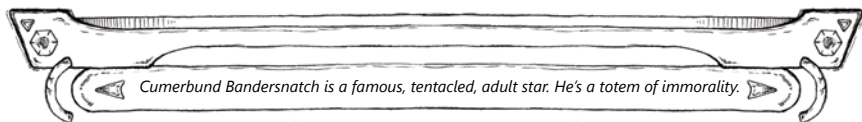
Tourist: +1 to Exotech or Xenoarchaeology. You tend to know things that others don't.

Toxic Gas: Special organs produce, mix and store toxic gasses which you are immune to but which you can release to dissuade attackers or to kill prey. You can expel a cloud of toxic gas two metres around yourself in every direction. Those in the cloud must make a Toughness save or take D4 damage. You can step this up by taking it multiple times. You are unaffected by the cloud and it can last several turns.

True Shapeshifting: Your species is capable, through augmentation or extreme adaptation, to truly shift shape. You can mimic other species to the extent that you can manifest their unique racial traits. You must have Shapeshifting. This is a free +1 bonus you can shift around your body wherever you want. You can manifest any trait you want or give a +1 to any statistic or skill. It takes you a full turn with no other actions to shapeshift. This may be taken multiple times.

Unusual Chemistry: Your body does not operate on the typical oxygen/carbon basis that most other life in the universe does. Your metabolism is extremely unusual even outside the bounds of the more common forms of non-carbon based life. You gain a +5 bonus to resist poison and disease that is not species specific.

UV Vision: Many insects are able to see into the near ultraviolet which reveals a whole new 'flower language' not seen in the more conventional visible spectrum. For whatever reason you have also evolved the ability to see into the ultraviolet beyond that of many other species. You can see into the near ultraviolet which can let you see tracks and traces, patterns and lights that others cannot.





Venom: Your body produces a natural toxin which can be administered to a target via your bite, nails, claws or other form of natural hand to hand attack even if that form of attack is not that effective in and of itself. Your hand to hand or other natural attack carries a venom with it. The target must make a Toughness Save or take an additional D4 damage. You can step this up by taking this trait multiple times.

Very Strong: Your species has evolved great muscle mass and power at the expense of speed and fine manipulation. +2 Strength, -1 Dexterity

Very Tough: Your species has evolved an extremely tough and robust body at the expense of speed and fine manipulation. +2 Constitution, -1 Dexterity

Vibration Sense: Perhaps through whiskers, fine hairs or simply very sensitive skin you are able to sense and interpret vibrations around you. You can sense movement that disturbs that atmosphere ten metres in all directions if your whiskers are exposed to the air.

Warning Sign: A creature that is poisonous or venomous will often evolve to advertise this fact. This means it can 'hide in plain sight' without the need for stealth or camouflage. You are brightly coloured in this way either because you are toxic or because you mimic other creatures which are. Your colouration, scent etc mark you out as something 'not tasty'. Wild animals target you last for attacks.

Fighter: Your culture values martial prowess and combat ability extremely highly and that culture inculcates every member with a basic understanding and appreciation of the will and skill to kill. +1 Close and Ranged Attack.

Wary: Your species has evolved to treat everything as a potential risk, perhaps due to a predator rich or dangerously unpredictable environment. Your Reflex and Logic saves are raised by +1 each.

Water Breathing: You are able to breathe fluid as well as - or instead of - the atmosphere. Gills are typical and can be internal or external. You can breathe underwater (or your home liquid equivalent).

Water: You have a quasi-mystical connection to fluids and your body and appearance reflect that connection. +1 Constitution, +1 Strength. You constantly appear to be wet and flowing.

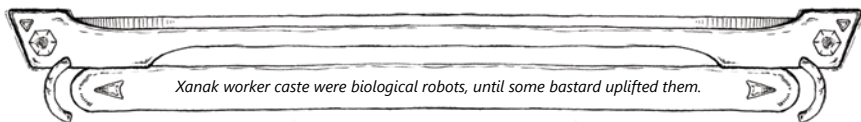
Weapon: Your culture honours and venerates a particular kind of weapon and has inculcated you with an appreciation and understanding of that weapon above and beyond all others. +2 Skill levels with a particular type of weapon.

Woo: Your culture or species is particularly open to spiritual and supernatural concepts and ideas. This makes it easier for you to manipulate and tap into psionics. +1 Psi Point.



Worker: In a caste species the workers make up the vast and overwhelming majority. They are often considered disposable or inconsequential, undervalued despite their role. In an intelligent species a worker may become dissatisfied with this state of affairs and seek a different kind of life. An infertile female genetically adapted for general colony duty. +1 Skill point, +1 Constitution.

Zero G: Perhaps your species has lived in zero gravity aboard stations and ships for many generations or perhaps they evolved in a gas torus in the habitable zone of a star. Whatever the case you are perfectly at home in micro or zero gravity and move in that environment with the grace and speed of a bird or fish. You offset any zero gravity penalties by +5.



Xanak worker caste were biological robots, until some bastard uplifted them.

name:
class:
level:

XP:

CHA: /
COM: /
CON: /
DEX: /
INT: /
STR: /
WIS /

CHARM:
LOOKS:
TOUGHNESS:
REFLEXES:
LOGIC:
POWER:
WILL:

HP:

RACE TRAITS
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2.
3.
*4
*5
*6

BASIC ATTACK:
RANGED ATTACK:
CLOSE ATTACK:

RANGED DEFENCE:
CLOSE DEFENCE:

SHIELD:
ARMOUR:

CASH:

SOCIAL REACTION:
INITIATIVE BONUS:

GEAR

CLIMB	000000
LANGUAGES:	000000
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SECURITY:	000000
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SNEAK ATTACK:	000000
STEALTH:	000000
STRUCTURE:	000000
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